“Zionist and Israeli political leadership: idealism, realism and pragmatism”
HIST 385-004 (cross-listings: JS371-001; MESAS370-008; POLS385-009)
Undergraduate
Spring 2015 - Ziv Rubinovitz

View Syllabus

The course will discuss the political leadership of the State of Israel as an introduction into Israel's political system. The course will begin with the pre-state (Yishuv) era and then will analyze the leadership since 1948. The analysis will highlight the ideational, realist and pragmatic aspects of Israel's leadership throughout its existence. It will discuss the prime ministers and other leading figures, as well as their personal impact and leadership in Israel's history, both in the foreign affairs and security arenas as well as the the domestic arena. It will deal with the major events in Israel's history – the establishment of the state, war and peace, domestic political affairs, government-military relations, and dealing with economic and social developments.

It is impossible to discuss or teach all of the figures who influenced Israel throughout its history. Hence, the main stream of the course will focus on the prime ministers of Israel and their deeds in power, but we will also discuss other significant figures who had important roles in Israel's history.

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 pages paper. This will be an individual assignment coordinated in advance with the instructor. The presentation and paper will be about political figures 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 Tuesday, May 5, 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 (1): (Political) leadership
2. Introduction (2): Varieties within Zionism
3. Leaders of the Zionist Movement
4. Pre-state leadership in Eretz Israel/Palestine and abroad
5. Introduction (3): the Israeli political system
6. David Ben-Gurion
7. Moshe Sharett
8. Levi Eshkol and Golda Meir (and Yigal Allon and Moshe Dayan)  
10. Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir  
11. Benjamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak, Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert: The 1990s to the Present  
12. Neither Left Nor Right: The Center  
13. Conclusion  

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 an electronic copy of Gideon Shimoni'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: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Politics/intltoc.html; government and politics: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Politics/poltoc.html; history: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/history.html  
Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS): http://history.state.gov/ - see volumes re the Middle East and Arab-Israeli conflict.
Detailed plan of the course

Required readings singed by an asterisk (*).

1. Introduction (1): (Political) leadership – January 14
* Joseph S. Nye, Jr. The Powers to Lead. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008 (2010). Please read the entire book as it will set a framework for analysis for the course. Specifically, read the preface and chapters 1 and 3 (but do read the rest too!)

2. Introduction (2): Varieties within Zionism – January 21
* Gideon Shimoni. The Zionist Ideology. Brandeis University Press, 1995, chs. 1 (pp. 3-21, 29-37, 46-51), 3 (pp. 85-103, 118-126), 4 (pp. 126-133, 136-139, 154-165), 5 (170-179, 189-208), 6 (all) – This applies also to topic 3.

* Gideon Shimoni – same readings as for topic 2.
4. **Pre-state leadership in Eretz Israel/Palestine and abroad – February 4, 9**  

5. **Introduction (3): the Israeli political system – February 11, 16**  

6. **David Ben-Gurion – February 23, 25, 26**  

7. **Moshe Sharett – March 2, 4**  

• Midterm exam, 50 minutes, on March 4.

SPRING BREAK March 9-13

8. Levi Eshkol and Golda Meir – March 16, 18

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


Yigal Allon:

Moshe Dayan:


**10. Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir – March 30, April 1, 6**


Ilan Peleg, “The Foreign Policy of Herut and the Likud,” in *Reich & Kieval,* pp. 55-78.


**11. Benjamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak, Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert: The 1990s to the Present – April 8, 13, 15**


* Galia Golan. *Israeli Peacemaking Since 1967: Factors Behind the Breakthroughs and Failures.* London and New York: Routledge, 2015, chs. 7 (Barak) and 8 (Olmert).


**12. Neither Left Nor Right: The Center – April 20, 22**


**13. Conclusion – April 27**