This seminar explores the dynamics of Israeli culture and society through a combination of weekly screenings of Israeli fiction and documentary films with readings from ethnographic and other relevant research. Among the (often overlapping) topics to be covered in this examination of the institutional and ideological construction of Israeli identity/ies: the absorption of immigrants; ethnic, class, and religious tensions; the kibbutz; military experience; the Holocaust; evolving attitudes about gender and sexuality; the struggle for minorities’ rights; and Arab-Jewish relations.

Course requirements: Two students will together draft 3-5 questions for one session as a basis for leading a discussion. Each student will also submit a question for [at least] three additional sessions. The final assignment is attached at the end of this syllabus.

In addition to the readings accessible on Chalk Library Reserves, participants are expected to view designated (*) films before class (available in Regenstein on four-hour reserve). [M] indicates films from www.maale.co.il

All individual articles are available for download on Chalk Library Reserve.

[NOTE: Instructor reserves the right to make alterations in syllabus as deemed necessary.]

**Session I: Introduction: Themes in Constructing Israeli Identity(ies)**

In class: Clip from: *A History of Israeli Cinema (Nadjari, 2009)*

Israel’s Decl. of Independence: [http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm](http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm)


*He Walked through the Fields (Millo, 1967)*

**Session II: Multi-Ethnic Israel**

In class: *Forget Baghdad (Samir, 2002): interview with Ella Shohat); The Immigrants (Einstein/Zohar)*


*Sallah (Kishon, 1964); Turn Left at the End of the World (Nesher, 2004)*  
*www.youtube.com/watch?v=5G6f0ztdoCk* (Spielberg Film Archive—Ethiopian Exodus)

**Session III: The Kibbutz: Evolution of a ‘Total Institution’**

In class: Clip from *Inventing Our Life (Freilich, 2011)*


*Noa at 17 (Yeshurun, 1981); Children of the Sun (Tal, 2007)*;

Kibbutz Degania: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwsHDSkhdFw*

Kibbutz Degania privatizes: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfmBkGlu20*

**Session IV: Grappling with the Holocaust** In class: *The Little Dictator (Cohn, 2015 [M])*


* Walk on Water (Fox, 2004); Under the Domim Tree (Cohen, 1995)


*One of Us (Barbash, 1989); Zero Motivation (Lavie, 2014)
Session VI: War

In class: The House on the Water (Regev, 2012[M])


*Beaufort (Cedar, 2007); Waltz with Bashir (Folman, 2008)

Session VII: Religion, Gender, and Sexuality

In class: And Thou Shalt Love (Elbaum, 2007 [M]); Cohen’s Wife (Hefetz, 2000)


http://www.pewforum.org/2016/10/13/video-israels-religiously-divided-society/

*Gett (Elkabetz, 2014); God’s Neighbors (Ya’ish, 2012)
Session VIII: Arabs and Jews: Negotiating Identities

In class: Arab Labor (TV series, 2007); Bus Station (Ir Amin, 2009); Lost Paradise (Brezis, 2008)


* Fictitious Marriage (Bouzaglo, 1988); Dancing Arabs (Riklis, 2014)

Session IX: The Settlers

In class: The Ranch (Domb, 2004 [M]); House 103 (Domb, 2005).


http://yesha.yeshachar.co.il/

http://peacenow.org/page.php?name=they-say-we-say#settlements

*The Hilltops (Hecht, 2011); The Field (Vardi, 2017)

Session X: Final Presentations
Modeling your entry on this quarter’s syllabus, organize a session for Anthropology of Israel distinct from those on our course syllabus. For your syllabus entry, list [at least] TWO Israeli Films (documentary or fiction) and FOUR articles (if relevant, you may use one article from the seminar syllabus). NOTE: one of the films may be for home viewing, the other for in-class.

Regarding films: you are encouraged to choose films other than those discussed. Nonetheless, as most of these films reflect different themes, if you have analyzed it from a perspective different than that used in class, one of the films chosen may be the same as that assigned during the quarter.

DISCUSSION:

After presenting the syllabus entry on the first page (follow the seminar’s syllabus format), your discussion should include the following:

1. First note the significance of the subject upon which you have chosen to focus.
2. Next, present the key themes that will organize your session.
3. Finally, discuss the relevance of your choice of reading material and films to illustrate the theme(s) selected. Here, you should provide:
   a) A concise summary of each article, indicating the rationale for your choice of each article and how they complement elements in the films chosen in further explicating the main arguments for your session.
   b) A succinct description of each film’s plot, pinpointing the noteworthy elements of the film(s) selected to illustrate the themes for your session.
4. Delineate the key features of your pedagogical approach to the session.

Final Session In-Class Presentation: Prepare a concise presentation of your session for the final meeting. Each person will have approximately 12 minutes (max.) to discuss your syllabus entry (including clips if you choose to show them).