

George Mason University
Department of History
MODERN ISRAEL
HIST 387-002

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This course offers both a general survey of contemporary Israel and also an opportunity to study some aspects of this subject in depth. By the end of the semester each student is expected to have acquired a historical understanding of modern Israel -- its political, social and economic systems, religious dimension, the basic determinants of the Arab-Israeli dispute, Israel's international relations, including the role of the Jewish Diaspora, and American-Israeli relations. Also, watershed events in Jewish and Israeli life will be examined: anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and its impact, nationalism, absorption of mass-immigration into Israeli society, the several Arab-Israeli wars, and the unfolding peace process, including the Camp David, Oslo and the current peace efforts.

Students will be required to prepare an oral presentation focusing on an aspect of contemporary Israel. Several Israeli films (with subtitles) will be shown throughout the semester.

Requirements

It is expected that students attend every class.

Class participation	20 percent
Midterm exam – March 15	25 percent
Final Examination – May 10	35 percent
Presentation	20 percent

Required Texts

Leslie Stein, The Making of Modern Israel, Polity Press 2009

Tom Segev, 1949: The First Israelis, Henry Holt 1998

Donna Rosenthal, The Israelis, Free Press, 2003

Robert O. Freedman, Contemporary Israel: Domestic Politics, Foreign Policy and Security Challenges, Westview 2009

Course Schedule

January	Introduction: overview of modern Israel Anti-Semitism and the rise of Zionism Read: Stein: Introduction
February	The emergence of the Yishuv and the British Mandate The Holocaust and its Impact The Establishment of Israel Read: Stein: 1-5; Freedman: Introduction Segev
March	The Arab-Israeli conflict Read: Stein: 6-9 March 15 Midterm Exam The Oslo Process, Camp David and the Palestinian Uprising Read: Freedman: 9-10
April	Politics, the economy, society and religion Read: Freedman: 2-3 Immigration, state-building and Israeli-Diaspora relations Rosenthal; Freedman: 5, 7-8 Israel's Arab Minority Read: Freedman: 6
May	Israel in Transition Read: Freedman: 11-14
May 10	Final Exam

Related web links:

<http://www.israelatsixty.org.il> (an excellent blog on Israel at 60)

Embassy of Israel: <http://www.israeemb.org>

Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs: www.mfa.gov.il

Jerusalem Post: www.jpost.com

Ha'aretz: www.haaretz.co.il/english

Palestinian National Authority: <http://www.pna.net>

Jerusalem Report: www.jmcc.org

Palestine Times: www.ptimes.com

General Information on Jordan: <http://www.discoverjordan.com>

Jordanian Radio and Television Corporation: www.jrtc.com

King Hussein of Jordan: <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo>

Foundation for Middle East Peace: <http://www.fmep.org>

In-depth Analysis from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, including link to other useful sites:

<http://www.newsworld.cbc.ca/news/indepth/mideast/index.html>

Iranian News Agency: www.irna.com

Syrian Arab News Agency: www.sana.org

Middle East Times: www.metimes.com

Cairo Live: www.cairolive.com

Cairo Times: www.cairotimes.com

Egypt Today: www.egypttoday.com

Gulf Times: www.gulf-times.com

Islamic News and Information Network: www.inin.com

Iraq Net Information Network: www.iraq.net

Lebanon: www.dailystar.com.lb

Libyan Al-Sidra: www.al-sidra.com

Oman News Agency: www.omannews.com

Dept. Of State: http://www.state.gov/www/regions/nea/related_links.html

In-Depth Analysis from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, including links to many useful websites:

<http://www.newsworld.cbc.ca/news/indepth/mideast/index.html>