The Development of Israel's Foreign Policy in a Changing World

The Ben Gurion University Campus

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Course Description:
This course will focus on Israel's relations with its Arab neighbors and the international community since the outbreak of the War of 1948. Within this context it will examine the following main subjects: The War of 1948 and its consequences; the conflicting interpretations of the Armistice Agreements; the "Jerusalem Question"; Arab Infiltrations and Israeli Retaliation Policy; peace initiatives 1949-1956 (The Protocol of Lausanne, The Syrian Peace initiative. The Alpha Plan); the Gaza Raid – background and implications; the Kinneret Raid – background and implications; the road to the Sinai War; the formulation of Israel' alliance with France; Soviet politics in the Middle East; the Sinai War and its consequences; the divisions with the Arab world `president Nasser vision of the Arab-Israeli conflict; the road to the Six Day War; the build-up of Israeli nuclear option.

Course Objectives:
The basic assumption underlying the cause is that an understanding of the present and future events in the middle east can only be achieved through an intensive knowledge of past events The aim of this course is to provide the student with a wide knowledge of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the development of Israel's foreign policy since the establishment of Israel as an independent state. The course will provide the students with various, sometimes conflicting interpretations and views of major political and security events in the Middle East during this period of time.
Course Structure:

Each course meeting will include a lecture, and a discussion based on readings which would be supplied to the students in advance.

Total # of Credits: 4 (without internship).

Teaching Method:
The course will be conducted through a combination of formal lectures and class discussion. The lectures will be based on weekly reading assignments, mostly based on the course textbook. In addition students would be required to write a research paper on a subject which would be agreed upon between the students and the lecturer. During the second semester, the students would have to present their research to the class.

Course Requirements

Compulsory attendance  YES

Pre-requisites: NONE

Structure of Final Course Grad

| 1. Participation         | 20%   |
| 2. Seminar Research Paper| 60%   |
| 3. Final Exam            | 20%   | 100% |

Note:
- Work handed in late, will not be graded!
- Penalties and course policies should be clearly articulated (i.e. students will have their final grade lowered an entire grade level if they miss more than 2 class meetings unexcused)
Course Schedule Layout:

* Note – readings are all based on course text book. Additional – recommended readings will be assigned throughout the course. One of the assignments will be based on two articles from the additional reading list.

**Week 1-2 [September 22th, October 6th]**

The War of 1948 – Background and Consequences
b. The struggle of the Jewish people for independence.
c. The road to the partition resolution – Israel, the Arab world and the great powers.
d. The debates within the Israeli leadership regarding the declaration of independence.
e. The armistice agreements – the Israeli, Arab and international interpretations.

**Readings:** Leslie Stein, The Making of Modern Israel, pp. 19-68.

**Week 3-4 [, 27th]**

Arab infiltration, Israeli retaliation
a. Sources of the Arab infiltration into Israel in the early 50's.
b. the rational behind Israeli’s retaliation policy
c. the position of the great powers to the retaliation policy
d. the debates within the Israeli leadership –Ben Gurion and Sharett regarding the retaliation policy
e. Kibia, the Gaza operation and the Kinneret operation – positive and negative reactions.
f. The struggle within the united nations on the legitimacy of the retaliation policy.


**Week 5 : November 3th**

The Jerusalem question
a. The definition of Jerusalem as "Corpus Separatism” in the Partition Resolution.
b. The division of Jerusalem between Israel and Jordan following the war of 1948.
c. The United Nations resolution on Jerusalem as an international city.
d. Ben Gurion's decision to transfer the Knesset and the Government offices to Jerusalem.
The debates within the Israeli leadership and the dialogue with the great powers regarding the future status of Jerusalem.

**Readings:** Zaki Shalom, David Ben-Gurion, Israel and the Arab World, pp.65-75.

**Week 6-7 [November 10th ; 17th]**

The peace initiatives between 1949-1956

a. Israel's foreign policy between east and west.
b. The Korean war – and Israel's identification with the west
c. The Lausanne conference
d. The Hosni Zaim peace initiative
e. The United States Britain and the Alfa plan.

**Readings:** Zaki Shalom, David Ben-Gurion, Israel and the Arab World, pp.76-114, 176-191.

**Week 8-9 [November 24th, December 1th]**

The road to the Sinai war

a. The formulation of the alliance with France
b. The end of the relation phenomenon.
c. Israel's territorial aspirations – had Israel really missed territorial opportunities in the 1948 war.
d. The Israeli, British and French collaboration towards the Sinai war


**Week 10-11-12 [December 8th, 15th]**

The build up of Israel's nuclear option

a. the rational of the nuclear option
b. The internal opposition to the option.
c. The reaction of the international community to the exposure of the Dimona reactor
d. Ben Gurion and President Kennedy dialogue on Israel's nuclear option.
e. Prime minister levy Eshkol and President Johnson dialogue on Israel's nuclear option.
f. Prime Minister Golda Meir and president Nixon strategic understandings.

Readings: Zaki Shalom, Israel's Nuclear Option, pp. 1-120.

Week 13

The road to the six day war

a. the struggle between Israel and Syria on the water projects
b. Israel Jordan secret alliance.
c. The entrance of massive Egyptian troops into Sinai
d. The Abba Eban mission to France, Britain and the United States.
e. The outbreak of the war and its consequences.


Course Textbook


Additional recommended Bibliography


United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 – bring the hardcopies of this document to class on October 16th