UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Arab-Israeli Relations

July 7 – August 6, 2026

Instructor: Dr. Daniel Zisenwine
Course Number: 702.2280 – 3 credits
Course Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 15:00-17:45 (Israel time)
20:00-22:45 (China time)
Course Location: online (Zoom)
E-Mail: dzisenwine@gmail.com

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

Participation and Writing Assignments: (40%)

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 prepare the readings for each class, contribute to the discussion, and be respectful and responsive to other students. Four short writing assignments (one-page summaries of four articles in the syllabus) will also be assigned, listed in the syllabus in bold.

Final Exam: (60%)

An online exam of multiple-choice and fill in questions, covering the course material.

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.

Benny Morris, Righteous Victims: *A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999* (New York, 1999).

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1:

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

Kenneth W. Stein, "A Historiographic Review of the Literature on the Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict", *American Historical Review*, Vol. 96, No. 5 (December, 1991), pp. 1450-1467.

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999* (New York, 1999), pp. 14-26; 37-66 (Ch. 2).

*Anthony D. Smith, "Zionism and Diaspora Nationalism", *Israel Affairs*, Vol. 2 No. 2 (Winter 1995); Also appears in Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp.203-224. (**Article for Summary Submission)**

Supplementary Reading:

Derek J. Penslar, "Is Zionism a Colonial Movement?", *Colonialism and the Jews* (eds. Ethan B. Katz, Lisa Moses Leff, Maud S, Mandel), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017, pp. 275-300.

The Emergence of Arab/Palestinian Nationalism

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999 (*New York, 1999), pp. 26-36.

Muhammad Y. Muslih, *The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism* (New York, 1988), pp. 1-11, 69-88, 175-224.

Supplementary Reading:

Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York, 1997), pp. 145-175.

The Jewish Community in Palestine under the British Mandate

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

Week 2:

The Arab Revolt 1936-1939

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

Tom Bowden, "The Politics of the Arab Rebellion in Palestine 1936-39", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 11 No. 2 (May, 1975), pp. 147-174.

World War II and the Struggle for a Jewish State

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 161-189.

Michael J. Cohen, "The Zionist Perspective", in Wm. Roger Louis and Robert W. Stokey (eds.), *The End of the Palestine Mandate* (Austin, 1986), pp. 79-103.

Walid Khalidi, "The Arab Perspective", in in Wm. Roger Louis and Robert W. Stokey (eds.), *The End of the Palestine Mandate* (Austin, 1986), pp. 103-106.

Week 3:

1948: The First Arab-Israeli War

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 161-258.

David Tal, "The Forgotten War: Jewish-Palestinian Strife in Mandatory Palestine, December 1947-May 1948", *Israel Affairs 6* (Spring/Summer 2000), pp.3-21.

*Rashid Khalidi, "The Palestinians and 1948: The Underlying Causes of Failure", *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948* (eds. Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim), (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 12-36 (**Article for Summary Submission**).

*Avi Shlaim, "The Debate about 1948", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 27 No.3 (1995), pp. 287-304 **(Article for Summary Submission**)

1956 Suez War

Colin Shindler, *A History of Modern Israel*, (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 98-122.

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

The 1967 Six Day War

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

Michael B. Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East,* (New York, 2003), pp. 12-32; 33-60; 305-327.

Week 4

From June 1967 to October 1973

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 347-443 (Ch. 8, 9).

Israel-Egyptian Peace Treaty; Lebanon War

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, Chapters 10, 11.

The First Intifada

F. Robert Hunter, *The Palestinian Uprising: A War by Other Means*, (London, 1991), Chapters 1,3.

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 561-610 (Ch. 12).

UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Week 5

The Oslo Accords and the Prospects for Peace

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

Avi Shlaim, "The Rise and Fall of the Oslo Peace Process", *International Relations of the Middle East*, (ed. Louise Fawcett) Oxford, 2005, pp. 241-261

*Oren Barak,, "The Failure of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, 1993-2000",*Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 42 No. 6 (November, 2005), pp. 719-736 **Article for Summary Submission**

The Second Intifada and the Breakdown of Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations

Elie Podeh, *Chances for Peace: Missed Opportunities in the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015, Ch. 20,21

Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, "Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors", *New York Review of Books,* August 9, 2001.

Jeremy Pressman, "The Second Intifada: Background and Causes of the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict", *Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol. 22 No. 2 (Fall 2003).

Hamas and the October 7, 2023 Attack on Israel

Kali Robinson, “What is Hamas”, Council on Foreign Relations, October 2024, www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hamas

Summary and Conclusion