The Struggle for Palestine: The Roots of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Draft Syllabus

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:
This course introduces students to the study of the Arab-Israeli conflict, from its initial stages starting from the first waves of Zionist immigration to Palestine through the 1948 war and the establishment of the state of Israel. It will focus on the emerging features of the conflict, the struggle between the Palestinian Arab and Jewish Nationalist movements, and the regional and international involvement in these events. Subsequent sessions will focus on the wars of 1956, 1967, 1973 and later developments such as the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty (1979) and Israel’s invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Moving closer to the present, the course will highlight the 1987 Palestinian Intifada, the Oslo accords and the prospects for peace leading up to the second Intifada and the breakdown of negotiations. We will conclude with a discussion of the current age of uncertainty in the region and the impact of non-state actors (such as Hizballah and Hamas) on the conflict, in an effort to bring the class up to the present as possible. A variety of scholarly studies, diverse opinions, and approaches will provide the background for class discussions.

Class Format
This course uses a lecture and discussion format. Learning as a dynamic process in which the student and teacher interact over the material under discussion. You will learn best by asking questions; all questions are welcome and, if they are of interest to the class as a whole, we will stop and discuss them together.

Course Requirements

Attendance:
Students must attend every class session prepared to participate.

Participation: (10%):
The course participation grade serves as an in-class oral examination extended throughout the semester. Informed and thoughtful participation is critical for the course and will be noted. To achieve the maximum participation score, students should attend class regularly, prepare the readings for each class, contribute to the discussion, and be respectful and responsive to other students.

Mid Term Exam: (20%)
An in-class exam that will cover the readings and course lectures of the first part of the semester. Students will be asked to answer two (2) out of (4) essay questions.

Final Take Home Exam: (70%)
A Take Home exam covering the second part of the semester. Students will be asked to provide more in-depth answers to two (2) out of four (4) essay questions.

**Reading Assignments:**

There is one assigned textbook which will be used for this course. Students are encouraged to obtain the book, but scanned chapters will be posted on the course web site, along with other required readings.


**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1:**

**Introduction: The Study of the Arab-Israeli Conflict and the Emergence of Zionism:**


**Week 2:**

**The Emergence of Arab/Palestinian Nationalism**


**Supplementary Reading:**

**Week 3:**

*The Jewish Community in Palestine under the British Mandate*

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 67-120 (Ch.3)

*The Arab Revolt 1936-1939*

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 121-160 (Ch. 4)


**Week 4:**

*World War II and the Struggle for a Jewish State*


**Week 5:**

*1948: The First Arab-Israeli War*


**Week 6:**

*1956 Suez War*


Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 259-302 (Ch. 6).

**Week 7:**

*The 1967 Six Day War*

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 302-346 (Ch. 7).

From June 1967 to October 1973
Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 347-443 (Ch. 8, 9).

**Week 8**

**The First Intifada**
Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 561-610 (Ch. 12).

**The Oslo Accords and the Prospects for Peace**

Benny Morris, pp. 611-652 (Ch. 13)


**Week 9:**

**The Second Intifada and the Breakdown of Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations**


**Week 10:**

**Non State Actors and their Impact; Prospects for Future Negotiations**


Elie Podeh, *Chances for Peace: Missed Opportunities in the Arab-Israeli Conflict*,

...
AustinL University of Texas Press, 2015, Chapter 21 (Arab Peace Initiative 2002-2014)