

**POL378H1F**

**The Israeli -Palestinian Conflict - Course Syllabus, Fall 2023**

**Contact Information:**

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**Office hours:** Mondays at 5 p.m., Fridays 3 p.m. **by appointment;** Via Zoom

**Course description**

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most intractable and multifaceted protracted conflicts in modern times with flare-ups of violence between its various actors continuing to claim lives and to threaten wider war. This course will survey the main political junctions in the conflict and will connect them to their reincarnations in contemporary times. We will study all of this, exploring the conflict's many layers and relating it to broader International Relations and sociological concepts from the emergence of the conflict's political fault lines during Ottoman times through the establishment of a Jewish state and its continued modern-day development. The course will include cultural products relating to both societies, including movies, clips, songs and forms of art and cultural representations.

**By the end of this course students will be able to:**

- Explore and understand the origins of the conflict and the processes that led to the creation of Israel in 1948 and the Palestinian "Nakba".
- Critically study current modes in Israeli and Palestinian cultures: including the role of the military and security, fear, and hatred towards the 'other', sentiments of localness, indigenouness and foreignness in Israel/Palestine, and the struggles over collective memory.
- Reflect on the symbols (monuments, songs, literature, film, language) of Israeli and Palestinian nationalism to understand conflict and culture production.
- Survey the different solutions for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the way they ignore or correspond with the needs of each of the communities.

## **Assignments**

**Weekly participation** in discussion: students are expected to come to class every week having read and critically reflected on the required readings before class. This is not a lecture course; discussion is primarily student-generated and based on weekly reading. Your participation grade will be based on the quality and relevance to course questions of your weekly participation, the extent to which your class contributions move the discussion forward, and the quality of your facilitation as presentation leaders. The participation grade will reflect preparedness for class, attentiveness, and contributions to class discussion. The class is a seminar where the instructor's primary role is to facilitate discussion rather than present information. I will work to ensure that everyone participates in the discussion on a regular basis.

### **Short response essay due before each class and no later than **October 17:****

In this assignment you are asked to turn in a **short response essay (850-1200 words)** using both the required and recommended materials. You can choose any of the weeks (2-6) until **October 17** but must submit your response **BEFORE** class time in the week you chose. For example, if you chose to focus your response on the assigned and recommend readings of week 3, your submission must be in before class time of week 3.

You are given guiding questions but need to make sure you focus your response on an issue and reflect on it critically, do not provide simple summaries. You are allowed to draw on more relevant external materials but must consult the ones listed. If you find in your mini research viewpoints that were not mentioned or narratives that offer more insight on the topic, please include them.

### **Second response paper due no later than **November 14.****

Your second response paper needs to provide a critical analysis based on the videos in the [Ask Project](#). Focus on a theme or themes covered in **4** separate videos, preferably, 2 directed at each population. Your goal for each paper should be to critically address an interesting controversy or insight that arises. The paper should not simply summarize the videos, but look at how facts are presented, discussed, and how narratives are formed and cemented on each side. Your reflection should integrate the readings and relevant issues we learned in class. You should pick a subject or question that can be covered in a short response (**1000** words). Finally send a suggestion to a question you would like Cory Gill to ask either Israelis, Palestinians, or both. Please link the videos you chose.

### **Final paper: Narratives Analysis – due **December 9 (Saturday) by 12 p.m.****

The goal of this assignment is to explore and assess competing narratives and interpretations of a current event as it is represented across different media outlets. While most news events that are related to the conflict (such as: use of violence, military action, demonstrations, settlement construction, negotiations, etc.) have some objective concrete features, media sources that align with competing national or political groups and ideologies will describe and interpret them in profoundly different ways. In this assignment you are required to explore these divergent interpretations of an event that is related

to the conflict by comparing and contrasting these different perspectives. For instance, you can examine reports on an IDF raid in the West Bank or a Hamas rocket attack on Israel by analyzing how the event was reported by diverse media outlets such as: The Hamas news agency, the official Palestinians press, liberal Israeli media, nationalist Israeli media, Arab media, or international news sources.

### **Instructions:**

1. Choose one current event that is related to the conflict that took place over the last Year (2022) that has reporting that represents competing perspectives of the event and email me your case for approval.  
For the paper itself:
2. Write a short description of the event (1 page).
3. Locate at **least four reports** from various news sources that represent divergent interpretations and narratives of the event you chose. You are encouraged to refer to the list of news sources and blogs that appear Quercus though you are welcome to use other sources.
4. Describe and explain the differences between these reports and interpretations. (2 pages).
5. What we can learn about the conflict more broadly through the analysis of these competing viewpoints? (1-2 pages)
6. Your paper should be **no longer than 5 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font**. Please include a reference list and links to the articles you used.

\*All assignments carry a 5% per day late penalty. They will not be graded more than a week after the deadline.

### **Course Grade Breakdown**

Class participation - **20%**

Short response paper in the first 6 weeks – **20%**

Short response The Ask Project– **25%**

Final paper - **35%**

### **Plagiarism**

Every year, students are caught for plagiarism. This is defined by the University of Toronto's Code of Behavior on Academic Matters as "the wrongful appropriation and purloining, and publication as one's own, of the ideas, or the expression of the ideas...of another." On all work you complete for this course, all passages, ideas or information culled from other people or sources must be attributed to them.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, please reach out to the instructor or consult institutional resources like the [University of Toronto website on Academic Integrity](#).

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

### **Accessibility Needs**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services as soon as possible.

Please call 416-978-8060 or email [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca). The sooner you let them know your needs the quicker they can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course. The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility, and I share that commitment by believing that every student should have an equal chance to excel in this course. I strive to create and maintain an inclusive environment and promise to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to persons who require them. More information is available here:

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/accessibility-services-registration-and-documentation-requirements/>

### **Quercus**

From time to time, class announcements & material will be delivered via e-mail and/or announcements through Quercus. It is the students' responsibility to maintain their e-mail addresses in good working order and to ensure that the e-mail address known to the university (and listed on Quercus) is accurate. Failure to receive important class announcements & messages are NOT legitimate excuses for missing class work.

**Class Schedule: Tuesdays, 4-6 p.m.**

Date	Topic	Notes
Week 1, September 12	Introduction and syllabus overview	Please read the syllabus and assigned readings
Week 2, September 19	The Rise of Zionism and Arab Nationalism	
Week 3, September 26	Zionism and the Selection of Palestine	
Week 4, October 3	Life under the British Mandate to Palestine	
Week 5, October 10	From Partition to Independence/Nakba and the Birth of the Refugee Problem	
Week 6, October 17	Israel and the conflict with the Arab world	<b>Last day to submit first response paper</b>
Week 7, October 24	The Palestinian Movement and Its Leadership	
Week 8, October 31	The Oslo Accords	
<b>Reading Week 9, November 7</b>	<b>Reading Week - No Class</b>	<b>No Class</b>
Week 10, November 14	The Second Intifada, Disengagement and The Gaza Wars	<b>Second response paper is due</b>
Week 11, November 21	One State, Two States, Confederation, Containment, the Status Quo	
Week 12, November 28	The Conflict in Palestinian and Israeli Culture	Watch a movie from the list
Week 13, December 5	Final discussion	<b>Final paper is due Dec 9</b>

**The course has two required textbooks:**

**Caplan, Neil.** The Israel-Palestine conflict: contested histories. John Wiley & Sons, 2019. Second Edition

**Gelvin, James L.** The Israel-Palestine conflict: One hundred years of war. Cambridge University Press, 2021. **Fourth Edition**

## **Class schedule and reading assignments**

### **Week 1: Introduction to the course and syllabus overview**

Caplan, Neil. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: contested histories*. John Wiley & Sons, 2019. **pp.3-16**

Gelvin, James L. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: One hundred years of war*. Cambridge University Press, 2014. **pp.1-14**

### **Week 2: The Rise of Zionism and Arab Nationalism**

Caplan, Neil. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: contested histories*. John Wiley & Sons, 2019.

#### **Chapter 2 pp.17-33**

Gelvin, "Cultures of Nationalism," *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, **Chapter 2: 15-35, 40-45.**

#### *Recommended*

Penslar, Derek J. "Herzl and the Palestinian Arabs: Myth and Counter-Myth." *Journal of Israeli History* 24, no. 1 (2005): 65-77.

### **Week 3: Zionism and the Selection of Palestine**

Caplan, Neil. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: contested histories*. John Wiley & Sons, 2019.

#### **Chapter 3: pp.45-58**

Gelvin, "Cultures of Nationalism," *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, **Chapter 3: 49-79**

#### *Recommended*

##### *The Arab vision*

Dawisha, Adeed. "Arab nationalism in the twentieth century." In *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton University Press, 2016. **Chapter 4**

Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity* (New York: Columbia University Press 1998) pp. 145-177 or 96-117

Guiding prompt for this week's response: compare the different explanations that explore the roots of Palestinian nationalism.

### **Week 4: Life under the British Mandate to Palestine**

Caplan, Neil. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: contested histories*. John Wiley & Sons, 2019.

#### **Chapters 4 and 5.**

Gelvin, "Cultures of Nationalism," *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, **chapter 4** World War 1 and the Palestine Mandate, **chapter 5** the Great Revolt pp. 110-123.

#### *Recommended*

1913 Seeds of Conflict

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3e6CN9uMIU>

Original documents: TEXT OF THE FAISAL-WEIZMANN AGREEMENT (3 January 1919)

<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-207006/>

## The Peel Commission

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/text-of-the-peel-commission-report>

Guiding prompt: What was (were) the principal cause(s) of interwar tensions? How so? What was the Peel Commission, and what did its members identify as the cause of unrest in spring 1936? What solutions did the members propose to attenuate tensions in Palestinian Mandate?

## Week 5: From Partition to Independence/Nakba and the Birth of the Refugee Problem

Caplan, Neil. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: contested histories*. John Wiley & Sons, 2019.

### Chapter 6, pp.101-130

**Gelvin**, "From The Great Revolt Through the 1948 War," *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, Chapter 6, 125-152.

#### *Recommend:*

Benny Morris, "Revisiting the Palestinian exodus of 1948," in Eugene Rogan and Avi Shlaim (eds), *The War for Palestine* (Cambridge, 2001), 37-59

Morris, Benny, and Morris Benny. *The birth of the Palestinian refugee problem revisited*. No. 18. Cambridge University Press, 2004. **Chapter 3**

Benny Morris an interview -parts 1& 2

<https://youtu.be/YzN3hHEvGdc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcVDZ2zuEyY>

Guiding prompt: explore the relationship between the refugee problem and the development of Palestinian nationalism. Based on the readings and the interview, how does Morris' work contribute to our understanding the displacement of Palestinians and the larger discourse about the conflict?

## Week 6: Israel and the conflict with the Arab world

**Gelvin**, "The Arab Israeli Conflict," *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, Chapter 8, 175-207.

Aly, Abdel Monem Said, Shai Feldman, and Khalil Shikaki. *Arabs and Israelis: Conflict and peacemaking in the Middle East*. Macmillan International Higher Education, 2013. **Pp. 130-149, 176-189**

#### *Recommended:*

Response paper about **One of three topics:**

Egypt and Israel – a "Cold Peace"

Owen, Tom. "COLD PEACE: Attitudes to Israel in Egypt." *Jewish Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (2001): 17-20.

Sallam, Moomen, and Ofir Winter. "Egypt and Israel: Forty years in the desert of cold peace." *Strategic Assessment* 20, no. 3 (2017).

#### Golan Heights – Normalization and Occupation

Ram, Moriel. "Colonial conquests and the politics of normalization: The case of the Golan Heights and Northern Cyprus." *Political Geography* 47 (2015): 21-32.

#### Munich 1972 and Black September

Singh, Subhash. "Black September: A turning point in the Palestinian national movement." *International Journal of Applied Social Science* 2, no. 5/6 (2015): 135-145.

### **Week 7: The Palestinian Movement and Its Leadership**

Caplan, Neil. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: contested histories*. John Wiley & Sons, 2019.

#### **Chapter 8, pp.184-191, 205-208**

Gelvin, James L. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: The Palestinian National Movement Comes of Age*, **chapter 9, pp. 209-242**

#### *Recommended*

Movie: Waltz with Bashir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynH68E1GEdc>

<https://www.documentarymania.com/player.php?title=Waltz%20With%20Bashir>

Hamas Charter

[https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/hamas.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp)

Tareq Baconi: Hamas, Explained - UNSETTLED Podcast

<https://www.unsettledpod.com/episodes/2021/5/17/tareq-baconi-hamas-explained>

### **Week 8: The Oslo Accords**

Aly, Abdel Monem Said, Shai Feldman, and Khalil Shikaki. *Arabs and Israelis: Conflict and peacemaking in the Middle East*. Macmillan International Higher Education, 2013. **Pp. 313-328**

Gelvin, James L. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: Coming Full Circle: The Era of Oslo*  
**Chapter 10, 244-265**

#### *Recommended*

Hermann, Tamar, and Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar. "Divided Yet United: Israeli-Jewish Attitudes toward the Oslo Process." *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 5 (2002): 597–613.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1555345>.

Extra resources

Hebron Treaty

<https://peacemaker.un.org/israelopt-redeploymentthebron97>

### **Week 9 -no class – Reading Week**

## **Week 10: The Second Intifada, Disengagement and The Gaza Wars**

Gelvin, James L. *The Israel-Palestine conflict*. Coming Full Circle: The Era of Oslo. **Chapter 10, 266-276**

Aly, Abdel Monem Said, Shai Feldman, and Khalil Shikaki. *Arabs and Israelis: Conflict and peacemaking in the Middle East*. Macmillan International Higher Education, 2013. **Pp. 370-388**

### *Recommended*

Jaeger, David. A., Esteban F. Klor, Sami H. Miaari, and M. Daniele Paserman. 2014. "Can Militants Use Violence to Win Public Support? Evidence from the Second Intifada." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*

Tenenbaum, K., & Eiran, E. (2005). Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank and Gaza: A brief history. *Negot. J.*, 21, 171.

## **Week 11: One State, Two States, Confederation, Containment, the Status Quo**

### The Two State Solution

Rumley, Grant, and Amir Tibon. "The Death and Life of the Two-State Solution: How the Palestinians May Eventually Get Their State." *Foreign Affairs* 94, no. 4 (2015): 78–87.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/24483819>.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/09/18/two-states-or-one-reappraising-israeli-palestinian-impasse-pub-77269>

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/getting-to-two-state-solution-regional-perspective>

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brookings-now/2015/10/21/podcast-alternatives-to-two-state-solution-for-israeli-palestinian-conflict/>

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ask-the-experts/2021-08-24/two-state-solution-still-viable>

### One State Solution

Bashir, Bashir, and Rachel Busbridge. "The politics of decolonisation and bi-nationalism in Israel/Palestine." *Political Studies* 67, no. 2 (2019): 388-405.

Peter Beinert, "I No Longer Believe in a Two-State Solution," *The New York Times* (8 July 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/opinion/israel-annexation-two-state-solution.html>.

Bret Stephens, "The Siren Song of 'One State,' *The New York Times* (4 August 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/03/opinion/israel-palestine-one-state-solution.html>.

### Confederation

Scheindlin, Dahlia, and Dov Waxman. "Confederalism: A third way for Israel–Palestine." *The Washington Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (2016): 83-94.

<https://www.alandforall.org/english/?d=ltr>

The Status Quo

<https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/fora95&div=77&id=&page=>

**Week 12: Week 12: The Conflict in Palestinian and Israeli Culture**

Danjoux, Ilan. "Political cartoons and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." In *Political cartoons and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict*. Manchester University Press, 2018.

Chapters 1, 7.

Watch one movie from the list

**Week 13: Closing discussion**

Aly, Abdel Monem Said, Shai Feldman, and Khalil Shikaki. *Arabs and Israelis: Conflict and peacemaking in the Middle East*. Macmillan International Higher Education, 2013. **Pp. 450-459**

Gelvin, James L. *The Israel-Palestine conflict: One hundred years of war*. Cambridge University Press, 2014. **Chapter 10, 264-267**