UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DEPARTMENT OF HEBREW AND SEMITIC STUDIES

ISRAELI FICTION IN TRANSLATION
HEBR ST 343/LITTRANS 367
Dr. Miri Talmon-Bohm
Tuesday and Thursday: 09:30 AM-10:45 AM
Classroom: Stirling Hall 1335

Office Hours: Thursdays 2-3 PM. Please coordinate appointments in advance by Email.
Dr. Talmon-Bohm’s office: 7137 Social Science Bldg
Office phone:
Office Hours: Thursday 2:00-3:00 PM. Please coordinate appointments in advance

Telephone: 608-890-3368
Email: talmonbohm@wisc.edu

SYLLABUS
Fall Semester, 2009

Course Description

This course explores the diversity, complexity and richness of the Israeli cultural scene. Through a discussion and analysis of diverse literary texts, we shall discover different trends in Israeli literature and cultural history from the first decade of the state of Israel to the present. The texts we shall study offer a view of diverse social, ethnic and gendered experiences, generational sensibilities, and fundamental contradictions which underlie the Israeli experience. The fictional characters- religious and secular, masculine and feminine, lovers and enemies, native and new comers, insiders and outsiders- clash and interact, creating a fascinating cultural tapestry. Important aspects of this fictional world relate to Israeli history, to the national and social formations that shape the individual experience: Jewish history in the Diasporas, the Holocaust, immigration, war, conflict and terror, militarism and bereavement, different spatial arenas and forms of life, such as kibbutz, army base, old and new cities.

Class Lectures and Discussions: Preparation and Attendance.
This Course requires active participation, and an ongoing dialog between students and texts. It is therefore absolutely vital that you prepare for each and every class. This means you have to read carefully the literary text assigned in advance, and prepare it for the designated date, as scheduled in the class syllabus and reading schedule. Attendance and participation in class discussions comprise 10% of the course grade. Students who miss over 2 classes will lose this component of the grade.

Course Reader

The course focuses on short stories. In addition, there will be poems, and additional sources, which shed light on the literary, cultural, historical, or social context of the literary pieces. All the texts, for which full references are given in the syllabus below, are compiled in a reader. The reader will be available as class packet from the L&S copy center at the Social Science Building, and you are expected to bring it to every class. The texts in the reader will be available in the library on reserve as well.

Course Requirements

Oral presentation in class

At the beginning of each class students will be asked to talk about their preparation of the text to be discussed in class and their understanding of it. Presentations will be up to 5 minutes long each. If you choose not to present orally you have to submit your written summary of the text you prepared at the beginning of class: 2-3 pages long. The grade for this oral presentation in class comprises 20% of your final grade.

Written Analysis Assignment (mid-term)

This written assignment requires a comparative analysis of two texts- poems or stories, according to guidelines provided specifically when it is assigned. This assignment should be typed, 4-5 pages long (a maximum of 2000 words). You will be required to submit one such written analysis, 20% for this component of your final grade.

Critique of UW Madison Israeli Film Festival

You are required to write one critical essay about one Israeli film screened in the Israeli film festival. Your essay should be 1-2 pages long; in it you should describe the film’s narrative and themes, and explain in what ways it is relevant to our discussions of Israeli literature. This film review of one UW Madison Israeli Film Festival comprises 10% of your final grade.

Final Paper

The final paper is an analysis of one story we have NOT discussed in class. The story will be assigned by me in advance. In your analysis you’ll be asked to apply the insights and tools you have acquired throughout the semester for the discussion of this new text, and compare it to other relevant texts we have discussed. The final paper should be submitted no later than December 12, 2009, 12 PM. This final paper should be 4-6 pages long. It comprises 30% of your final grade.
Fall 2009 Jewish Heritage Lecture Series

You are required to attend one lecture offered by the Mosse-Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies as Jewish Heritage Lecture Series, and it is highly recommended that you consider attending all of them. The program is detailed as an appendix to this syllabus. A typed summary of the lecture you attended, 1-2 pages long, should be submitted to me no later than one week after the lecture event. This summary comprises 10% of your final grade.

Course Grade:

1. Attendance: 10%
2. One Oral presentation in class: 20%.
3. One written comparative analysis assignment [mid term]: 20%
4. One written Israeli Film Festival Review: 10%
5. One written final Paper: 30% (to be submitted by December 12 2009, 12 PM, 4-6 pages).
6. One Jewish Heritage Lecture Series lecture summary: 10%

Class Syllabus and Reading Schedule *

* You should read and prepare in advance the text/s designated for each date, except for the first class, September 3, 2009.

September 3

September 8

September 10,15


September 17, 2008


September 22, 24

September 29, October 1

October 6, 8

October 13,15

October 20, 22

October 27


October 27, 29

November 3, 5

Additional reading:

November 10, 12


November 17, 19

Additional Reading:
“An Introduction to: “It’s Greek to You”, She Said to Him’ In: DREAMING THE ACTUAL-

Additional Reading:

November 24

December 1

December 3

December 8, 10,

December 15

Appendix 1:
Academic Calendar for 2009 Fall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction begins</td>
<td>Sep 2 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Day§</td>
<td>Sep 7 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosh Hashanah***</td>
<td>Sep 19-20 (S-N)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramadan ends (Eid-al-Fitr)***</td>
<td>Sep 20 (N)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yom Kippur***</td>
<td>Sep 28 (M)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thanksgiving recess Nov 26-29 (R-N)
Eid-al-Adha*** Nov 27 (F)**
Last class day Dec 15 (T)

§No classes

*Observances of Jewish holidays begin at sunset on the day preceding that which is listed as the holiday.

**Islamic holidays are based on the lunar cycle, and dates may vary by one day from those listed.

***RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES POLICY
In accordance with regent and faculty policy, faculty are asked not to schedule mandatory exercises on days when religious observances may cause substantial numbers of students to be absent from the university. Some religions mark observances over multiple days, which may begin at sunset on the day preceding the posted date(s) of the holiday. Conflicts may occur for religious observances other than those identified in the calendar. A listing, though not exhaustive, of religious holidays is available at www.interfaithcalendar.org. Any student with a conflict between an academic requirement and any religious observance must be given an alternative means of meeting the academic requirement. A student's claim of a religious conflict, which may include travel time, should be accepted at face value.

Appendix 2: CJS Lectures and Screenings Fall 2009