ISRAEL AND PROBLEMS OF SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST:
REGIONAL AND GLOBAL DIMENSIONS

Course Syllabus

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Course description:

The course is designed like the special course (64 hours) for the students of the 5th course of the Department of International Relations and aimed to deepen their knowledge in foreign policy of Israel and problems of security in contemporary Middle East. This course will explore how Israel’s regional role (or more precisely, its multiple roles) is conceptualized and executed by examining its evolution in the second half of XX - in the beginning of the XXI centuries, the interests and concepts that underlie it and the historical watersheds that have periodically re-shaped it.

The course will provide deep analysis of the nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict, its evolution and prospects for peace resolution in the region. It will look closely at all current problems of Israeli security – Iranian nuclear program, the problem of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism, destabilization in Iraq, “soft” factors of security, etc, as well as Israeli relations with major external powers, including the USA, the EU and the UN in the context of main problems of security in the Middle East.

Course objectives:

The purpose of this course is to give students a better understanding of the specific and detailed issues of Israeli foreign policy. Students are introduced to analytical frameworks that are used to examine the main current problems of security in the Middle East. Students are expected to master those frameworks and to develop an informed understanding of the Israel’s regional role. Emphasis will be placed upon improving student’s analytical and conceptual skills through discussion, analysis of primary sources, and writing on topics related to the subject matter.

Grading Criteria:

Final grade will be calculated according to the following.

Panel Work: 30 %
Midterm examination: 20%
Course paper( up to 15 pages on a topic to be determined in consultation with the instructor): 20%
Final Examination: 30%
**Essential Reading:**


You can also visit the following online resources:
- Jerusalem Post - [http://www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com)
- BBC online, Middle East Coverage - [http://www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

**Course Schedule:**

**Topic 1  Israel’s Strategic Thinking toward the Main Problems of Middle Eastern Security (2 lectures)**

Introduction to the course: the process of formulation and implementation of Israel’s main foreign policy goals since 1948; Israel’s concept of national security; a look “inside” Israeli foreign policy: orientations, strategies and political institutions.

**Readings:**


**Topic 2  The Arab-Israeli Conflict as a Major Threat to Israeli Security. Israel’s Relations with PLO, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan**

**2.1. History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict**

The lecture traces the general history of the Arab-Israeli conflict; the shaping of Palestinian identity and nationalism; major tensions between Israel and
Arab states; the wars of 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973 and 1982; the evolution of Israeli foreign policy in this period.

Readings:

2.2. Negotiating Middle East Peace (1977-2008)

The topic covers the negotiation process in the context of resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict from 1977 to the present, focusing on the Madrid Peace Conference, the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles, the Israel-Jordan peace treaty, Israel-Syria negotiations and “Road Map” plan. It includes case studies of success and failures of negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors; Israel’s changing security perceptions.

Readings:

2.3. Israeli Strategic Options in the Peace Process

The lecture is dedicated to the Israeli strategic options on the main problems of the Arab-Israeli peace process: boarders, Jewish settlements, relationships with the Palestinian Authority, problems of Jerusalem and Golan Heights.

Readings:

Topic 3  Israel’s Policy Toward Egypt, Turkey and Persian Gulf Countries
(2 lectures)

The topic includes the development of Israel-Egypt relations after Camp David of 1978; its achievements and main problems. It specifies the economic, political and security dimensions of Israeli-Turkish strategic ties. Then it focuses on Israeli foreign policy toward the Persian Gulf Countries.

Readings:

Topic 4  Iran and Iraq in Israeli Foreign Policy
(2 lectures)

The lecture examines the place of Iran and Iraq in Israel’s regional and global strategy with special attention to the current situation in Iraq. It focuses on Iranian nuclear program as the one of the main threat for Israeli security.

Readings:

Topic 5  Israel and External Powers in the Context of Security Problems in the Middle East

5.1. U.S. – Israeli alliance

The lecture traces the nature and evolution of U.S.-Israeli strategic relations since 1948. It represents thorough analysis of American policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict and the role of “cosponsor” in the Middle East peace process. The special attention will be given to the common security problems.

Readings:

**5.2. Israel-Europe Relations**

The lecture focuses on the EU’s policies regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict and its resolution; deals with an analysis of the economic and political effects of the different agreements concluded between Israel and the European Union; focuses on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the Euro-Arab Dialog and understanding of Euro-Islam.

*Readings:*

**5.3. Israel and UN**

The lecture offers the Israeli relations with international organizations, primarily United Nations, in the field of security issues in the Middle East. It examines the role of the UN in the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Israeli attitude toward this role.

*Readings:*

**Topic 6 Israel and Problem of Islamic Fundamentalism and Terrorism in the Middle East (2 lectures)**

The lecture is dedicated to the main terrorist groups and movements in the Middle East that targeted and are currently targeting Israel; their strategy, tactics and financing. The focus will be on Israeli intelligence, security and law enforcement tools and methods that deter and punish terrorist acts.
**Readings:**


**Topic 7  **Israel and “Soft” Factors of Security in the Middle East**

The topic includes problems of demographics and economic growth in the Middle East with accent on its impact on Israeli stability. Special attention will be given to the problem of Middle East water resources, land use and scarcity and the role of the environment in the regional relations.

**Readings:**