

**The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Rothberg International School
Division of Undergraduate Studies
Spring Semester 2016**

48201: Foreign Policy of Israel
Dr. Meron Medzini

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 15:30-16:30

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Course Description.

The course explores the formation, formulation, evolution and implementation of Israel's foreign policy since the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948. An examination of the events following World War II will set the stage. The political-diplomatic moves of the key players – Jews, Arabs, British and Americans, will be examined. The 1948 War of Independence will be studied in depth as well as its immediate consequences, borders, refugees and Jerusalem. This war also shaped Israel's initial defense and foreign policies which stressed three main elements: Jewish immigration, defense and the acquisition of arms and the funds to finance both. The course will then focus on the various approaches to foreign policy, the impact of key Israeli leaders and their world view, the economic factor as well as Israel's handling of the media. Special attention will be devoted to Israel's strategic and defense thinking which also helped shape its special relations with the United States, Western and Eastern Europe and Asia and Africa. The aim is to demonstrate how Israeli decision makers adapted themselves to rapidly changing regional and international realities such as the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, two Gulf Wars, two Intifadas and the emergence of international terror as a major threat.

The course will strive to allow students to acquire basic understanding of Israel's place in the Middle East, develop an understanding of the effect of economic, strategic, cultural, religious and psychological influences on decision making, explore the relationships between Israel and world Jewry, the impact of the wars fought by Israel, and become familiar with foreign policy decision making institutions and practices. The goal is that students will be able to apply their learning and the framework of analysis this course seeks to provide to help them reach their own conclusions and assessments, and better understand future developments in Israel and the Middle East.

Course Format.

The twice weekly class meetings will be devoted to a discussion of a key topic. Since this is a basic introductory course, the instructor will present lectures and assume responsibility for directing discussion on current topics whenever applicable.

Course Requirements.

1. Students are expected to read the readings listed for each class prior to the relevant session.
2. Attending all classes and, if possible, active participation in the discussion. Unjustified absences will result in loss of points.
3. Presentation of a term paper (see below): 50% of the final grade.
4. Final examination: 50% of the final grade.

The term paper will consist of a 12-15 pages in length, double spaced, typewritten, with an introduction specifying the subject, footnotes and bibliography. The student will select any topic which has relevance and connection to Israel's foreign policy. The instructor must approve the topic. The goal of the paper is to enable the student to study in depth a specific subject, become more familiar with the literature, read additional sources and devote time and thought to this assignment. Five books and a similar number of articles will be considered adequate number of sources. The paper is due on the day of the final examination. Please retain a copy in your possession. The paper cannot be emailed or faxed.

Course Outline.

Session 1. 22 February 2016

Topic: Israel in the regional and international setting: defining the key regional and international actors in the Middle East system, their domestic and external interests and constraints.

Readings: Elie Podeh, "Rethinking Israel in the Middle East", in *Israel Affairs*, Vol. 3, Nos. 3-4, 1997, pp. 280-295. **E-JOURNAL ; ERESERVE 001224090**

Session 2. 24 February 2016

Jews, Arabs and British policies in Palestine: 1945-1947. Discussion of Jewish and Arab claims and British policy in Palestine following World War II, the impact of the Holocaust and the emerging Cold War.

Readings: Alvin Z. Rubinstein (ed.). *The Arab-Israeli conflict: perspectives*, New York, Harper Collins, 1991, p. 1-33, 224. **E327.56 R896 ; ERESERVE 001736214**
Gilbert, pp. 100-186. **E9 G465 ; ERESERVE 001878471**

Session 3. 29 February 2016

Israel's War of Independence, study of the major diplomatic and military moves and the consequences of the war – territorial, psychological, political and emotional.

Readings: Safran, pp. 32-64. **E327.73.S128**

Session 4. 2 March 2016

The Armistice System 1949-1967. What were its purposes, where did it succeed and why in the final analysis did it fail.

Readings: Medzini, Israel's Foreign Relations, Vol. I, pp. 163-179, **E327(029) M493** ; **ERESERVE 001878474**

Benny Morris, Israel's border wars, 1949-1956, pp. 1-27. **E327.56 M875** ; **ERESERVE 001878479**

Session 5. 7 March 2016

Formulation of Israel's security and foreign policy - 1949-1956. The discussion will focus on various Israeli approaches to foreign policy including the conflicting views of Ben-Gurion and Sharett.

Readings: Y. Harkabi, "Three Israeli Schools of Thought", in Arab Strategies and Israel's Response, pp. 127-151. **E327.56 H283** ; **ERESERVE 001878476**
Safran, pp. 222-239. **E327.73.S128**

Session 6. 9 March 2016

The quest for arms and alliances – 1950-1956. How did Israel attempt to secure weapons, diplomatic relations, recognition and legitimacy.

Readings: Safran, pp. 332-358. **E327.73.S128**

Session 7. 14 March 2016

Israel's Jewish Foreign Policy. In addition to discussing Israel's perception of its role as defender and protector of Jewish communities, special attention will be devoted to Israel's immigration efforts from Arab countries and Eastern Europe.

Readings: Shlomo Avinery, Ideology and Israel's Foreign Policy", in the Jerusalem Quarterly, No. 37, 1986, pp. 3-13 **ERESERVE 001215400**

Session 8. 16 March 2016

The Sinai War – causes and consequences for Israel, the Arab world and the super powers. What did Israel achieve in this war and what did it fail to attain.

Readings: Mark Tessler, A History of the Israel-Palestinian Conflict, pp.336-378. **E327.56.T341** ; **ERESERVE 001878478**

Session 9. 21 March 2016

Israel and the Third World Nations. What led Israel to develop relations with countries in Asia and Africa. Were these efforts successful?

Readings: Safran, pp. 359-380. **E327.73.S128**

Session 10. 23 March 2016

Israel and Western Europe 1948-1967. The discussion will focus on German Reparations, arms from France and initial ties with the emerging European Economic Union.

Readings: Gideon Rafael, Destination Peace, pp. 100-112. **E327 R136** ; **ERESERVE 001878506**

Session 11. 28 March 2016

Israel and the United States 1948-1967. What was the nature of the early ties between Jerusalem and Washington, what were the areas of agreement and spheres of disagreement.

Readings: Safran, pp. 571-622. **E327.73 S128**

Session 12. 30 March 2016

The June 1967 Six Days War, causes and consequences. What led to the war, what alternatives Israel faced and what were some of the long term implications of this seminal event on Israel's development, foreign relations, military strength and domestic perceptions.

Readings: Tessler, pp. 379-397, **E327.56 T341 ; ERESERVE 001878478**

Bernard Reich, The Quest for Peace, pp. 13-78. **E327.73 R347; ERESERVE 001878507**

Session 13. 4 April 2016

The road to the Yom Kippur war, 1967-1973. Could this war have been avoided by a different diplomacy and statecraft by Israel and the Arabs.

Readings: Connor Cruise O'Brien, The Siege, pp. 489-530. **E9 013**

Session 14. 6 April 2016

The Israel-Egypt peace process between 1973-1982. What led to the Sadat visit and to the Camp David agreement culminating with the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty. The American role will also be discussed.

Readings: O'Brien, pp. 530-641. **E9 013**

Session 15. 11 April 2016

Israel and Western Europe 1967-2009. What are the key areas of disagreement between the countries of Western Europe and Israel.

Readings: to be announced.

Session 16. 13 April 2016.

Israel and Eastern Europe 1948-2009. The issues to be dealt with are the Soviet policy towards Israel and the Middle East, the issue of Jewish immigration, the collapse of the Soviet Union and its impact on the Arab-Israel conflict.

Readings: Yaacov Roi, "The Soviet Attitude to the Existence of Israel", in Y. Roi, ed. The Limits to Power, London, 1979, **ME327.47 R741 ; ERESERVE 001216222**

Rafael, pp. 113-122. **E327.R136 ; ERESERVE 001878506**

Session 17. 2 May 2016

Israel's first war in Lebanon 1982-2000. What led to this war, why was it different than previous wars. What did it achieve and where did it fail.

Readings: Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 254-265, **E327.56(08) L317**

Avi Shlaim, The Iron Wall, pp. 384-423. **E327.56.S558**

Session 18. 4 May 2016

Israel and the United States 1967- to present. Continued examination of the spheres of agreements and disagreements between Israel and its major ally since the Six Days War.

Readings: Safran, pp. 521-622. **E327.73.S128**

Session 19. 9 May 2016

The first Intifadah, The First Gulf War and the Madrid Peace Conference, the end of the Cold War, turning points on the road to political solution 1987-1992.

Readings: Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 315-368, **E327.56(08) L317; ERESERVE 001878508**

Tessler, pp. 736-752. **E327.56.T341; ERESERVE 001878478**

Session 20. 16 May 2016

The Road to Oslo 1992-1995. What were the key events and developments that led to the Israel-Palestinian Declaration of Principles and the Interim Agreement of 1995?

Readings: Shlaim, pp. 502-563, **E327.56 S558 ; ERESERVE 001878505**

Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 414-423 and 442-455, **E327.56(08) L317**

Zittrain and Caplan, Negotiating Arab-Israel Peace, pp. 103-143. **E327.172 E36 or E-BOOK 001811434**

Session 21. 18 May 2016

Israeli attitudes to the peace process since 1993. Discussion will focus on the growing rift in Israel between "civil" Israel and "traditional" Israel.

Readings: Alan Dowty, The Jewish State – A Century Later, pp. 249-255,

E320.9 D752 or E-BOOK 001828699

Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 522-580. **E327.56(08)L317**

Session 22. 23 May 2016

The foreign policy of the Netanyahu governments 1996-2016. Discussion will focus on the attempts to implement the Oslo Process, the Second Camp David Summit, the Second Intifadah, the Iran Nuclear deal and their results.

Readings: Kurtzer, Daniel

Negotiating Arab-Israeli peace : American leadership in the Middle East / Daniel C.

Kurtzer, Scott B. Lasensky . Washington, D.C. : United States Institute of Peace Press, 2008. **E327.56 K96 ; ERESERVE 001878564**

Session 23. 27 May 2015

The foreign policy of the Sharon Government 2001-2006, focusing on Israel-America understanding, the second Gulf War, the growing threat of Iran and international

terror. The unilateral withdrawal from Gaza and the concept of two states will also be discussed.

Readings: Kurtzer, Daniel

Negotiating Arab-Israeli peace : American leadership in the Middle East / Daniel C. Kurtzer, Scott B. Lasensky . Washington, D.C. : United States Institute of Peace Press, 2008. **E327.56 K96 ; ERESERVE 001878564**

Major texts used.

Dowty, Alan, The Jewish State – A Century Later, 1998. **E320.9D752**
Harkabi, Y. Arab Strategies and Israel's Response, **E327.56 H283**
Karsh, Efraim, ed. Israel Affairs, 1997, vol. 3, Nos.3-4 **E320.9 K18**
Kurtzer, Daniel Negotiating Arab-Israeli peace : American leadership in the Middle East / Daniel C. Kurtzer, Scott B. Lasensky .2008. **E327.56 K96**
Laqueur and Rubin, The Arab-Israel Reader, 2001. **E327.56(08)L317**
Medzini. M. Israel's Foreign Relations – Selected Documents **E327(029) M493**
Morris, Benny, Israel's border wars, 1949-1956 : Arab infiltration, Israeli retaliation, and the countdown to the Suez War, 1993. **E327.56 M875**
O'Brien, Coonor Cruise, The Siege, 1998. **E9 013**
Rafael, Gideon, Destination Peace, Thirty Years of Israel's Foreign Policy **E327 R136**
Reich, Bernard, The Quest for Peace US-Israel Relations,1977 **E327.73 R347**
Roi, Yaacov, The Limits to Power, 1979. **ME327.47 R741**
Alvin Z. Rubinstein (ed.). The Arab-Israeli conflict: perspectives, New York, Harper Collins, 1991 **E327.56 R896**
Safran, Nadav, Israel-The Embattled Ally, 1978 **E327.73 S128**
Shlaim, Avi, The Iron Wall – Israel and the Arab World, 2000 **E327.56 S558**
Tessler, Mark, A History of the Israel-Palestinian Conflict, 1994, **E32.56 T341**
Zittrain, Laura and Caplan, Neil, Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace, Patterns, Problems, Possibilities, 1998. **E327.172 E36**

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