Course name: Seminar on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
Course number: POLI 3003 AMJO
Programs offering course: Amman Middle East Studies Program
Language of instruction: English
U.S. Semester Credits: 3 hours
Contact Hours: 45 hours
Term: Spring 2020

Course Description

This course focuses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: it looks at the roots and history of the question contextualizing it into regional and international political developments. The course covers the most important events that characterized the conflict providing a solid historic background for analyzing contemporary developments. Moreover, the course analyzes the role of international and regional actors into the making of the conflict while also highlighting the impact of the Palestinian issue into the Arab world.

The first class provides the theoretical tools for a critical analysis the conflict, the different actors and their political role. This approach should help the student to challenge the traditional mainstream paradigms around the Arab-Israeli crisis. The following classes are also informed by this critical approach: the analysis of important events such as the Suez crisis, the 1967 and 1973 Wars, the emergence of Palestinian resistance, the impact of the Cold War and the role of international players, require the student to grasp the political dynamics behind the mere facts.

Regional events impacted by the Arab-Israeli conflict such as the Black September and the Lebanese civil war will be discussed in order to highlight the influence and relevance of the Palestinian question on regional politics.

Having built a historical background and critical understanding of the conflict, the last part of the course will focus on contemporary events and the emergence of new actors, new diplomatic strategies as well as the popular mobilization that is characterizing current political developments. Finally, possible solutions will also be discussed.

Learning Objectives

This course aims at providing students with a clear historical understanding of the conflicts, its roots and developments. It also aims at challenging mainstream discourse on the Arab-Israeli conundrum questioning hegemonic categories of analysis. By doing so, the course aims at providing students with the necessary background to think about politics in an informed, proper fashion.

In this course, we seek to develop a critical and inquisitive look: we aim at uncovering, grasping and criticizing the power relations that inform the politics of Israel-Palestine so to demystify the most commonplace assumptions, ideas and notions about the conflict.

This course will enable students to:
- understand the history behind present day events
- detect and understand power relations developing in the course of the conflict
- question categories and ways of thinking
- develop and apply critical analytical skills
- contextualize the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into broader regional and international dynamics.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Methods of Instruction

The class will be structured as follows:
- students’ presentations (15-20 minutes)
- a discussion/debate (1 hour)
- lecture from the instructor (20-30 minutes)
- final questions and debates (30-40 minutes)

Documentaries screenings and guest speakers’ participation will be organized

Assessment and Final Grade

List three or more methods of assessment in addition to attendance and participation, indicating the percent of final grade below totaling 100%:

1. In-class presentations: 10%
2. Weekly press review: 15%
3. Mid-term exam: 25%
4. Final exam: 35%
5. Attendance and class participation: 15%

Course Requirements

In-Class Presentations

The weighted value of the in-class presentations amounts to 10% of the final semester grade. Every week a student will present on the assigned readings. Each student will present throughout the course. The presentation will serve as an opening for the class discussion in which all students are expected to actively participate. The presenter should introduce the readings, providing a general overview and summary of the material analyzed; they should critical engage with the reading sharing their analysis and thought on them and finally suggest questions to open up the discussion. The presenter is expected to provide their classmates with a hand-out (max 2 pages), preferably organized in bullet points, in order to facilitate the understanding of the subject matter. The presentation should last 15-20 minutes in total, failure to meet the time limits will result in a lower grade.
Weekly press review

This assignment accounts for 15% of the final grade and it is ongoing (students should provide a press review every week and the grade will be based on the overall fulfillment of the assignment throughout the course). Every week each student should prepare a short review of current events in Palestine/Israel. Students are not expected to cover every single event in the Palestine/Israel but should show familiarity with and identify the political issues and developments happening in the region. In order to do so, students should check media sources (a list of sources is provided in this syllabus) and review the news providing a short list of the events (title and links in bullet points). Along with the short review of current events, students should add at least two questions related to the readings assigned for that week. This material will be used in class discussions. The review should be sent to the instructor every Sunday by 11:30 am.

Mid-Term Exam

The mid-term exam will consist of an in class test. The exam will be held during Week 6 and will last 2 hours. The weighted value amounts to 30% of the final semester grade. The exam consists of answering three questions. There will be a compulsory question for everyone while for the additional two answers, three questions will be provided for the students to choose among. All the questions will concern the topics discussed in class over the previous six weeks. The compulsory question amounts to 40% of the exam’s grade, the two additional answers are each worth 30% of the exam’s grade, irrespective of the chosen question. The students should refer to the material and readings discussed in class. All the answers should be long enough to adequately respond to the question. Consulting books, notes, readings or any other material is not allowed.

The essay questions will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Are you answering the question?
- Is there a clear thesis and argument?
- Is there evidence that you have done the readings?
- Is there evidence of critical, personal engagement with the topic at hand? Or are you just reiterating and summarizing the readings?
- How well are you mastering the topics we dealt with in class?
- Is the language used appropriate?

You must be in class the day of the exam. There can be no make-up exams unless in exceptional cases with the authorization of CIEE director.

Final exam

The final exam consists on a 3,000-word essay and it is to be submitted Week 15. The weighted value amounts to 40% of the final semester grade. The students will be provided with two titles for the final paper in week 10 and they should choose one of the provided topics for their essay. A minimum of ten (10) total sources is required. The student should refer to the material and readings discussed in class, but should also integrate the paper with at least five (5) sources outside the assigned readings. Papers more than 10% longer/shorter than the word limit (3,300-2,700 words) will be penalized 2
points per each 100 words above/below the parameter. The paper will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Are you focusing on the topic required by the title you choose?
- Is there a clear thesis and argument?
- Is there a clear structure?
- Is there evidence of critical, personal engagement with the topic at hand? Or are you just reiterating and summarizing the readings?
- How well are you mastering the topics we dealt with in class?
- Is the language used appropriate?

Details on the format and style for the paper will be provided by the instructor.

*Please note that late submission of research papers will result in a 2 points deduction for each day they are late.*

**Attendance and Class Participation**

1. As this class is dependent on in-class activities, discussions, and group exchanges, your attendance is mandatory, necessary, and essential to your success. Therefore, you are expected to attend and participate in every class session. If a true calamity should arise and you must miss class, it is your responsibility to contact us to determine what you have missed. Absences are excused when the student submit the CIEE absence-form stamped and signed by CIEE director. Only one unexcused absence is allowed, additional absences will result in a reduction of the final grade (5 point for each class missed without providing any reason).

   *Due to the participatory nature of the course, your participation will be valued.*

   In particular, not only the “quantity” of your engagement but also its “quality” will be evaluated. However, the participation score will also take into account the personal and direct engagement of the student with the instructor: class discussions are informal and friendly so that everyone can and should feel free to express his/her opinion, comment and thought freely and as often as wanted. Yet, if any of the student might face difficulty in in-class exchanges can still email their comments to me or ask for an appointment. The evaluation of participation will take it into consideration in order to favour the ice-breaking of the student and their more consistent engagement during class discussion. Please remember that this kind of “private exchanges” is exceptional, only in case of strong inability to participate in class. The assessment of participation will also take into account students’ ability to listen to their classmates, allow them to freely express their opinion without interrupting, engage with them politely, criticizing or supporting their arguments.

2. Students are requested to maintain at all times a respectful and proper attitude towards their peers and the instructor. This includes also being in class on time and avoid premature preparation when about to leave class. Being late frequently is not accepted, as it is disruptive behaviour.

3. Cell phones must be turned off.
4. In order to keep abreast of developments, everyone (not just the presenter of the day) is thus required to read a daily newspaper such as The New York Times, The Guardian, The Independent, or The Washington Post. If you can read Arabic, Hebrew, Persian or Turkish, then feel free to follow a newspaper of your choice in that language as well (for a list of Middle Eastern newspapers, visit www.onlinenewspapers.com; you are strongly advised to look at it). You are encouraged to read from sources you may be less familiar with: prominent news sites such as www.aljazeera.com, http://english.alarabiya.net, www.jadaliyya.com are published in English. Here are a few more examples of sources for you to look up:

BBC, www.bbc.co.uk
Haaretz (Israel, newspaper), www.haaretzdaily.com
The Guardian https://www.theguardian.com/international
The Independent https://www.independent.co.uk/
Financial Times, www.ft.com
The Times, www.timesonline.co.uk
The Economist, www.economist.com
Y-Net—Yediot Ahranot (Israel, newspaper),
(http://www.ynetnews.com/home/0,7340,L-3083,00.html
The Jerusalem Post (Israel, newspaper), www.jpost.com
The Forward (Jewish daily newspaper), www.forward.com
Electronic Intifada (U.S.-based) www.electronicintifada.net
The Israel Policy Forum (U.S.-based), www.israelpolicyforum.org
The Alternative Information Center (Israeli-Palestinian news site)
www.alternativenews.org
Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre (Palestinian research institute),
www.jmcc.org
Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (Palestinian research institute),
www.pcpsr.org
+972 Independent reporting and commentary from Israel and Palestine,
http://972mag.com/
Middle East Research and Information Project, http://www.merip.org/
Foreign Policy Magazine’s Middle East Channel, http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/
Jadaliyya (magazine), http://www.jadaliyya.com/
Al-Jazeera (Arab world, news site), http://english.aljazeera.net
al-Ahram Weekly (Egypt, newspaper), http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/index.htm
Jordan Times (Jordan, newspaper), http://www.jordantimes.com/
Daily Star (Lebanon, newspaper), www.dailystar.com.lb
Now Lebanon (Lebanon, news site), http://www.nowlebanon.com/Default.aspx
Middle East Times (Egypt, newspaper), www.metimes.com

5. Students failing to show up for their scheduled presentation without justification or previous notice will receive an automatic F.

6. Submitting all papers is a minimum requirement, but not a guarantee, for passing this course. Late submissions of final exams will lose 2 points of the final grade per
calendar day late and will not be accepted a week after the final submission date (unless in exceptional cases approved by CIEE administration).

7. Plagiarism—the unacknowledged use of another’s words, form, or ideas—will result in failure of the course. If you are unsure of how to acknowledge outside material, speak with me immediately.

8. During the in-class examinations (midterm and final exam), no books, notes, articles, or any kind of electronic device are allowed. Copying and cheating will result in an automatic F.

9. You can reach me easily via emails; however, do not expect I will be reading and answering your emails during weekend. I am more than happy to meet with you outside class to discuss whatever issue or problem you might have with the class. Do not hesitate contacting me.

Weekly Schedule

**Week 1**
**Orientation Week**
Introduction to class
What do we know about the Palestinian question? Introductive questionnaire.

**Week 2**
FRAMING THE CONFLICT: UNDERSTANDING ORIENTALISM
This class will provide the theoretical framework for approaching the study of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

-Said, *Orientalism* pp.1-9;
-Salaita, Steven George, Beyond Orientalism and Islamophobia: 9/11, Anti-Arab Racism, and the Mythos of National Pride

**Week 3**
THE ROOTS OF THE CONFLICT: ANTI-SEMITISM, NATIONALISM, IMPERIALISM AND COLONIALISM IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY
This class focuses on the role of international actors in the making of the Arab region and its impact on Palestine, the emergence of Zionism and its implications for the region.
- Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*. P 239-261
-Mansour, "The Arab Worker under the Palestine Mandate (1937)." 190-205.
-Balfour Declaration (1917)  
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/balfour.asp
-The Husayn-McMahon Correspondence, 128-131.
-Herzl, "Local Groups", “Society of Jews and Jewish State” and “Conclusion” (Dover 1988).  
http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Zionism/herzl2.html
- Jabotinsky, “We and the Arabs”,  
http://www.danielpipes.org/3510/the-iron-wall-we-and-the-arabs

Suggested:

King Abdullah: “As the Arabs See the Jews, 1947”,  
http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/kabd_eng.html

We will watch a documentary: Promises and Betrayal

**Week 4**

**TRIUMPH AND CATASTROPHE: THE CREATION OF ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIAN NAKBA**
This class discusses the 1948 war, the establishment of Israel and its enduring consequences.

- Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*. P 261-271
-Pappe, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*
-Badil "Palestinian refugees in exile. Country Profile" p. 3-8; 19-37

**Week 5**

**THE 1950S AND 1960S, REGIONAL TRANSFORMATIONS, WARS AND THE EMERGENCE OF PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE**
This class examines the events that followed the partition of Palestine. In particular it investigates how Palestinian organized their movement and the interconnection with the regional development from 1948 to the early 70s
- Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*. 323-355
- Khalaf Salah (Abu Iyad) *My Home My Land* 29-40
- Habash, George. *al-Thawriyūn La Yamūtūn Abadan*. 1-4
- Palestine Research Center *Aims of the Palestinian Resistance Movement with regard to the Jews*
- Hamid Rashid “What is the PLO?”
- Reports on the Battle of Karameh. Al-Ahram (Cairo), 22 March 1968. Translated by The Palestinian Revolution, 2016.1

**Week 6**

MID-TERM EXAM

**Week 7**

SPRING BREAK

**Week 8**

PALESTINIANS IN THE REGIONAL CONTEXT: THE 1970s

This class focuses on the political transformation the PLO underwent during the 70s and it analyses its role in regional developments. In particular, it looks at the Black September events, the 1973 war and its political meaning for PLO strategies and the Lebanese Civil War.

- Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*. 356-389

Suggested:
- Kishli, Mohammad. "Lebanon’s Crisis: Lebanese First and
Foremost, Before Becoming a Crisis in Lebanese-Palestinian Relations”. Shu’un Filastiniya (Beirut), 1975. Translated by The Palestinian Revolution, 2016.

**Week 9**

UPRISINGS AND OCCUPATIONS: FROM THE 80s TO THE GULF WAR
In this class we will examine the historical developments throughout the 80s up to the Gulf War in 1991. We will discuss the economic impact on Palestinian society and will analyse the first intifada and the emergence of Hamas.

- Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East* 473-499
- Tamari "The Palestinian Movement in Transition: Historical Reversals and the Uprising” pp. 57-70
- Rouhana “The Intifada and the Palestinians of Israel: Resurrecting the Green Line” pp. 58-75
- Roy, Ch. 17 “Hamas and the Transformation(s) of Political Islam in Palestine” 293-308

**Week 10**

THE ILLUSION OF PEACE
This class looks at the regional and international political dynamics that led to the Oslo accords. It will analyse the peace process and critically assess it.

- Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East* 499-526
- Massad, Oslo and the end of Palestinian independence.
- Roy, “De-Development Revisited: Palestinian Economy and Society since Oslo"
- Edward Said, “The Morning After”,
  [http://www.lrb.co.uk/v15/n20/edward-said/the-morning-after](http://www.lrb.co.uk/v15/n20/edward-said/the-morning-after)

**Week 11**

ISRAELI SOCIETY AND POLITICAL CONTRADICTIONS
This class examines Israel’s internal politics, the impact of the conflict on the society and its contradictions.
- The Economist, ‘A Nation of Tribes’,
  [http://www.economist.com/node/160840](http://www.economist.com/node/160840)
  doi:10.1080/13531040801902708.
- Ella Shohat “Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of
Week 12

ISRAELI SOCIETY, POLITICS AND THE PALESTINIANS
This class examines Israel's internal politics, the impact of the conflict on the society and its contradictions.

-Oren Yiftachel 'Ethnocracy': The Politics of Judaizing Israel/Palestine pp 1-20
Nuri Pelit on Palestinians in Israeli Textbooks:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWKPRC_oSg
Ronald Krebs, “Israel’s bunker mentality”,
http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136593/ronald-r-krebs/israels-bunker-mentality
-The Nation State Law Paves the Way for a New Nakba

Week 13

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY
This class investigates Israeli relations with international powers

- Quandt Intro 1-23
- John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, “The Israeli Lobby and US Foreign Policy,”
- Michael Massing, “The Storm over the Israel Lobby”
- More "Killing with kindness: funding the demise of a Palestinian state" pp 981-999

-Watch the documentary Donor Opium

Readings on current reactions to the US declaration of Jerusalem as capital of Israel TBA
Week 14

OCCUPATION AND RESISTANCE AT THE TIME OF NEOLIBERALISM:
This class examines the recent developments focusing on the neoliberal character of the occupation.

- Farsakh, “Independence, Cantons or Bantustans: Whither the Palestinian State?” p 1-16
- Pappe “The Killing Field of Gaza” 189-210
- Ytfachel “Neither Two States Nor One: The Disengagement and ‘Creeping Apartheid’” p 1-5
- Dana “Corruption in Palestine: A Self-Enforcing System”

Week 15

CURRENT STRATEGIES AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES
This class looks at the current strategies and future perspective of peace from both Palestinian and Israeli sides.

- Henriette Chacar ‘A new activism, a new politics, a new generation of Palestinians in Israel’
- Dimi Reider ‘Jewish nationalism and the new Palestinian politics in Israel’

Readings on current developments TBA

SUBMISSION FINAL EXAM

Readings
- Anne More “Killing with kindness: funding the demise of a Palestinian state” International Affairs, 2005
- Badil “Palestinian refugees in exile. Country Profile” p. 3-8; 14-43
- Balfour Declaration (1917) http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/balfour.asp
- Dimi Reider ‘Jewish nationalism and the new Palestinian politics in Israel’ +972 17 March 2015
- Farsakh, “Independence, Cantons or Bantustans: Whither the Palestinian State?” p 1-16
- Hamid Rashid “What is the PLO?”*90-109
- Henriette Chacar 'A new activism, a new politics, a new generation of Palestinians in Israel' +972 11 March 2015
  http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Zionism/herzl2.html
  http://ksgnotes1.harvard.edu/Research/wpapers.nsf/rwp/RWP06-011
- Khalaf Salah (Abu Iyad) My Home My Land 29-40
- Nadim Rouhana “The Intifada and the Palestinians of Israel: Resurrecting the Green Line” Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Spring, 1990), pp. 58-75
- Naomi Klein “Loosing the Peace Incentive: Israel as Warning” in The Shock Doctrine p 423-443
- Nuri Pelit on Palestinians in Israeli Textbooks: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWKPRC-_oSg
- Oren Ytfachel “Neither Two States Nor One:The Disengagement and “Creeping Apartheid” in Israel/Palestine” in The Arab World Geographer/Le Géographe du monde arabe 8, no 3 (2005) p 1-5
- Salaita, Steven George, Beyond Orientalism and Islamophobia: 9/11, Anti-Arab Racism, and the Mythos of National Pride
- Sara Roy, Ch. 17 “Hamas and the Transformation(s) of Political Islam in Palestine” 293-308