CIEE in Amman, Jordan

Course name: Seminar on Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
Course number: POLI 3003 AMJO
Programs offering course: Middle East Studies
Language of instruction: English
U.S. Semester Credits: 3
Contact Hours: 45
Term: Spring 2019

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 critically analyze 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.

Having built a historical background and critical understanding of the conflict, the last part of the course will focus on contemporary developments and aims also at discussing possible solutions.

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. Two in-class presentations: 10%
2. Mid-term exam: 30%
3. Final exam: 40%
4. Attendance and class participation: 20%

**Course Requirements**

**In-Class Presentations**

The weighted value of the in-class presentations amounts to 10% of the final semester grade. Every week two students will present on the assigned readings. Each student will present twice throughout the course (once before mid-term and once after it). The presentation will serve as an opening for the class discussion in which all students are expected to actively participate. The presenters 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 presenters are 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.

**Mid-Term Exam**
The mid-term exam will consist of an in-class test. The exam will be held during Week 6 (05 March) 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.

Final exam

The final exam consists on a 3,000-word essay and it is to be submitted Week 15 (07 May). 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 (3,150-4,400 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).

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 (it would be preferable a few minutes before class start) and avoid premature preparation when about to leave class. Being late frequently is not accepted, as it is disruptive behavior.

3. No electronic devices of any kind (laptops, tablets and the likes) are allowed in class. Cell phones, in particular, must be turned off. Students failing to comply with these rules may be required to leave the classroom.

4. Due to the participatory nature of the course, your participation will be valued. Generally your engagement will be assessed on a 0-4 scale for participation. The scores will breakdown as follows: 0-not in attendance, 1-late and/or present without active participation, 2-active, but unprepared, 3-nearly full participation throughout the class, 4-consistent positive participation in class activities and discussions. As you can see, 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 his/her 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 his/her 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.
5. 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 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 your to look up:

BBC, www.bbc.co.uk
Financial Times, www.ft.com
The Times, www.timesonline.co.uk
The Economist, www.economist.com
Haaretz (Israel, newspaper), www.haaretzdaily.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 (ezine), 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

6. Students failing to show up for their scheduled presentation will receive an automatic F.

7. 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).

8. 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.

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

10. You can reach me easily via emails; however, do not expect I will be reading and answering your emails after 7pm or before 8am and 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

**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; 285; 306-329


**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](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).  

- Jabotinsky, “We and the Arabs”,  

*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* pp. 10-37; 235-257

- Badil “Palestinian refugees in exile. Country Profile” p. 3-8; 19-37

**Week 5**

**THE AFTERMATH OF THE NAKBA: REGIONAL WARS AND THE EMERGENCE OF PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE**

This class examines the events that followed the partition of Palestine: the Suez Crisis, the 1967 War and the emergence of Palestinian resistance. It investigates how Palestinian organized their movement and the interconnection with the regional development from 1948 to the 70s

- Berry and Greg Philo, 41-43

- Cleveland 345-367

- Baumgarten, Helga. 25-48

- Hamid 90-109
Week 6

MID-TERM EXAM

Week 7

SPRING BREAK

Week 8

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 its consequences.

-Cleveland 451-473

-Hilal Jamil "PLO Institutions the challenges ahead" 46-60


Week 9

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.

- Charles Smith, 2012, Chap 10 433-464


-Massad, Oslo and the end of Palestinian independence.

-Roy, De-Development Revisited: Palestinian Economy and Society since Oslo
Week 10

THE PALESTINIAN SOCIETY: NEW ACTORS AND STRATEGIES
This class focuses on the Palestinian movement and how it developed over the years. It mainly focuses on the emergence of new Islamic movements (Hamas) and it investigates the crisis of the PLO also in relation to the establishment of the PA.

- Hroub, Hamas (10 p)
- Roy, Ch. 17 “Hamas and the Transformation(s) of Political Islam in Palestine” 293-308
- Luigi Achilli “On Martyrdom”
- Dana “The Structural Transformation of Palestinian Civil Society: Key Paradigm Shifts"
- Dana “Corruption in Palestine: A Self-Enforcing System”
- Mjriam Abu Samra “The Road to Oslo and its reverse”

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.

- Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs “The political structure of Israel”
- BBC Guide to Israel’s Political Parties
- Ella Shohat “Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of Its Jewish Victims” pp. 1-35

Week 12
**ISRAELI DEMOGRAPHIC ISSUE: THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CITIZENS**
This class focuses on the democratic nature of the Israeli state and the condition of the Palestinian-Israeli citizens.

- Oren Yiftachel ‘Ethnocracy’: The Politics of Judaizing Israel/Palestine pp 1-20


- Azmi Bishara, Sara Scalenghe, Steve Rothman and Joel Beinin On Palestinians in the Israeli Knesset: Interview with Azmi Bishara

- Article on the status of Jerusalem to be assigned

**GUEST SPEAKER: DIRECTOR OF LAW DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY OF AL-QUDS MUNIR NUSAIBAH ON SKYPE (TO BE CONFIRMED)**

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**Week 13**

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

- John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, “The Israeli Lobby and US Foreign Policy,”

- Michael Massing, “The Storm over the Israel Lobby”


- Naomi Klein Loosing the Peace Incentive: Israel as Warning p 423-443

- More “Killing with kindness: funding the demise of a Palestinian state” pp 981-999

*We will watch the documentary Donor Opium*

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**Week 14**

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

-Rubin “Israel New Strategy”

-Shlaim “How Israel brought Gaza to the brink of humanitarian catastrophe” *The Guardian* 2009

-Mouin Rabbani “Israel mows the lawn”

- Elgindy “Palestine Goes to the UN: Understanding the New Statehood Strategy”

-Palestinian Youth Movement: Statehood Bid Harmful to Struggle

-Alaa Tartir, Belal Shobaki, Jamal Juma', Jamil Hilal, Jaber Suleiman, Khalil Shaheen, Mjriam Abu Samra, Nijmeh Ali “Palestinian Youth Revolts: Any Role for Political Parties?”

-Netanyahu to AIPAC: Brussels Attacks and Terror in Israel Part of the Same Assault.

- McMahon, “The Boycott, Divestment, sanctions campaign: contradictions and challenges,”

- Dershowitz, “10 reasons why BDS is immoral and hinders peace,”


**Week 15**

**WHAT SOLUTION? THE ONE STATE-TWO STATE DEBATE SUBMISSION FOR FINAL EXAM**

-Sari Hanafi, [Opening the Debate on the Right of Return](#)

-Raef Zreik, [Palestine, Apartheid, and the Rights Discourse](#)

-David Lloyd (2012) Settler Colonialism and the State of Exception

-Bennett, Naftali “For Israel, Two-State Is No Solution”
Readings

A. Dershowitz, “10 reasons why BDS is immoral and hinders peace,” CIJA (http://www.cija.ca/bds/ten-reasons-why-bds-is-immoral-and-hinders-peace/)


Anne More “Killing with kindness: funding the demise of a Palestinian state” International Affairs, 2005

Avi Shlaim “How Israel brought Gaza to the brink of humanitarian catastrophe” The Guardian 2009


Badil “Palestinian refugees in exile. Country Profile” p. 3-8; 14-43

Balfour Declaration (1917) http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/balfour.asp


David Lloyd (2012) Settler Colonialism and the State of Exception: The Example of Palestine/Israel, Settler Colonial Studies, 2:1, 59-80,


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)


Hamid Rashid “What is the PLO?” 90-109


Hilal Jamil “PLO Institutions the challenges ahead” 46-60


http://ksgnotes1.harvard.edu/Research/wpaper.nsf/rwp/RWP06-011


Leila Farsakh, “Independence, Cantons or Bantustans: Whither the Palestinian State?” 59 Middle East J. (No. 2, Spring 2003)


Luigi Achilli On Martyrdom Mphil essay SOAS 2008 Unpublished pp 1-4


Mouin Rabbani “Israel mows the lawn” http://www.lrb.co.uk/v36/n15/mouin-rabbani/israel-mows-the-lawn

Naomi Klein “Loosing the Peace Incentive: Israel as Warning” in The Shock Doctrine p 423-443


Palestinian Youth Movement: Statehood Bid Harmful to Struggle http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/760


Sara Roy, Ch. 17 “Hamas and the Transformation(s) of Political Islam in Palestine” 293-308


Sari Hanafi, *Opening the Debate on the Right of Return*, Middle East Report No. 222 (Spring 2007) p. 2-7


Tariq Dana (2015): The Structural Transformation of Palestinian Civil Society: Key Paradigm Shifts, *Middle East Critique*  

