Established as the nation state of the Jewish people, Israel has an outstanding ethno-religious socio-cultural diverse population. This course will introduce the students to this diversity and its impact on Israeli politics and society. We will explore the historical origins of this complexity: The religious significance of the Holy Land, the preservation of Ottoman and British mandatory traditions, the 1948 war and the mass immigration to Israel from Europe and the Middle East. We will examine the socio-cultural and religious diversity within the Jewish majority that extends far beyond the common division between western European (Ashkenazim) and Middle Eastern (Mizrahim) and the Palestinian Arab minority that is no less complex and includes Muslims, Christians, Druze and smaller communities.

Based on socio-historical researches and documentaries, we will discuss the following issues: Is the breach between the Jewish majority and the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel bridgeable? Is there a 'demographic issue' in Israel? and if so, what is its impact on Israeli politics? Who are the 'Arab Jews'? Can they form a bridge between Jews and Arabs? Is there an Israeli identity? What are its components?

The course will discuss various approaches to the Israeli society as based on reading, documents, websites and videos that will be shown in class.

Course Requirements:
Two short mid-term papers and a final essay. Specific requirements will be announced in due course. Active participation in class meetings is required.
Grades will be weighed as follows:
Two mid-term papers: 50 percent (25 percent each)
Final essay: 40 percent
Active participation in class: 10 percent

Required Books: To be purchased at the university bookstore. Other reading material will be posted on the web.

Dowty, Alan, The Jewish State A Century Later, Berkeley:
University of California Press, 1998
Rosenthal, Donna, The Israelis, Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Land,
Course outline and reading:
Note: Topics may overlap for more than one week due to film screening and discussion.

I. **Introduction: The Origins of Israel and Israeli Society**
   T Jan. 29: Who are the Israelis? The Zionist revolution and Jewish immigration into Palestine during the British mandate; The Zionist ideology, ethnicity and social stratification
   Required Reading: Wasserstein, pp. 5-23, 31-39; Dowty, pp. 51-60
   Th Jan. 31: Continued

II. **Israeli Society during the First Decades of the State of Israel**:
   T Feb. 5: The mass immigration to the state of Israel during the 1950s and 1960s; Building the state's democracy and political institutions; The 'melting pot' ideology, its impact on Israeli society and the making of the Ashkenazi political dominance
   Required Reading: Dowty, pp. 61-84; Rosenthal, pp. 97-112; Shafir-Peled, pp. 66-73
   Th. Feb. 7: Continued

III. **Middle Eastern 'Mizrahi' Jews**
    T Feb. 12: Ethnicity and social stratification; Who are the 'Arab Jews'? The rise of 'Mizrahi' identity
    Required Reading: Dowty, pp.148-156; Rosenhal, pp. 113-129; Shafir-Peled, pp. 74-95
    Th Feb. 14: Continued

IV. **The Arabs in Israel**
    T Feb. 19: The origins of the Arabs in Israel; minority rights, inequality in law and practice; Israeliization or Palestinazation?
    Required Reading: Dowty, pp. 184-215; Rosenthal, pp. 247-277; Optional: op.cit, 278-291
    Th Feb. 21: Continued

V. **Minorities within Minority: the Christians and Druze**
    T Feb. 26: The Christians in Israel
    Required Reading: Tsimhoni, Christians, pp. 124-152; Rosenthal, pp. 305-323
    Th Feb. 28: The Druze in Israel
    Required Reading: Rosenthal, pp 292-304

VI. **The Impact of the 1967 War and the Arab-Israeli Conflict**
    T Th Mar. 4: The rise of messianism and the search for the biblical origins; settlements in the occupied territories and their impact on Israeli society
    Dowty, pp. 226-243; Shafir-Peled, pp. 159-183
    Th Mar. 6: Continued
March 8-March 16 Spring break

VII. The Expansion of Religious Ethnicity and its Impact on Israeli Politics
T Mar. 18
The turn of Middle Eastern Mizrahi Jews to the right wing politics
The rise of the Shas party
The expansion of Ultra-Orthodox parties influence on Israeli politics
Required Reading: Dowty, pp. 159-183; Shafir-Peled, pp. 137-155
Th Mar. 20: Continued

VIII. The Mass Immigration of the 1990s: The Russians and Ethiopians
T Mar. 25:
The Russian immigration and absorption in Israel
Required Reading: Ben Rafael, pp. 55-77; Shafir-Peled, pp. 308-323
The Ethiopians in Israel
Required Reading: Rosenthal, pp 148-169
Th Mar. 27: Continued

IX. Religion, Demography and Nationalism in Israel
T April 1:
Will Israel retain its Jewish majority? The discourse in Israel on
Demography and Jewish/Israeli nationalism
Required Reading: Wasserstein, pp. 25-30, 167-171
CBS data
Th April 3: Continued

X. Jewish-Arab relations in Israel
T April 8:
Required Reading:
Smooha, Ethnicity, pp. 300-319
Th April 10: Continued

XI. Ethnicity and the struggle for constitutional and human rights
T April 15:
Required Reading: Shafir-Peled, pp. 260-307
The April 17: Continued

XII. Summary:
T April 22:
Will the State of Israel remain a Jewish democratic state?
Is there an Israeli identity? Israeli nationalism?
Required Reading: Dowty, pp. 249-255
Th April 24: End

Bibliography:
Ben Rafael, Eliezer et.al, Building a Diaspora, Russian Jews in Israel, Germany

Shafir, Gershon and Peled, Yoav, Being Israeli, the Dynamics of Multiple
Citizenship, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005

Smooha, Sammy, "Ethnicity as a Factor in the Israeli Jews' Attitude toward Arabs,"


Video Clips to be screened and discussed from the following list:
Lul, (excerpts) - how Israelis accept aliya
Salah Shabati – relations between the Ashkenazi kibutziem and middle eastern immigrants
Life according to Agfa – the Israeli internal ethnic strife
Wedding in Galilee: the Arab collective memory
The Druze bride – the national dilemma of the Golan heights Druze
Medurat ha-shevet - life and concepts of Israeli settlers in the West bank
A Trumpet in the Wadi – An impossible love between a Russian immigrant and an Arab girl in Haifa