The common denominator of many recent studies on citizenship is that immigration and naturalization processes are articulated in relation to the conception of citizenship and nationhood in any particular country. That is, the regulations responsible for the entrance into and inclusion of new members in the national community are dependent on the understanding of who in the first place should belong to the national "we" and who should not. Therefore, by looking at the Israeli citizenship laws – the Nationality Law and the Law of Return – and at the different interpretations, amendments and implementations of these laws, we will be able to better understand modern Israel. This courseprovides an overview of modern Israeli democracy, society and politics.

Course evaluation:

This class is designed as a seminar. Therefore class time is devoted to discussion between and among students and the instructor, as well as lectures. It is essential that seminar participants come to class prepared to discuss the reading material for that day’s class. Grades are based on daily participation, three book reviews, and a final paper. The composition of final grades and grading scale are as follows:
Class Participation (15%): Class attendance will not be taken. However, class participation is part of the final grade and you will be expected to include issues discussed during class in the final essay.

Response paper (15%): Each week the students prepare (in advance to class) a short response to the assigned reading (1-2 pages). The response paper should show that the student is able to critically analyze the work instead of just reading it and composing a restatement or summary.

Book Review (10%): Students will be required to write a critical review of literature. The literature review has to comment on one book which is NOT from the required reading list. The review should be 3-4 pages long. The review should take a form similar to that found in academic journals. For a good example, browse an issue of Contemporary Sociology or the American Journal of Sociology (review sections are at the end). Reviews include both a summary of a book’s central argument and approach, and a discussion of the book’s contributions and shortcomings. A list of suggested books for review is presented at end of this syllabus.

Midterm assignment – short presentation (10%): - Each student will be required to present his or her research project in class. The presentation should be 15 minutes long.

Final essay (50%): One 15-20 page long essay. The essay should focus on a subject discussed in the course and that is of particular interest to the student. The essay could be theoretical or practical; that is, it could highlight a theoretical debate or a specific historical event. The student should introduce new literature on the subject, and combine at least two sub-topics discussed during the course.

Course Schedule & Assigned Readings:
Listed below are the required texts and schedule for the course. Additional articles and topics may be added during the course. The course discuss different elements of the Israeli citizenship laws: The Law of Return and the Israel Citizenship Law; Jewish Refugees; Who is a Jew; Section 7A; Loss of citizenship; Arab citizens and the Marriage Amendments; and Foreign Workers and Asylum seekers.

Suggested books:

Week 1 (6/3/2014): Israel - Jewish and Democratic?


Research session: Social Science and empirical data

Week 2 (20/3/2014): The law of Return and the Israel Citizenship Law


Research session: Evaluation of laws

Week 3 (27/3/2014): The Formation of Jewish Society in Palestine and Israel


Research session: History and Sociology


Movie: SallahShabati (1964)

Week 5 (24/4/2014): Nation Building and State Formation


Research session: Archival work

Week 6 (1/5/2014): Holocaust Survivors and the Next Generations


Research session: Students Presentations
Week 7 (8/5/2014): Who is a Jew?


Research session: Students Presentations

Week 8 (15/5/2014): Israeli Arabs


Research session: Students Presentations

Week 9 (22/5/2014): Immigration from the Soviet Union and its successor states


Research session: Writing a Paper
Week 10 (29/5/2014): Gender relations


Research session: Ethics and Politics

Week 11 (5/6/2014): National Security and Democracy


Week 12 (12/6/2014): Migrant Workers and Refugees


Tour: Holot Camp

Week 13 (18/6/2014): Israeli society since Oslo


Introduction and chapter 1

Suggested books for review:


