

# Israeli Politics

## (POLS 149)

### Fall 2014

### Syllabus

Heather Stoll

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Office: 3715 Ellison Hall

Office Hours: M 3:30–4:45 p.m., W 12:45–1:30 p.m., or by appointment

Class Meeting Time: M W 2:00–3:15 p.m.

Class Meeting Place: Girvetz 1115

Class Website: On GauchoSpace

## 1 Objectives

This class both introduces students to the politics of Israel and explores the ways in which the study of Israel can contribute to important contemporary debates. The first half of the class maps the contours of Israeli domestic politics: the conflicts within Israeli society, the functioning of Israel's political institutions, the identity of its key political actors, and the features of its public policy. The second half of the class explicitly places Israel in comparative perspective. Israel's experiences can illuminate many ongoing debates in the United States and other democracies, such as that about how religion and politics should relate. Israel also serves as a critical case for several bodies of theory in comparative politics, such as the literature seeking to explain the rise of religious fundamentalism. What this class is *not* is a class solely devoted either to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or to the history and politics of Israel. With respect to the latter, it is a comparative politics class, which aims to generalize beyond the Israeli case; with respect to the former, while one cannot study Israeli politics without encountering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, neither can one solely reduce Israeli politics to it.

## 2 Class and Contact Information

The syllabus, paper guidelines, study guides, and other handouts are all available from the class GauchoSpace site. Announcements will be posted to the website; it should be your first port of call if you're unsure about what's happening when and where. You have two ways to contact me:

- *Office Hours*: I encourage you to stop by early in the quarter so that you can get to know me and vice versa. Don't, in other words, feel shy about coming to see me, whether you just want to chat about the weather or have more substantive class-related issues to discuss.
- *E-mail*: I will generally respond within twenty-four hours to e-mails that I receive Mondays through Fridays. Often my response will come in far less than twenty-four hours, but I do not guarantee it. Note that I rarely check e-mail in the evenings. E-mails that I receive over the weekend will be answered on Monday. I will notify you of any planned deviations from this pledge, such as occasions when I am out of town and hence away from my e-mail.

I will also usually arrive a few minutes early to class, so you can catch me then.

### 3 Prerequisites

One formal prerequisite exists for the class: Political Science 6 (Introduction to Comparative Politics). A background in the history and politics of the Middle East, such as that obtained from Political Science 150A (Politics of the Middle East), is helpful but not required. The class also assumes a willingness to engage in discussion about difficult issues with appropriate respect for others' opinions.

### 4 Initial Attendance and Waitlist

Students who do not attend the first two class meetings may be dropped from the course. Information regarding the waitlist will be given out at the first class meeting, so those who would like to crash should attend the first class. If you decide not to take the class, please drop as soon as possible to make room for others on the waitlist.

### 5 Requirements

There are four written assignments. First, the in-class midterm will assess your basic knowledge of Israeli politics, the material from the first half of the course. It will consist of identifications and short answers. Second, the take-home final, which will have an essay format, will emphasize critical thinking skills and the material from the second half of the course. Third and fourth, you will write an approximately three to four page response paper (standard font and double-spaced) to *two* of the three topical sets of readings from the second half of the course. In other words, you will write *two* response papers. These short papers are designed to spur discussion. They should both demonstrate that you have done the readings *and* offer some kind of critical response to them. Guidelines will be made available from the class Gauchospace site.

The other requirement is participation. The class will operate somewhere between a lecture and a seminar format, although closer to the former for the first half of the quarter. Thoughts about the course's subject matter and its application to other contexts (such as current political events in the U.S.) are welcome throughout. Substantial time will be devoted to discussion in the second half of the course. I expect you to play an active role in these discussions, particularly for the topics for which you write a response paper. I also encourage you to stay abreast of current events, which we will periodically discuss. Accordingly, participation—comprised of contribution to class discussions and the response papers—constitutes a non-trivial portion of the grade. Note that earning a good participation grade will require you to be a regular attendee of the class: while I will not take formal role, I will be aware of your general attendance (or lack thereof).

### 6 Grading

Grades for the course will be calculated as follows.

- An in-class midterm examination on 12 November (tentative date). (30%) No make-ups will be scheduled for the midterm; if you have an excused absence due to a documented medical or family emergency, the final examination will count for 70% of your grade.

- Class participation, including response papers. (30%) Response papers are due in hard copy at the beginning of the second class devoted to the topic: tentatively, on 19 November for Topic A (Democracy, Citizenship and Nation); on 1 December for Topic B (Religion and Politics); and on 8 December for Topic C (Fundamentalism). The response papers and in-class participation will be weighed roughly equally in determining the participation grade (so 15% for the two response papers and 15% for in-class participation).
- A take-home final examination handed out in lecture on the third to last day of class, 3 December, and due by 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, 17 December, in my mailbox. (40%)

Response papers will be graded according to the following three category scale: “check plus,” exceeds expectations (roughly equivalent to an ‘A’); “check,” satisfies expectations (roughly equivalent to a ‘B’); “check minus,” falls short of expectations but is minimally satisfactory (roughly equivalent to a ‘C’); and ‘F’, either not acceptable or not received. Exams will receive letter grades.

In this class, you earn your grades. If you do an excellent job on all assignments and exams, you will earn an ‘A’ for the course; if you do not, I will assign you an appropriate grade that reflects both your mastery of the material and your efforts.

Note that there are usually several speakers and events over the course of the quarter that touch upon topics related to the class. You may earn extra credit by attending and writing a brief (circa one page) response. Information about these extra credit opportunities will be both announced in class and posted on the class GauchoSpace site.

## 7 Late Policy

The late policy for this course is designed to avoid punishing students whose work is handed in on time. It is: *late response papers will be penalized one category for up to each twenty-four hour period late* (e.g., from a “check plus” to a “check”) for a maximum of two days, after which they will not be accepted and you will receive an ‘F’. However, late penalties will not drop grades below minimal passing (a “check minus”). However, *no late take-home final exams will be accepted*. Exceptions to this policy will be made only for *documented* cases of medical or family emergencies. Advance arrangements to hand in assignments late may be made on an individual basis with me, at my discretion, at least a week in advance of the official due date and time. Note that you may *always* hand in work early!

## 8 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

UCSB defines plagiarism as “the use of another’s idea or words without proper attribution or credit” (see “Academic Integrity at UCSB: A Student’s Guide”, available at <http://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/AcademicIntegrity.aspx>). It is a serious academic offense. For this course, *while you may discuss your response papers with other people, the write-ups must be your own*. However, *do not discuss your take-home final exam with others; you must write it on your own, and it should be your own, original work*. Plagiarism and other types of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Student Judicial Affairs Office for disciplinary action and will result in an automatic failing grade for that assignment. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, ask me! Also ask me for help if you are struggling before you resort to such desperate measures.

## 9 Required Reading Materials

There is a required textbook:

Mahler, Gregory. 2011. *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Press.

It may be purchased either from the bookstore or from online stores; for those who would like to save some money, it is also available from the library's Reserve Book Service (after about 7 October).

All other required readings on the syllabus are available from the course GauchoSpace site. These other readings include many short current event articles (usually at least five per week) and serve as the text for the second half of the course. I have deliberately selected readings that make strong arguments for the final three topics. At the same time, I have tried to ensure that they either individually or jointly present competing perspectives. The idea is to familiarize you with ongoing debates and hopefully for you to formulate your own informed opinions about them. In other words, you're not expected to agree with everything!

## 10 Schedule and Readings (Dates Tentative)

### Introduction (6 Oct)

Mahler. Introduction, p. 1–10.

Neuberger, Benyamin. 1989. "Israel's Democracy and Comparative Politics." *Jewish Political Studies Review* 1: 67–75.

### PART I: SETTING THE STAGE: POLITICS IN ISRAEL

#### A Whirlwind Tour Through History (8 and 13 Oct)

Mahler, Chapter 1, p. 13–45. Also skim Chapter 9, p. 208–225 only, and Chapter 11, p. 269–301.

Berger, Marilyn. 1995. "Assassination in Israel: Yitzhak Rabin, 73, an Israeli Soldier Turned Prime Minister and Peacemaker." *The New York Times*. 5 November.

*The Economist*. 2004. "Obituary: Yasser Arafat." 13 November.

*The Economist*. 2007. "Forty Years On." 24 May.

*The Economist*. 2014. "Obituary: Ariel Sharon." 18 January.

Feron, James. 1992. "Menachem Begin, Guerrilla Leader Who Became Peacemaker." *The New York Times*. 9 March.

#### Cleavages in Israeli Society (15 and 20 Oct)

Mahler, Chapter 2, p. 47–71, and Chapter 3, p. 73–81 and 85–88 only.

Kop, Yaakov and Robert E. Litan. 2002. "Israel's Four Schisms" (Chapter 2, p. 18–43 only). In *Sticking Together: The Israeli Experiment in Pluralism*. Washington, D. C.: The Brookings Institution.

Bronner, Ethan. 2011. "Protests Force Israel to Confront Wealth Gap." *The New York Times*. 11 August.

Bronner, Ethan. 2012. "Anger and Compassion for Arab Justice Who Stays Silent During Zionist Hymn." *The New York Times*. 4 March.

Bronner, Ethan. 2013. "What Mideast Crisis? Israelis Have Moved On." *The New York Times*. 25 May.

Bronner, Ethan and Isabel Kershner. 2012. "Israelis Facing a Seismic Rift over Role of Women." *The New York Times*. 14 January.

*The Economist*. 1998. "A Nation of Tribes." 23 April.

### **Political Institutions (22 and 27 Oct)**

Mahler, Chapter 4, p. 97–116; Chapter 5, p. 117–131 only; Chapter 7, p. 171–175 only, Chapter 8, p. 185–200 only, and Chapter 10, p. 244–249 only.

Powell, G. Bingham. 2000. "Elections as Instruments of Democracy" (Chapter 1, p. 3–13 only) and "Constitutional Designs" (Chapter 2, p. 20–22 and 38–43 only). In *Elections as Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Dahl, Robert. 1998. "Varieties II: Constitutions" (Chapter 10, p. 119–127 only) and "Varieties II: Parties and Electoral Systems" (Chapter 11, p. 136–141 only). In *On Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

*The Economist*. 2008. "A Systemic Problem." 3 April.

Glanz, James. 2006. "A Lesson From Hamas: Read the Voting Law's Fine Print." *The New York Times*. 19 February.

Kershner, Isabel. 2007. "Friends' Clash Reflects Battle Over Israeli Court." *The New York Times*. 22 November.

Kershner, Isabel. 2014. "Israel Parliament Elects Ex-Speaker as President to Succeed Peres." 10 June.

Rosner, Shmuel. 2013. "The Tyranny of the Minority." *The New York Times*. 2 August.

### **Representation & Government (29 Oct and 3 Nov)**

Mahler, Chapter 5, p. 131–139 only; Chapter 6, p. 141–158; and Chapter 7, p. 175–183 only.

Bronner, Ethan. 2009. "A Hard-Liner Gains Ground in Israel." *The New York Times*. 8 February.

*The Economist*. 2013. "Israel's Arab Voters: What's the Point?" 12 January.

*The Economist*. 2013. "Israel's Election: The Hawks' Wings are Clipped." 26 January.

Kershner, Isabel. 2012. "Netanyahu Announces Coalition with a Nationalist Party." *The New York Times*. 25 October.

Rudoren, Jodi. 2012. "Ex-Foreign Minister Heads Party to Oppose Netanyahu." *The New York Times*. 27 November.

Rudoren, Jodi. 2013. "Bringing Ultra-Orthodox Traditions to Israel's Parliament, Olive Branch in Hand." *The New York Times*. 8 February.

Rudoren, Jodi. 2013. "Israelis Form Government Days Before Obama Visit." *The New York Times*. 15 March.

Rudoren, Jodi. 2013. "Israel's Foreign Minister Returns, but Abrasive Style Appears Absent." *The New York Times*. 1 December.

Rudoren, Jodi and Isabel Kershner. 2013. "The Making of Israel's New Power Broker." *The New York Times*. 23 January.

**Public Policy: Domestic and Foreign (5 and 10 Nov)**

Mahler, Chapter 3, p. 81–84 and 88–93 only, and Chapter 9, p. 225–236 only.

Shalev, Michael. 1998. "The Contradictions of Economic Reform in Israel." *Middle East Report* 207. Summer.

Uslaner, Eric M. 2007. "American Interests in the Balance? Do Ethnic Groups Dominate Foreign Policy Making?" (Chapter 13, p. 301–321). In Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis, *Interest Group Politics*, 7th ed. Washington, D. C.: CQ Press.

Bronner, Ethan. 2010. "Israel Puts Off Crisis over Conversion Law." *The New York Times*. 23 July.

*The Economist*. 2006. "To Israel with Love." 3 August.

*The Economist*. 2007. "Israel and the Jews: Second Thoughts about the Promised Land." 11 January.

Goodstein, Laurie. 2014. "Talk in Synagogue of Israel and Gaza Goes from Debate to Wrath to Rage." *The New York Times*. 22 September.

Rudoren, Jodi. 2013. "Netanyahu Takes a Lonely Stance Denouncing Iran." *The New York Times*. 11 October.

Steinhauer, Jennifer and Steven Lee Myers. 2011. "House G.O.P. Tightens Its Bond with Netanyahu." *The New York Times*. 20 September. [E]

Traub, James. 2009. "The New Israel Lobby." *The New York Times*. 9 September.

Witte, Griff. 2008. "Israeli Leaders Find Generous Donors in U.S." *Washington Post*. 26 July.

*Note: Midterm exam on 12 November.*

## PART II: ISRAEL IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

### Topic A: Liberal vs. Ethnic Conceptions of Democracy, Citizenship, and Nation (17, 19 and 24 November)

Brubaker, Rogers. 1992. Chapter 4 (“Citizenship and Naturalization in France and Germany”), p. 75–84, and Chapter 9 (“Conclusion”), p. 179–189. In *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Dowty, Alan. 2001. Chapter 1, p. 3–18, Chapter 7, p. 148–152 only (“The Ideology of Integration”), and Chapter 9, p. 200–215 only (“Israelization or Palestinization?” and “The Test of Israeli Democracy”). In *The Jewish State: A Century Later*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Dahl, Robert. 1989. Chapter 1 (“Introduction”), p. 1–5 only. In *Democracy and Its Critics*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Dahl, Robert. 1998. Chapter 4 (“What Is Democracy?”), p. 35–43, and Chapter 5 (“Why Democracy?”), p. 44–54 only. In *On Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Kop, Yaakov and Robert E. Litan. 2002. Chapter 6 (“Lessons for Other Countries”), p. 113–135. In *Sticking Together: The Israeli Experiment in Pluralism*. Washington, D. C.: The Brookings Institution.

Peleg, Ilan. 2000. Chapter 4 (“Israel as a Liberal Democracy: Civil Rights in the Jewish State”), p. 63–80. In Laura Zittrain Eisenberg and Neil Caplan, eds., *Review Essays in Israel Studies: Books on Israel, Volume V*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Bronnner, Ethan. 2011. “Israel TV Station’s Troubles Reflect a Larger Political Battle.” *The New York Times*. 26 December.

Bronner, Ethan. 2014. “Israel Reaches Out to the Diaspora.” *The New York Times*. 15 March.

DeParle, Jason. 2008. “Born Irish, but with Illegal Parents.” *The New York Times*. 25 February.

*The Economist*. 2006. “Israel: Who’s a Citizen?” 18 May.

### Topic B: Religion and Politics, Church and State (26 Nov, 1 and 3 Dec)

Don-Yehiya, Eliezer. 2000. “Conflict Management of Religious Issues: The Israeli Case in a Comparative Perspective.” In Reuven Y. Hazan and Moshe Maor, *Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective*, p. 85–108. Portland: Frank Cass & Co.

Liebman, Charles S. and Eliezer Don-Yehiya. 1984. “Separation of Religion and State in Israel: A Program Or a Slogan?” (Chapter 2), p. 15–30. In *Religion and Politics in Israel*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Monsma, Stephen V. and J. Christopher Soper. 1997. “Introduction” (Chapter 1), p. 1–14. In *The Challenge of Pluralism: Church and State in Five Democracies*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Neuberger, Benyamin. 2000. “Religion and State in Europe and Israel.” In Reuven Y. Hazan and Moshe Maor, *Parties, Elections and Cleavages: Israel in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective*, p. 65–84. Portland: Frank Cass & Co.

Whitman, Lawrence. N.d. "Church and State: Why are America and France so Different?," p. 1–15 only. Unpublished manuscript.

Yishai, Yael. 1997. "Family Policy: Patriarchy in the Jewish State" (Chapter 7), p. 177–194 only. In *Between the Flag and the Banner: Women in Israeli Politics*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

*The Economist*. 2014. "Israel, Religion, and the Draft: Get into Uniform." 23 March.

Fisher, Ian. 2004. "Italy's Church and State: A Mostly Happy Union." *New York Times*. 1 December.

Hadjicostis, Menelaos. 2009. "In Mideast, Marriage Too Can Be a Battlefield." *The Washington Post*. 19 October.

Khalil, Ashraf. 2007. "A Temple-State Clash in Israel." *Los Angeles Times*. 7 December.

Rosner, Shmuel. 2013. "The Ultimate Conversion." *The New York Times*. 9 July.

### **Topic C: Religious Fundamentalism and the Occupied Territories (3, 8 and 10 Dec)**

Mahler, Chapter 10, p. 257–265 only.

Berman, Sheri. 2008. "Taming Extremist Parties: Lessons from Europe." *Journal of Democracy* 19 (1).

Dowty, Alan. 2001. Chapter 10, p. 216–226 ("The Impact of the West Bank and Gaza"). In *The Jewish State: A Century Later*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gill, Anthony. 2001. "Fundamentalism and the New Religious Politics." In "Religion and Comparative Politics", p. 123–130. *Annual Reviews of Political Science* 4.

Jurgensmeyer, Mark. 1995. "Antifundamentalism" (Chapter 14), p. 353–366. In Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalism Comprehended*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Marty, Martin E. and R. Scott Appleby. 1992. "The Fundamentals of Fundamentalism" and "Gush Emunim: A Fundamentalism of the Land" (Chapters 1 and 3), p. 7–35 and 89–128. In *The Glory and the Power: The Fundamentalist Challenge to the Modern World*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Sprinzak, Ehud. 1998. "Extremism and Violence in Israel: The Crisis of Messianic Politics." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 555 (Israel in Transition): 114–126.

Bronner, Ethan. 2009. "A Religious War in Israel's Army." *The New York Times*. 21 March.

Bronner, Ethan and Isabel Kershner. 2009. "Resolve of West Bank Settlers May Have Limits." *The New York Times*. 13 September.

*The Economist*. 2013. "Could Two Become One?" 16 March.

Gorenberg, Gershom. 2011. "Israel's Other Occupation." *The New York Times*. 25 November.

Kershner, Isabel. 2007. "Young Israelis Resist Challenges to Settlements." *The New York Times*. 8 December.