Course I: Introduction to Contemporary Israeli Society and Culture
Upper Division History course
Credit: 4 units
Lecture: 8 hours per week
Outside prep by the student: 10 per week
On-site instruction: 12 per week
Three excursions (one over-night)

Class schedule: Monday – Thursday, 9-11 a.m.

Course Objectives
This five-week course will provide the students with a multi-faceted understanding of modern Israeli society, politics and culture. Jerusalem provides an ideal site from which to introduce the students to the complexities of Israel’s history, politics, religion, society and culture. Among the topics explored: the political and legal systems; the spectrum of Jewish ethnicities and identities: the relations between state and religion, and between Israel and World Jewry; the role of the Holocaust in Israeli identity and politics; and the Israeli-Arab conflict and the peace process. We will end up by exploring Israeli music, literature and art, and the ways in which they reflect on many of the course’s topics.

Course Assessment
1. Midterm Exam during week 3 (30%)
2. Discussion and Participation (30%)
3. Final Exam Final Exam during week 5 (40%)

Note: Lecture and site visits are mandatory. Failure to attend any required class or visit will negatively affect a student’s final grade.
Course Plan

WEEK 1: Politics

WEEK 2: Identity politics
Ephraim Ya'ar, "Continuity and Change in Israeli Society: The Test of the Melting Pot", Israel Studies (2005) 10(2)91-128.

WEEK 3: Secular and Religious Jews

WEEK 4: Jews and Arabs
Ahmad Sa'adi, "Catastrophe, Memory and Identity: Al-Nakbah as a Component of Palestinian Identity", *Israel Studies* (Summer, 2002) 7(2):175-199
WEEK 5:  Culture: Music, Literature, and Art

**EXCURSIONS & TOURS** (in conjunction with Course II: Zionism and Post Zionism)
WEEK 1: National Museum & National Library
WEEK 2: Old City, Wailing Wall, and *City of David* archeological excavation
WEEK 3: Holocaust Museum
WEEK 4: Galilee (Northern Israel)
WEEK 5: Negev (Southern Israel)