

## The Ultraorthodox in Israeli Society: Differentiation vs. Integration Spring 2021

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Course Credits: 6 TAU Semester Credits

### **Course Description and Objectives**

The course is designed to introduce students to Israel's fastest-growing demographic group: The Ultra-Orthodox community ("Haredim"). Estimated at 12% of Israel's population, forecasts suggest an incremental growth of up to 25% of Israel's population by 2048. The Haredi community of today is transitioning from a small and marginal minority, to a substantial minority and thus, the future of the Jewish state is closely tied to the future of this sector. The course will familiarize the student with the characteristics of the Haredi society and the various streams within this community. The right of minorities to protect their culture and the tension it creates in Israel as a liberal and democratic state will be examined. Many Israeli Haredim, with government encouragement, are undergoing a process of "Israelization", characterized by integration without assimilation. The course will address various dimensions of Haredi integration into the society at large, which exists simultaneously with: isolationism, criticism, and strong verbal protest from both inside the community and the outside.

The course will include class discussions, presentations and movies relevant to the studied topics. In addition, there will be a tour of a Haredi neighborhood. The tour will give a glimpse into the rich cultural and religious identity of the Ultra-Orthodox Jews living in Israel.

The course integrates social involvement, which includes interpersonal encounters between students and young Haredi people, with the aim of getting to know each other and practice speaking in English.

The meetings will be coordinated with the students/young Haredi people, taking 2 hours a week. Some of the meetings can be held over Skype/zoom; however, it is a requirement to have at least one frontal meeting a week of at least 60 minutes. Moreover, preparation for the meetings is required. Throughout the course, support materials will be given for the preparation of the meetings.

### **Grade Composition:**

- 50% Final Paper – written assignment that includes theoretical perspectives on current issues relevant to the Haredi population in Israel (minimum 8-10 pages).
- 15% Presentation - presentation (in pairs) of an article from the reading list.
- 20% Service Learning Component – Evaluation of seriousness and commitment to service learning component of the course.
- 15% Attendance - class attendance and full service learning participation is mandatory as is participation in the excursion (tour of Haredi neighborhood).



**Course Schedule and Reading Assignments:**

Week No.	Topic	Reading demand	Social involvement
Week 1 (class1+2) 8.3.21	<b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Presentation of the course content and objectives.</li> <li>•General background on Haredi society: its place in the context of Israeli society and central characteristics.</li> </ul>	Stern, (2018). <i>Who Are The Ultra-Orthodox Jews Of Israel?</i> Cahaner, Malach & Choshen, (2019). <i>Statistical Report on Ultra-Orthodox Society in Israel 2017</i> . MJL (2019). <i>The Jewish Denominations</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed description of the social involvement required during the course, its goals and the commitments involved.</li> <li>• Providing a general background of the Haredi students and preparation for the first meeting with them.</li> <li>• Receiving structured questionnaire for personal introduction, a kit, and discussing how to use this material.</li> </ul>
Week 2 (class 3+4) 15.3.21	<b>Heterogeneity across the many streams of Haredi society.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Between Hasidim and Lithuanians ("Yeshivish") - differences and similarities.</li> <li>•Major groups in Haredi society: "Haedah Ha'haredit", Chabad, Gur Hasidism, "Baali T'shuva", and "Sephardim".</li> </ul>	Brown, (2000). <i>Orthodox Judaism</i> . Heilman, (1992). <i>Defenders of the Faith</i> . Leon (2016). <i>The ethnic structuring of "Sephardim" in Haredi society in Israel</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First meeting with Haredi students in class: assignment of 1 to 1 buddies between Haredi and course participants.</li> <li>• Games of Introduction. Since the various Haredi streams were mentioned in the first part of the class, each Haredi student will be asked to present the stream or group to which s/he belongs and describe its general characteristics.</li> <li>• Instructions for the first personal meeting with the Haredi students outside the classroom framework.</li> </ul>
Week 3 (class 5+6) 22.3.21	The Haredi "ghetto" - walls and cracks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Separating from society at large: physical, social, and cultural insulations.</li> <li>•Cracks in the "wall": Online media and its implications for Haredi society.</li> <li>•From God's army to the people's army: On the issue of enlisting</li> </ul>	Deutsch, (2009). <i>The Forbidden Fork, the Cell Phone Holocaust, and Other Haredi Encounters with Technology</i> . Hakak, (2016). <i>Haredi masculinities between the yeshiva, the army, work and politics</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students give feedback from first personal meeting with the Haredi students.</li> <li>• Discussion of difficulties, dilemmas and various issues that arose during that meeting.</li> <li>• Continuing the theme from the first part of the lesson, course participants will prepare for the next meeting with the Haredi students where they will discuss the various media information channels Haredi use, and read together news and current events in English, from the following link:</li> </ul>



	<p>ultra-Orthodox men to the IDF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study: the penetration of a researcher into the closed world of women from extreme Hasidic sects in Mea She'arim.</li> </ul>	<p>Sivan, (1995). <i>The Enclave Culture</i>.</p>	<p><a href="https://sites.google.com/site/israelfreenglish/reading">https://sites.google.com/site/israelfreenglish/reading</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of the meanings of the Passover holiday that is upcoming and the family aspects surrounding this festival among the Haredi population. Course instructor will talk about the Passover Haggadah (story)</li> </ul>
<p>Week 4 (class 7+8) 5.4.21</p>	<p><b>Body and sexuality in Haredi society.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The discourse on body and sexuality.</li> <li>• The ideal of modesty - meanings and practices.</li> <li>• "Grace is deceitful and beauty is vain" - indeed?</li> </ul>	<p>Hurwitz, (2017). These orthodox designers are making frum fashionable.</p> <p>Zalcborg, (2007). Grace is Deceitful and Beauty is Vain': How Hasidic Women Cope with the Requirement of Shaving One's Head.</p> <p>Zalcborg &amp; Zalcborg (2012). Body and Sexuality Constructs among Youth of the Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course participants give feedback from their last meeting with the Haredi students, and share experiences and difficulties.</li> <li>• An issue that has been taboo for years in Haredi society is the Holocaust. Since Holocaust Remembrance Day is upcoming this week, course instructor will discuss Holocaust Day in the context of Haredi society, the reasons for silencing the topic, and will provide course participants with materials on Holocaust Day that they will read in the next meeting with the Haredi students.</li> </ul>
<p>Week 5 (class 9+10) 12.4.21</p>	<p><b>"Woman of Valor"? - Women in Haredi society.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exclusion of women.</li> <li>• Traditional gender roles vs following a career.</li> <li>• Women as agents of change in Haredi society.</li> </ul>	<p>Neria-Ben Shahar, (2009). The Learners' Society.</p> <p>Zalcborg (2011). Shouldering the burden of the redemption: How the "fashion" of wearing capes developed in ultra-Orthodox society. Zalcborg (2016). Religious coercion and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course participants give feedback from their last meeting with the Haredi students, and share experiences and difficulties that arose.</li> <li>• Continuing the theme of status of Haredi women, manifestations of which can be seen in the Haredi press, course participants will receive a Haredi bulletin for discussion with the Haredi students in their next meeting. In class, course participants will discuss possible questions that will help develop a discourse about the newsletter and its contents with the Haredi students.</li> </ul>



		violence against women	
Week 6 (class 11+12) 19.4.21	<b>The Haredi family in Israel.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The importance of marriage and family in Haredi society.</li> <li>•The matchmaking process and the factors it involves.</li> <li>•"Matchmaking capital" - criteria for choosing a spouse.</li> </ul>	Zalcborg Block (2012). Gender differences in the involvement of young people in the matchmaking process in an extreme ultra-Orthodox community. Zalcborg Block (2013). "The Art of the Deal"; Preferences in spouse selection among parents in a Hasidic community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course participants give feedback from their last meeting with the Haredi students, and share experiences and difficulties that arose.</li> <li>• A major controversy issue for years in Haredi society is Memorial Day and the Independence Day of Israel. Since last week were Memorial Day and Independence Day, course instructor will discuss their meaning in the context of Haredi society, and provide course participants with materials on these days that they will read in the next meeting with the Haredi students.</li> </ul>
Week 7 (class 13+14) 26.4.21	<b>Dealing with taboo topics.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Copping with sexual abuse in Haredi community.</li> <li>•Treating issues of mental health.</li> </ul>	Greenberg, Kalian & Witztum, (2010). Value-sensitive psychiatric rehabilitation. Lightman & Shor (2002). Askanim: Informal helpers and cultural brokers. Zalcborg (2017). The place of culture and religion in patterns of reporting sexual abuse of ultra-Orthodox male victims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course participants give feedback from their last meeting with the Haredi students, and share experiences and difficulties that arose.</li> <li>•Guidance and preparation for the tour of Mea Shearim next week: An unforgettable experience of a world that is just an hour of traveling, yet worlds away.</li> </ul>
Week 8 (class 15+16) 3.5.21	<b>House and Habitat, design and strategy.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Between practical and decorative.</li> <li>•Between private space and public space.</li> </ul>	Meeting this week will include a tour to Haredi neighborhoods. The tour will give a glimpse into the rich cultural and religious identity of the Ultra-Orthodox Jews living in Israel. Course participants will visit traditional neighborhoods,	



		<p>getting the opportunity to remove the veil of a culture that most people have only observed from the outside.</p> <p>On this tour, course participants will go back in cultural time to a world that conducts itself entirely differently from everything we know and understand.</p> <p>Please dress very modestly: women in long skirts with high neck lines and sleeves beyond the elbow, men with a skullcap and pants or shorts below the knee.</p>	
<p>Week 9 (class 17+18) 10.5.21</p>	<p><b>Leaving Haredi society.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Conflicts and challenges facing those who leave the Haredi world.</li> <li>•Haredi society's struggle with deserters.</li> <li>•Course summary and discussion of the final assignment.</li> </ul>	<p>Zalcborg Block, (2015). Completely orthodox completely modern. <a href="https://www.hillel.org.il/en/">https://www.hillel.org.il/en/</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing personal experiences and impressions from the tour.</li> </ul> <p>Continuing the theme of those who left Haredi society, today, course participants are also parting - in a different way - from Haredi society; not only because they are ending the course on ultra-Orthodox society, but also because they are ending the meetings with the Haredi students. Therefore, the second half of the lesson will be dedicate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General feedback about the meetings with the Haredi students and the part of social involvement in general.</li> <li>• A little goodbye party with the Haredi students. During this last meeting, course participants and Haredi students will prepare and exchange farewell letters and symbolic gifts.</li> </ul>

### Reading list:

- Brown, B. (2000). Orthodox Judaism. In J. Neusner & A. Avery-Peck, A (Ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Judaism* (pp. 311-333). Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley-Blackwell.  
[https://www.academia.edu/4920047/Orthodox\\_Judaism\\_in\\_The\\_Blackwell\\_Companion\\_to\\_Judaism](https://www.academia.edu/4920047/Orthodox_Judaism_in_The_Blackwell_Companion_to_Judaism).
- Cahaner, L., & Malach, G. (2019). *Statistical Report on Ultra-Orthodox Society in Israel 2017*. Center for Religion, Nation and State. The Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research. Jerusalem.
- Deutsch, N. (2009). The Forbidden Fork, the Cell Phone Holocaust, and Other Haredi Encounters with Technology. *Contemporary Jewry*, 29(1), 3.  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12397-008-9002-7>.
- Greenberg, D., Kallian, M., & Witztum, E. (2010). Value-sensitive psychiatric rehabilitation. *Transcult Psychiatry*, 47(4), 629-46.

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- Heilman, S. (1992). *Defenders of the Faith - Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Hurwitz, S. (2017). These orthodox designers are making frum fashionable. *Forward*, February 9, 2017. <http://forward.com/culture/art/361782/these-orthodox-designers-are-making-frum-fashionable/>
- Leon, N. (2016). The ethnic structuring of "Sephardim" in Haredi society in Israel. *Jewish Social Studies* 22(1),130-160.
- Lightman, E.R. & Shor, R. (2002). Askanim: Informal helpers and cultural brokers as a bridge to secular helpers for the ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities of Israel and Canada. *Families in Society*, 83(3), 315-325.
- Mansfeld, Y., & Cahaner, L., (2012). Ultra-Orthodox Jewish tourism: A differential passage out of a socio-cultural bubble to the "open space". *Tourism Analysis*, 18 (1): 15-27.
- MJL (2019). *The Jewish Denominations* [https://www-myjewishlearning.com.cdn.ampproject.org/v/s/www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-jewish-denominations/amp/?usqp=mq331AQCCAE%3D&js\\_v=0.1#referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com&tf=From%20%251%24s&ampshare=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.myjewishlearning.com%2Farticle%2Fthe-jewish-denominations%2F](https://www-myjewishlearning.com.cdn.ampproject.org/v/s/www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-jewish-denominations/amp/?usqp=mq331AQCCAE%3D&js_v=0.1#referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com&tf=From%20%251%24s&ampshare=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.myjewishlearning.com%2Farticle%2Fthe-jewish-denominations%2F).
- Neria-Ben Shahr, R. (2009). The Learners' Society: Education and employment among ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) women. *Women in Israeli Judaism* 14, 1-15.
- Sanua, M. (2007). The "be virtuous" board game "Monopoly" in contemporary Yiddish for Satmar Hasidic girls. In J. Wertheimer (Ed.), *Imagining the American Jewish community* (pp.136-175). Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press.
- Sivan, E. (1995). The Enclave Culture. In M.E. Marty, & R.S. Appleby (Eds.), *Fundamentalism Comprehended* (pp.11-68 ). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Stern, Y. (2018). *Who Are The Ultra-Orthodox Jews Of Israel?* the Forward's curated contributor network. <https://forward.com/scribe/391516/who-are-the-ultra-orthodox-jews-of-israel/>
- Zalcborg, S. (2007). Grace is Deceitful and Beauty is Vain': How Hasidic Women Cope with the Requirement of Shaving One's Head and Wearing a Black Kerchief. *Gender Issues* 24(3), 13-34.
- Zalcborg, S. (2011). Shouldering the burden of the redemption: How the "fashion" of wearing capes developed in ultra-Orthodox society. *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues*. 22, 32-55.
- Zalcborg, S. (2017). The place of culture and religion in patterns of reporting sexual abuse of ultra-Orthodox male victims. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 26(5), 590-607.
- Zalcborg Block, S. (2016). Religious coercion and violence against women: The case of Beit Shemesh. In F. Banda and L. Fishbayn Joffe (eds.), *Women's Rights and Religious Law. Domestic and International Perspectives* (pp.152-175). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Zalcborg Block, S. (2012). Gender differences in the involvement of young people in the matchmaking process in an extreme ultra-Orthodox community. *Journal of Jewish Identities*, 5(2), 27-50.
- Zalcborg Block, S. (2013). "The Art of the Deal"; Preferences in spouse selection among parents in a Hasidic community. *Israel Studies Review* 28(2), 61-82.
- Zalcborg Block, S. (2015). Completely orthodox completely modern. *Eretz Acheret: About Israel and Judaism*, 77, 56-61.  
[http://jmgads.com/eretz\\_aheret/EretzAcheretUnityoftheJewishPeople.pdf](http://jmgads.com/eretz_aheret/EretzAcheretUnityoftheJewishPeople.pdf)
- Hillel – the Right to Choose. <https://www.hillel.org.il/en/>





Zalberg, S, & Zalberg, S. (2012). Body and Sexuality Constructs among Youth of the Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Community. In A. Kam-Tuck Yip and P. Nynäs (eds), *Religion, Gender and Sexuality in Everyday Life* (pp. 124-140). Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

### Faculty Biography

Dr. Zalberg specializes in the ultra-Orthodox community, religious radicalism, gender and ethnography. She teaches as well in the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and is a Fellow of the SDU-TAU Institute.

### TAU International Academic Guidelines

Students may only attend classes which they are officially registered for. No auditing of courses is permitted. Students are responsible for reading and adhering to all policies and procedures in the TAU International Academic Handbook [posted here](#) at all times. Below is a summary of some of these relevant policies and procedures.

### Learning Accommodations

In accordance to University guidelines, TAU International may be able to accommodate students with learning disabilities or accommodation requests if these requests are also honored at the student's home university or home school. To be considered, students must submit official documentation from their home school or university (if not in English, a notarized official copy translated into English is required) to TAU International in advance of arrival describing in detail any specific needs and how these are accommodated at the home school or university. Students must also bring a copy of this documentation with them on-site and give it to their faculty on the first day of class while introducing themselves so that the faculty know who they are and what sorts of needs or accommodations they may have. **Without official documentation from the home school submitted on or before the first day of courses, TAU will not be able to honor accommodation support.**

With supporting documentation and by following the correct procedure as outlined above, TAU International and its faculty will do the best it can to make any suitable accommodations possible. However, we cannot guarantee that all accommodations received at the home school can be similarly met at TAU. For example, TAU is usually not able to offer note-taking services in English, private testing rooms, or advance viewing of classroom presentations, exams, or assignments. It may be an option to provide a student with additional tutoring or support outside the classroom as needed. Students should be aware that this additional support cannot be guaranteed and is based on teacher availability in the subject as well as the specific student level. If available, the cost of additional tutoring or support will be the sole responsibility of the student.

### TAU International Absence Policy

Attendance is mandatory in all of the courses including Hebrew Ulpan. Faculty can and will take attendance regularly. Missing classes will be reflected in the final grade of the course. Up to three justified and properly documented absences from classes may be accepted (for example:

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emergency matter or illness, both of which will require a doctor's note). Such cases of absence should be reported to the faculty immediately and again, a doctor's note is required. Teachers are entitled to treat any lateness or absence without documentation as unexcused. **Some of our courses such as Service Learning or the Internship Seminar require more practical in-class work; thus, attendance policies may be stricter in some courses and students then must adhere to the stricter attendance policy as outlined by the faculty/syllabus.**

Students are required to arrive on time for classes. Teachers are entitled to treat any single case of lateness and/or repeated lateness as an unjustified absence.

Please note that according to official TAU Academic Policy, if a student's behavior or attendance during is disagreeable his/her course participation may be cancelled at the discretion of TAU with no due refund.

### **Grade Appeals**

Students are responsible for checking grades once posted or distributed by faculty. The limited grade appeals window and the detailed procedure for appealing a grade – whether a graded assignment, exam or final grade – is outlined clearly in the policies and procedures in the TAU International Academic Handbook [posted here](#).

