

## Israeli & American Politics in Comparative Perspective

Course Instructor: Dr. Ariel Zellman  
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Office Hours: \*\*\*By Appointment\*\*\*

Location: 708 בניין ראשי חדר  
Time: Tuesdays, 12:15-15:45

"History did not spoil us with power, wealth, nor with broad territories or an enormous community lot, however, it did grant us the uncommon intellectual and moral virtue, and thus it [the virtue] is both a privilege and an obligation to be a 'Light Unto the Nations'"

- *David Ben-Gurion, 1959*

"For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword throughout the world."

- *John Winthrop, 1630*

One of the most characteristic themes in Israeli politics is that of Israel's uniqueness, in its security needs, in its cultural and political identity, and in its relationship to the international community. This widespread perception of separateness readily contributes to and is at least partially constituted by the state's history of strategic insecurity and political isolation in the Middle East as well as its characteristic form of democratic governance. So too, the United States is often characterized as an "exceptional" country, unique both in its political development and presumed global mission of democracy promotion. The objective of this class is to critically examine the assumption of these two countries as "cases apart" and the degree to which their "unique" characteristics may be understood as "normal" politics both in reference to each other and in the world at large. To do so, students will engage with a range of academic and popular readings on a diversity of major subjects related to each state's politics and the American-Israel relationship.

### Course requirements:

- Attendance & Participation (10%)
- Paper Proposal (10%)
- Paper Outline (30%)
- Seminar or Term Paper (50%)

### Required texts:

- Reading Packet

### Attendance & Participation:

Regular attendance of and participation in class discussions is essential to your success in this course. Absences for campus activities, religious observances, personal concerns, or the like must be cleared with the instructor in advance barring emergencies so that appropriate make-up work can be assigned. Classroom discussions will be open, civil, and mutually respectful. Active involvement in class discussion is strongly preferred, however if you feel very uncomfortable

speaking in front of your peers, the instructor can offer alternative assignments to receive participation credit.

### **Seminar/Term Paper:**

A significant portion of your grade for this course is tied to the final paper. In it, you are required to critically analyze and evaluate some aspect of comparative Israeli-American politics. Papers are encouraged to explore the course's central theme of uniqueness and normality, applying these concepts to at least one of the major topics that will be discussed in class. In doing so, your paper should elucidate how this topic is relevant to the Israeli-American relationship and/or to these countries' relationships with the broader international community. Students may choose to focus their papers on a particular time period, policy agenda, political ideology, or comparative case, but *all papers must identify and advance an argument*. Papers may offer policy recommendations regarding their subject although are not required to do so.

In order to assist students in developing the best possible paper and facilitate its timely completion, three benchmark due dates have been scheduled for the submission of a paper proposal, paper outline, and final paper for 8 April, 13 May, and 10 July. The **paper proposal** need be no longer than 1-1.5 pages double-spaced with a clearly stated topic, thesis question, and provisional argument. It should also include a basic description of potential sources of information and evidence to test your hypothesis. The **paper outline** should be approximately 5 pages double-spaced with greater detail as to the kinds of arguments and data you will be using to support your arguments. This should be a basic roadmap to your paper. These are as much opportunities for critical feedback on your work by the instructor as they are tasks to keep you on schedule. *You are encouraged to make the most of them*. Further details on these incremental assignments will be given throughout the semester. Students may choose to write the final paper as either a term paper (עבודת סיום) or a seminar paper (עבודת סמינריונית). Depending upon your choice, papers should be no more than 15 or 25 pages excluding bibliographic references, double-spaced, use 12 point font and 1 inch margins, and be written in English. They are due one month following the conclusion of the course, 10 July, and should be submitted via email.

### **#1 & #2: 4 March - Uniqueness & Exceptionalism in Israel & America (Introduction to Comparative Politics)**

Alexander Yakobson, "Jewish Peoplehood and the Jewish State, How Unique? A Comparative Survey," *Israel Studies* 13, no. 2 (Summer 2008), pgs. 1-27.

James W. Ceaser, "The Origins and Character of American Exceptionalism," *American Political Thought* 1 (Spring 2012), pgs. 1-25.

\*\*\*Aviel Roshwald, "Chapter 4: Chosenness and Mission," in *The Endurance of Nationalism*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2006: 167-252.

Arend Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method," *American Political Science Review*, 65, no. 3 (September 1971), pgs. 682-693.

Kathleen Thelen, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2 (1999), pgs. 369-404.

Barbara Geddes, "3: How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get," in *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, MI (2003), pgs. 89-129.

### **#3: 11 March - Voting for Persons or Parties? Electoral Politics in USA v. Israel**

Moshe Maor & Reuven Hazan, "Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective," *Israel Affairs* 6, no. 2 (1999), pgs. 1-10.

Giovanni Sartori, "The Party-Effects of Electoral Systems," *Israel Affairs* 6, no 2, pgs 13-28.

Norman Schofield, et al., "Estimating the Effects of Activists in Two-Party and Multi-Party Systems: Comparing the United States and Israel," *Social Choice and Welfare* 36, no. 3-4 (April 2011), pgs. 483-518.

### **#4: 18 March - How Supreme is the Supreme Court? Judicial Review in US & Israel**

Gad Barzilai, "Courts as Hegemonic Institutions: The Israeli Supreme Court in a Comparative Perspective," *Israel Affairs* 5, no. 2-3 (1998), pgs. 15-33.

Malvina Halberstam, "Judicial Review, a Comparative Perspective: Israel, Canada, and the United States," *Cardozo Law Review* 31 (2009-2010), pgs. 2393-2456.

Jeffrey A. Segal, Chad Westerland & Stefanie A. Lindquist, "Congress, the Supreme Court, and Judicial Review: Testing a Constitution Separation of Powers Model," *American Journal of Political Science* 55, no. 1 (January 2011), pgs. 89-104.

### **NO CLASS: 25 March - Instructor out of country at conference!**

### **#5: 1 April - The State of the Welfare State: Israel v. USA**

Nissim Cohen, et al., "Public Attitudes Toward the Welfare State and Public Policy: The Israeli Experience," *Israel Affairs* 17, no. 4 (2011), pgs. 621-643.

Jens Alber, "What the European and American welfare states have in common and where they differ: Facts and fiction in comparisons of the European Social Model and the United States," *Journal of European Social Policy* 20, no. 2 (May 2010), pgs. 102-125.

Gøsta Esping-Andersen, "The Three Political Economies of the Welfare State," *International Journal of Sociology* 20, no. 3 (Fall 1990), pgs. 92-123.

## **#6: 8 April - Multiculturalism, Ethnocracy, and Democratic Governance**

Alan Dowty, "Is Israel Democratic? Substance and Semantics in the 'Ethnic Democracy' Debate," *Israel Studies* 4, no. 2 (Fall 1999), pgs. 1-15.

Dov Waxman and Ilan Peleg, "Neither Ethnocracy nor Bi-Nationalism: In Search of the Middle Ground," *Israel Studies Forum* 23, no. 2 (Winter 2008), pgs. 55-73.

David Lublin, et al., "Has the Voting Rights Act Outlived its Usefulness? In a Word, 'No,'" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (November 2009), pgs. 525-553.

Will Kymlicka, "The Rise and Fall of Multiculturalism? New Debates on Inclusion and Accommodation in Diverse Societies," *International Social Science Journal* 61, no. 199 (March 2010), pgs 97-112.

\*\*\*Paper Proposal Due\*\*\*

## **NO CLASS: April 15 - PESACH**

## **#7: 22 April - Religion & State: Tenuous Separation or Uncomfortable Fusion?**

Jonathan Fox & Jonathan Rynhold, "A Jewish and Democratic State? Comparing Government Involvement in Religion in Israel with other Democracies," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 9, no. 4 (2008), pgs. 507-531.

Penelope Sheets, et al., "God and Country: The Partisan Psychology of the Presidency, Religion, and Nation," *Political Psychology* 32, no. 3 (June 2011), pgs. 459-484.

Ahmet Kuru, "Passive and Assertive Secularism: Historical Conditions, Ideological Struggles, and State Policies toward Religion," *World Politics* 59, no. 4 (July 2007), pgs. 568-594.

## **#8: 29 April - Securing the Homeland? Counterterrorism in Israel & USA**

Arie Perliger, "How Democracies Respond to Terrorism: Regime Characteristics, Symbolic Power, and Counterterrorism," *Security Studies* 21, no. 3 (2012), pgs. 490-528.

Hillel Frisch, "Motivations or Capabilities? Israeli Counterterrorism against Palestinian Suicide Bombings and Violence," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no. 5 (2006), pgs. 843-869.

Benjamin H. Friedman, "Managing Fear: The Politics of Homeland Security," *Political Science Quarterly* 126, no. 1 (Spring 2011), pgs. 77-106.

## **NO CLASS: May 6 - YOM HA'ATZMAUT**

## **#9: 13 May: Exceptional Realism? American & Israeli Global Engagement**

Amichai Cohen & Stuart A. Cohen, "Israel and International Humanitarian Law: Between the Neo-Realism of State Security and the 'Soft Power' of Legal Acceptability," *Israel Studies* 16, no. 2 (Summer 2011), pgs. 1-23.

James M. Lindsay, "George W. Bush, Barack Obama and the future of US global leadership," *International Affairs* 87, no. 4 (July 2011), pgs. 765-779.

Robert Kagan, "Power and Weakness," *Policy Review* (June & July 2002), pgs. 3-28.

\*\*\*Paper Outline Due\*\*\*

### **#10: 20 May: Homeland & Manifest Destiny, Occupation & Empire**

Ran Aaronsohn, "Settlement in Eretz Israel - A Colonialist Enterprise? 'Critical' Scholarship and Historical Geography," *Israel Studies* 1, no. 2 (Fall 1996), pgs. 214-229.

Jonathan Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine: Power, Nationalism, and Democracy Promotion in U.S. Strategy," *International Security* 29, no. 4 (Spring 2005), pgs. 112-156.

David Edelstein, "Occupational Hazards: Why Military Occupations Succeed or Fail," *International Security* 29, no. 1 (Summer 2004), pgs. 49-91.

### **#11: 27 May: The Israel Lobby?**

John Mearsheimer & Stephen Walt, "The Israel Lobby," *London Review of Books* 28, no. 6 (23 March 2006), pgs. 3-12.

Robert C. Lieberman, "The 'Israel Lobby' and American Politics," *Perspectives on Politics* 7, no. 2 (June 2009), pgs. 235-257.

Christine Mahoney, "Lobbying Success in the United States and the European Union," *Journal of Public Policy* 27, no. 1 (May 2007), pgs. 35-56.

### **NO CLASS: June 3 - SHAVUOT**

### **#12: 10 June: The American-Jewish Relationship with Israel**

Peter Beinart, "The Failure of the American Jewish Establishment," *The New York Review of Books*, 10 June 2010, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2010/jun/10/failure-american-jewish-establishment/>.

Theodore Sasson, et al., "Trends in American Jewish Attachment to Israel: An Assessment of the 'Distancing' Hypothesis," *Contemporary Jewry* 30, no. 2-3 (October 2010), pgs. 297-319.

William Safran, "The Jewish Diaspora in a Comparative and Theoretical Perspective," *Israel Studies* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2005), pgs. 36-60.

**10 July: \*\*\*Seminar/Term Paper Due\*\*\***