Course Description
This course examines some of the issues currently facing Israeli society and the ongoing debates in Israeli politics. The course is organized into two parts. The first part establishes the historical and political background against which contemporary Israeli politics plays out. The second part of the course focuses on a number of crucial cleavages and debates within Israeli society – along political, religious, ethnic, and national lines. Although this course is not about the Arab-Israeli or Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, their influence on Israeli politics and society will be addressed.

Course Requirements
Our class time will be split between lectures and discussions. Students are expected to attend all classes having read the assigned readings and ready to participate in class discussions.

You should also keep up on current events relating to Israel, including daily perusing of articles in the New York Times and, among others, in:
http://haaretz.com/
http://www.ynetnews.com

Simulation: Forming the Israeli government
At the end of the semester we will engage in a simulation exercise in forming the Israeli government. You will be randomly assigned to represent an Israeli political party and tasked with researching its positions and with negotiating with other “parties” to form the Israeli government. As part of the simulation you will be responsible for drafting a memo detailing your desired candidate for Prime Minister and the most important items on its agenda. This 3-4 page memo should outline your main positions on the key topics facing Israeli society, the policies you would want to enact as part of the government, and what it would take to get you to join it. If you nominate yourself to be the Prime Minister, please provide a breakdown of your proposed coalition partners and what you would be willing to give them. See the attached simulation worksheet. We will then simulate the negotiation process involved in forming the Israeli government. At the end of the exercise, you will be responsible for a memo detailing why you decided to join the government or stay in the opposition.

Late assignments will be penalized half of one letter grade for every day they are late.

Grading Criteria
Final course grades will be assigned according to the following weights:
   Mid-term exam                        30%
   Israeli politics simulation          25%
Comprehensive final exam 45%

**Honors optional/Graduate Credit**
If you are taking this course for graduate credit or as an honors optional course, you will also need to complete an approximately 6-8000 word research paper on a topic of your choice relating to the course content. The paper will be due on the last day of class. Please meet with me during the course of the semester so we can develop your topic.

For students taking the course for honors or graduate credit, the paper will account for 20% of the grade and the simulation for 5%. The remainder of the grade will be determined by the mid-term and final as above.

**Academic Conduct**
This class is geared to maximize our joint exploration of important topics in Israeli history, society and politics. Serious scholarly discussion becomes impossible when diatribe and invective displace scholarly analysis. As a result, when posing questions or responding to others, students are expected to demonstrate an appropriate level of respect despite what might be deep disagreements.

The background work for your simulation memos requires you to cite other people’s work. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated!** If you are caught turning in work that is not your own or using another author’s work without properly citing it, you will receive an F on the assignment. If you have any questions about what constituted academic dishonesty, please consult the Dean of Students Web page, at [http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html](http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html)

**Required Readings**
Many of the required readings for this course are in the course reader, which is available at StudentPrint (333 East Campus Mall Rm 3301 or [http://studentprint.rso.wisc.edu/](http://studentprint.rso.wisc.edu/)) and at Learn@UW.

In addition, the following book is required for the course and is available at the University Bookstore and on reserve in College Library.
COURSE SCHEDULE

* indicates reading is in the course reader.

**September 6: Course overview & Why Study Israel?**

**September 8: Why study Israel? Cont.**
Sasley and Waller, chapter 1, 1-8.

Part I: Ideological, historical, and political background

**September 13-15: The origins of Zionism**
Sasley and Waller, Chapter 2, 11-25.

**September 20-22: Labor Zionism**

**September 27: Revisionist Zionism**
Jabotinsky, Vladimir (Ze’ev). “The Iron Wall,” and “The Ethics of the Iron Wall” (13)
September 29: Religious Zionism

October 4: No class

October 6-18: From Mandate to statehood- the creation of political institutions, a Jewish society, and the birth of the state
Sasley and Waller, Chapters 3,4 (27-53).
Migdal, Joel. *Through the Lens of Israel*, pp. 51-79.*

October 11: No class

October 20: Mid-term exam

Part II: Major social and political cleavages in Israeli society

October 25-October 27: Political institutions and the party system
- Party assignment for simulation
Sasley and Waller, Chapters 8, 9, 12, 13 (114-150, 187-218).

November 1: Economics and Society
Sasley and Waller, Chapter 15 (231-243).

November 3-8: Hawks, Doves, and the question of peace
Sasley and Waller, Chapter 16 (244-256).


**November 10-15: Palestinians in Israel**

Sasley and Waller, Chapter 7 (86-113).


The Haifa Declaration*

**November 17: No class**

**November 22: The religious-secular divide**

Sasley and Waller, Chapter 6 (72-85).


**November 24: No class: Thanksgiving recess**

**November 29: The religious-secular divide continued**

**December 1- 6: The Jewish ethnic divide**


**December 8: Simulation: presentation of party positions**
Simulation party memos due

December 13: Simulation: party negotiations and government formation

December 15: simulation results and course review
Simulation final memo due

Final Exam: December 19th, 7:25PM-9:25PM
Coalition government simulation worksheet

Name:____________________________________
Party:____________________________________

Proposed government:

Prime Minister:
Minister of Defense:
Minister of Foreign Affairs:
Minister of Finance:
Minister of Education:
Minister of Health:
Minister of Internal Security:
Minister of Internal Affairs:
Minister of Welfare and Social Services:
Minister of Justice:
Minister of Housing and Construction:
Minister of Religious Services:

Other ministers and deputy ministers:

Policy promises
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Parties supporting this government

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<th>Party</th>
<th>Your name</th>
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