

POLS 3342: Arab - Israeli Conflict

Syllabus

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar description as follows:

A comprehensive introduction to the history and development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict.

It is rare for warring nations to fight indefinitely. Yet after more than 60 years of violence and continuously failed attempts at peace, the Arab-Israeli Conflict is unique in its longevity and seeming resistance to any viable resolution.

Prior to the 20th Century, there was no conflict between Jews and Arabs. At that time, Palestine was a peripheral province in the Ottoman Empire which contained a multicultural population consisting of roughly 590,000 Muslims, 83,000 Jews and 17,000 Christians and others. For the most part, these groups lived peacefully with one another.

However, demographic changes in Palestine sowed the seeds for conflict after waves of Jewish immigrants began to arrive in the area beginning in the 1880s to escape the violence and insecurity of their predicament in Europe. As more and more Jewish nationalists began building new lives in the Holy Land, the indigenous population became increasingly alarmed.

The goal of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine had the unfortunate, and perhaps even unintended effect, of displacing Arab farmers and depriving them of their livelihood. Jewish immigrants to Palestine purchased and cultivated increasingly larger tracts of land in their hopes of making the desert bloom. Hitler's rise to power in Germany and attempt to exterminate world Jewry intensified the Jewish nationalist movement and secured world sympathy for a Jewish homeland in Palestine. However, growing animosity between Jews and Arabs in Palestine deteriorated into armed clashes. Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the dispersal of the Palestinian population, the Arab-Israeli Conflict has eluded attempts at resolution.

The history of the Arab-Israeli Conflict is one of war, statehood, nationalism, occupation and resistance, religious extremism and third party mediation. This course will delve into the deepest corners of the conflict to investigate its roots, determine its character and conditions of existence, and ponder possible solutions to the most obstinate issues that plague this fascinating yet unfortunate part of the world.

[Welcome to the Course](#)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, you should be able to:

- identify the root causes of the Arab-Israeli conflict;
- interpret the key political moments that shaped the chronology of Arab-Israeli relations;
- recognize the principal political institutions, leadership styles, group identities and major changes throughout Arab-Israeli history;
- compare and contrast the competing goals of Zionism and Palestinian nationalism;
- critically evaluate the role of religion, gender, ethnicity, and so on in the Arab-Israeli conflict
- apply the relevant scholarly approaches to the Arab-Israeli conflict and determine their significance;
- dispel common prejudices about the key players in the conflict (Arabs, Jews, Israelis, Palestinians, Muslims, etc) that stem from the media, casual debate, film, art, and the written word;
- differentiate between the Arab-Israeli conflict and the narrower Israeli-Palestinian conflict;
- articulate and justify *your own* reasoned perspective on the obstacles to resolving the Arab-Israeli relationship; and

- present constructive solutions towards a comprehensive peace settlement.

COURSE MATERIALS

Textbooks

The following required textbooks are available for purchase from the [University of Manitoba Bookstore](#). Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your [Distance and Online Education Student Handbook](#) for instructions on how to order your materials.

Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001*, New York: Vintage Books, 2001, ISBN: 0-679-74475-4 (paperback).

David W. Lesch, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History*, New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008: ISBN: 978-0-19-517230-0 (paperback).

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course covers a variety of topics and approaches to understanding the Arab-Israeli Conflict focusing on the dominant themes of war, peace and national identity.

Topics

Unit 1: Arab-Israeli Conflict as Object of Study

Unit 2: Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Unit 3: World War One and the British Mandate

Unit 4: World War Two and the First Arab-Israeli War

Unit 5: Cold Wars and the Suez Crisis

Unit 6: The Six Day War

Unit 7: The October War and the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Process

Unit 8: The War in Lebanon

Unit 9: The Intifada (Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation)

Unit 10: The Middle East Peace Process

Unit 11: Relentless Violence

Unit 12: The Arab-Israeli Conflict and the Arab Spring

EVALUATION AND GRADING

You will be evaluated on the basis of five assignments – two critical outlines, two online discussions, an essay and a final exam.

Distribution of Marks

| Evaluation | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------|
| Critical Outline #1 | 10% |
| Critical Outline #2 | 10% |
| Online Discussion #1 | 5% |
| Online Discussion #2 | 5% |
| Essay | 30% |
| Final Exam | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

Grading Scale

| Letter Grade | Percentage Range | Description |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| A+ | 90 – 100 | Exceptional |
| A | 80 – 89 | Excellent |
| B+ | 75 - 79 | Very good |
| B | 70 – 74 | Good |
| C+ | 65 – 69 | Satisfactory |
| C | 60 – 64 | Adequate |
| D | 50 – 59 | Marginal |
| F | 0 - 49 | Failure |

Note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.

Plagiarism, Cheating, and Examination Impersonation

You should acquaint yourself with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar*. Note: These policies are also located in your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

Assignments

Critical Outlines

You will be required to write two critical outlines. Critical outlines are brief evaluations of selected themes throughout the course. These assignments are intended to encourage you to engage with the topics covered in this course and allow you to describe, criticize and evaluate the arguments given by respected authors in the field. (Total 20%)

Online Discussions

There will be two online discussion forums in the course that will serve as a type of seminar. The online discussion will provide you with an opportunity to engage in a vibrant and constructive dialogue with your peers and the professor. The online discussion will enrich your learning experience by exposing you to the opinions of others, which will help you further develop your own opinions. (Total 10%)

Essay

There will be one essay in this course. The essay is an opportunity for you to clearly organize an argument and substantiate/defend it about a controversial political problem relating to the Arab-Israeli conflict using evidence provided by the course materials. You will be required to consult primary and secondary sources and develop your own substantive conclusions. (Total 30%)

Note: Detailed instructions about the assignments are found in the Assignments section in your course website.

Assignment Due Dates

Consult the course Calendar for assignment due dates.

Final Exam

The final exam will be written at the University of Manitoba (UM), Fort Garry campus or at an approved off-campus location. **Students needing to write at an off-campus location must declare a location by the specified deadline date** (see off-campus declaration and policy under Student Resources on course homepage). **Students writing at the UM Fort Garry campus do not need to declare an exam location.**

The Registrar's Office is responsible for the [final exam schedule](#) which is available approximately one month after the start of the course.

There will be a three hour final examination in this course and it will be worth 40% of your grade. The examination will take place during the examination period. The examination format will consist of very short essay-style questions. You are not required to know sections of the textbook that are not covered in the course material.

DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION (DE) STUDENT RESOURCES

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
- Distance and Online Student Handbook

- Distance and Online Education Website

Acknowledgements

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|--------------------------------|---|
| Content Specialist: | Tami Amanda Jacoby, PhD Political Studies Faculty of Arts University of Manitoba |
| | Tami Amanda Jacoby teaches in the Department of Political Studies at the University of Manitoba, where she is Associate Professor and Graduate Chair. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Manitoba, and holds a Master of Arts from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Doctor of Philosophy from York University in Toronto. Her primary areas of research are Arab-Israeli conflict, security studies, the politics of victimhood, terrorism and gender in International Relations. She is the author of many articles and three books entitled <i>Redefining Security in the Middle East</i> (Manchester University Press, 2002), <i>Women in Zones of Conflict: Power and Resistance in Israel</i> (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), and <i>Bridging the Barrier: Israeli Unilateral Disengagement</i> (Ashgate Press, 2007). |
| Instructional Designer: | Jonathan Dyck, PhD Distance and Online Education The University of Manitoba |
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