Syllabus

Israel: Politics and Society - 1771

Last update 25-09-2014

HU Credits: 4

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor) and 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: israel studies: society & politics

Academic year: 1

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Gideon Rahat

Coordinator Email: msgrah@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff: Prof Gideon Rahat
Course/Module description:
An Introductory course that provides the foundations for understanding Israeli politics by analyzing Israeli society, political institutions and political behavior.

Course/Module aims:
To analyze the properties of the Israeli regime, the main cleavages in Israeli society, the major political institutions, and several main social and behavioral features.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
- List the main cleavages in Israeli Society and their political implications.
- Identify the main political institutions in Israel and analyze their role.
- Identify some of the main properties of Israeli political culture and patterns of political behavior in Israel
- Define the character of Israeli democracy
- Compare between Israeli politics and politics in other countries.

Attendance requirements(%):
100%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: lecture

Course/Module Content:
The course outlines the main characteristics of Israeli politics and society and the relationship between them. The introductory part presents a general background and examines the debate concerning Israel’s democracy. The second part describes and analyzes the main cleavages in Israeli society: Jewish-Arab/Palestinian, religious-secular, Ashkenazi-Sepharadi, new immigrants-veteran immigrants/Sabre, Doves-Hawks and the socio economic cleavage. The next part inspects Israel's political institutions: the three branches of government; the electoral system; the political parties and the party system; and interest groups. We will then turn to examine some of the main social and behavioral features of Israeli democracy: political culture; electoral behavior; religion and politics; and gender politics. The course concludes with a discussion on whether Israeli politics and
society are comparable to other democracies, or whether Israel is unique.

1. Introduction: The Israeli Political System

2. Democracy in Israel

*Israeli Society: Social Cleavages in Israel*

3. Introduction: Social Cleavages in Israel

4. The Jewish/Arab-Palestinian Cleavage

5. The Intra-Jewish Communal Cleavage

6. The Religious-Secular Cleavage

7. The Cleavage between New Immigrants and Veteran Immigrants/Natives

8. Social Cleavages: A Summary

*Political Institutions*

9. The Executive Branch

10. The Legislative Branch

11. The Constitutional Setting

12. The Judicial Branch

13. The Electoral System

14. Political Parties

15. Party System

16. Interest Groups

*Selected Issues*

17. Political Culture and Electoral Behavior
18. Religion and Politics

19. Gender Politics

20. Are Israeli Politics and Society Comparable or Unique?

Required Reading:
1. Introduction: The Israeli Political System


2. Democracy in Israel


Israeli Society: Social Cleavages in Israel

3. Introduction: Social Cleavages in Israel


4. The Jewish/Arab-Palestinian Cleavage

(4a) Eli Rekhess, “The Evolvement of an Arab-Palestinian National Minority in

5. The Intra-Jewish Communal Cleavage


6. The Religious-Secular Cleavage


7. The Cleavage between New Immigrants and Veteran Immigrants/Natives


8. Social Cleavages: A Summary


Political Institutions

9. The Executive Branch


(9a) „Basic Law: The President of the State„ http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic12_eng.htm


(9c) Kenig, Ofer and Shlomit Barnea. „The Selection of Ministers in Israel: Is the Prime Minister 'A Master of His Domain'?„ Israel Affairs, vol. 15, no. 3, 2009, pp. 261-278. E-JOURNAL
10. The Legislative Branch


(10a) Basic Law: The Knesset
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic2_eng.htm


11. The Constitutional Setting


(11a) Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic3_eng.htm

(11b) Basic Law: Freedom of Occupation
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic4_eng.htm

(11c) The Existing Basic Laws: Summary
http://www.knesset.gov.il/description/eng/eng_mimshal_yesod2.htm


12. The Judicial Branch


(12a) Basic Law: The Judiciary
http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic8_eng.htm

(12b) Menachem Hofnung, The Unintended Consequences of Unplanned Constitutional Reform: Constitutional Politics in Israel, The American Journal of
13. The Electoral System


14. Political Parties


15. Party System


16. Interest Groups


147-162.
ERESERVE 001229212


Selected Issues

17. Political Culture and Electoral Behavior


18. Religion and Politics


19. Gender Politics


(19c) Frances Raday. "Women's Human Rights: Dichotomy between Religion and Secularism in Israel" Israel Affairs, Volume 11, Number 1, 2005. 78–94. ERESERVE 001379946

20. Are Israeli Politics and Society Comparable or Unique?


Additional Reading Material:
none

Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 90 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 10 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:
The final version would appear about a week before the course starts