

Jewish Life Writing: Israeli Literature

Dr. Rachel S. Harris

FALL 2013 • Tu/Th 2.00-4.50pm • Bevier Hall 103

Credit: 3 hours.

(CWL 421/ Hist 436/SLAV 420/ RLST 420/ RLST 420/ YDSH 420)

Office Hours: Thursday 1-2pm or by appointment. FLB 3029

Email: rsharris@illinois.edu

This course explores Israeli society, politics and culture through major Israeli novels published recently by significant writers. All novels were originally written in Hebrew but will be read in translation.

Goals:

Students will become aware of the diversity of Israeli society, examining novels by Palestinian Israelis, Mizrahi writers and women writers, as well as reading novels that have become immediately canonical upon publication. Issues of army service, migration, religious/secular divisions, the peace movement, West Bank settlements and daily life within Israel's cultural centres will all be explored.

The novels range in style and students will become familiar with literary terms such as magical realism, post-colonialism and historical fiction.

Assignments:

Students are expected to read the novels and any additional supporting material for class. ***Class discussion is an integral part of this course.***

2 short essays (5%) each: Due dates: 31st Jan/ 14th Feb, **Assignment to be given in class**

1 midterm essay (20%): Due date: 28th Feb

1 Final essay (40%): Due date: 1st May

Class participation (30%):

For the midterm essay and final essay, students are encouraged to identify a research question that emerges from their reading of a text and to discuss the topic with me, before embarking upon the assignment. Essays should be up to 8 pages, and where appropriate use additional sources.

4-6 March 2012 there will be a Symposium: Hebrew Literature in the 21st Century at the Levis Faculty Center. Students are strongly encouraged to attend.

Schedule:

17 Jan Intro

24 Jan Sayed Kashua *Let it Be Morning*

31 Jan Sayed Kashua *Let it Be Morning*

7 Feb Emuna Elon *If you Awaken Love*

14 Feb Asaf Schur *Motti*

21 Feb Ronit Matalon *Bliss*

28 Feb Ronit Matalon *Bliss*

6 Mar (4-6 March, Hebrew Literature Conference)

13 Mar David Grossman *To the End of the Land*

20 Mar Spring Break No class

27 Mar David Grossman *To the End of the Land*

3 Apr Alon Hilu *Rajani*

10 Apr Alon Hilu *Rajani* Passover -

17 Apr Etgar Keret *Suddenly a Knock at the Door*

24 Apr Etgar Keret *Suddenly a Knock at the Door* **Etgar Keret will be at the Chicago Humanities Festival 26th April 2012. 6-7pm. Students are encouraged to participate in a field trip! Details to be discussed.**

1 May Final Class

Other information:

Respect and tolerance for all viewpoints as well as courteous and attentive behaviour are expected from all class participants. Anyone who fails to adhere to these standards may be required to leave the class at my discretion.

Support: If you are having any difficulties in the course, I encourage you to contact me sooner rather than later so that we can devise a work plan and strategies so that you can be successful in the course.

Grading: I strive to be fair and accurate in grading student assignments. If you are dissatisfied with a grade that you have received, please present to me in writing what error you feel has been made and what course of action you propose for remedying it. Then, please visit my office during regular office hours (or contact me to make an appointment) and we will discuss your concerns. Additionally, if you wish to have your final essay returned, please contact me during the first week of the new semester to arrange for the work to be returned to you. It is my policy not to leave student work in public places for pick up. I do not give out or discuss grades over email.

Percentage % Grading Bands

96-100	A+	Excellent knowledge of subject. Critical awareness of academic debate with excellent use of evidence to illustrate argument. Appropriate contextualization of material.
91-95	A	
86-90	A-	
81-85	B+	Good knowledge of subject. Clear awareness of debate, with appropriate use of evidence. Some awareness of larger historical context. Accurate use of appropriate terms.
76-80	B	
71-75	B-	
66-70	C+	Displays factual knowledge of subject. Some evidence of discussion and awareness of different points of view. Adequate documentation. Some use of appropriate terms
61-65	C	
56-60	C-	
51-55	D+	Poor knowledge of subject. Poor presentation of work.
46-50	D	Limited, incorrect or no use of appropriate terms.
41-45	D-	Minimal discussion.
40 or below	FAIL	Work below minimum standard required.