“History of Israeli Foreign Policy”
HIST 285-006 (cross-listings: JS271-002; MESAS270-002)
Undergraduate
Spring 2015 Ziv Rubinovitz

View Syllabus

The course will analyze Israel's foreign relations, and will examine the tension between Israel's geographic location in the Middle East and its Western orientation. It will look at how Israel’s foreign relations emerged from Israel’s Jewish origins, the Palestine Mandate, Israel's relations with the great powers, and the superpowers as well as its regional quest for recognition.

This will also include Israel’s quest for normalization in the mist of being thrust into wars and engaging in subsequent negotiations with its neighbors. The discussion will take into account global changes that affected Israel, especially the Cold War, the end of the Cold War, economic globalization, proliferation of WMDs, terrorism, and local insurgencies. Each of these topics and other major international events changed Israel's position and status, both in the region and in relation to non-regional powers. We will discuss the question of Israel's apparently growing dependence on the West, especially the United States, and the question of Israel's future relations with its neighbors in the Middle East.

Requirements
1. Attending class and participating in discussions (10%). You are expected to attend all classes. However, if you cannot attend, please notify me, preferably in advance, and provide applicable justification.
2. A brief presentation in class (5-7 minutes), followed by a 2-3-page paper. This will be an individual assignment coordinated in advance with the instructor. The presentation and paper will be about Israel's relations with a specific state or region that we will discuss and will open our class discussions (20%).
3. A 50-minutes Midterm exam will be in class on Monday, March 4 (25%). Please note that the exam will take 50 minutes of the class.
4. Final exam on Monday, May 4, 2015, 11:30 am – 2:00 pm in the regular classroom (45%).

Note: The Emory University Honor Code applies in this course.

Topics
1. Introduction: Origins of Israeli Foreign Policy
2. Israel and the Middle East; the Middle East and Israel
3. Not only War and Peace – Reparations from Germany, the Jewish Diaspora and anti-Semitism
4. Israel's relations with the great powers
5. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict
6. Israel's relations with Latin America, Africa and Asia
7. The wars of the first decade, 1948 & 1956
8. Israel's "Periphery alliance"
9. 1967, Jerusalem, Occupied Territories
12. Peace efforts
13. Nuclear Middle East
14. Dealing with new challenges
15. Conclusion: can Israel feel "at home"?

Disclaimer
Minor changes to the syllabus may apply during the course. Updates will be announced, and when applicable the “Blackboard” will be updated.

Required books

The following books are required. You may purchase or rent copies at the bookstore or find hardcopies (also electronic copies, except for Uri Bialer's book) at the library.


Recommended reference:


The Knesset website: www.knesset.gov.il


Israel's Foreign Policy – Historical Documents: http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MFADocuments/Pages/Documents_Foreign_Policy_Israel.aspx - see volumes in the left side column.

Jewish Virtual Library: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/indexrestore.html - many topics within the library are relevant, especially Israel's international relations:
Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS): [http://history.state.gov/](http://history.state.gov/) - see volumes re the Middle East and Arab-Israeli conflict.

**Detailed course outline**

Required readings singed by an asterisk (*).

1. **Introduction: Origins of Israeli Foreign Policy: early 20th century lessons from Zionism, the British Mandate, and holocaust – January 14, 21**


2. **Israel and the Middle East; the Middle East and Israel – January 26, 28**


3. **Not only War and Peace – Reparations from Germany, the Jewish Diaspora and anti-Semitism – February 2, 4**


4. **Israel's relations with the great powers – February 9 (Soviet Union/Russia and France), 11 & 16 (The United States, the United Kingdom)**


5. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict – February 23 & 25


6. **Israel's relations with Latin America, Africa and Asia – February 26**


7. **The wars of the first decade, 1948 & 1956 – March 2, 4**


Guy Laron. "'Logic dictates that they may attack when they feel they can win': The 1955 Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal, the Egyptian Army, and Israeli Intelligence," *Middle East Journal* 63 (1), 2009, pp. 69-84.

Midterm exam, 50 minutes, on March 4.

SPRING BREAK March 9-13

8. Israel's "Periphery alliance" – March 16


* Elections in Israel - March 17. We will discuss them on the day before and after with the results.

9. 1967, Jerusalem, Occupied Territories – March 18, 23


10. *Between Euphoria and Despair: 1967-1973 – March 25, 30*


12. *Peace efforts – April 8, 13, 15*


13. Nuclear Middle East – April 20


14. Dealing with new challenges – April 22


15. Conclusion: can Israel feel "at home"? – April 27