The course introduces the political system in Israel, going back to its roots in the pre-state period (*Yishuv*), up to the recent elections (2009). We survey key aspects of the Israeli political system including election methods, parties, the constitutional status, and the impact of social cleavages on political behavior.

**Requirements**

Two reading summaries and presentations (10% and 15% of the final grade). A final paper (75%).

**Main Books**


**Topic 1: Intro: Zionism and the Intellectual Origins of Israeli Identity**

- Mahler, ch. 1.

**Topic 2: Intro: The Israeli – Arab Conflict**


**Topic 3: State Formation: The Yishuv and the Creation of Political Institutions**

Topic 4: The Electoral Process and Voting Patterns
- Arian, chs. 7,8.
- Mahler. ch. 7.

Topic 5: Political Parties and Interest Groups
- Mahler, ch. 6.
- Arian, chs. 5,6.

Topic 6: Constitution and Referenda: Work in Progress?
- Mahler, ch. 4.

Topic 7: Political Representation of Minorities

Topic 8: Palestinians in Israel
- Vision documents (online).

Topic 9: The Religious Divide
Topic 10 (*): The Jewish Ethnic Divide


- Shafir and Peled, Ch. 3 (74-110).

Conclusions

You can find these special issues useful:

The 2009 Elections
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g918953511~tab=toc~order=page

The 2006 Elections
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g781743040

Israel studies- an ethnology

Cohen-Almagor, Israeli Society at the Crossroads (Israel Affairs, 1,1)
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g714003332~tab=toc~order=page

Special volume of Citizenship Studies on Israeli Citizenship (Israel Affairs, 11,2)
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=g714003364~tab=toc~order=page