Course Description:
Israel stands at the center of global attention, and, in recent months, also at the center of American anthropological discussions. But what characterizes Israeli culture? What are the dilemmas and challenges Israeli society faces? And how can ethnography be undertaken in such a complex and sensitive place? These are some of the questions this seminar will try to address.

By reading a wide range of contemporary ethnographies, this seminar will introduce students to the anthropology of Israel. The seminar will focus on concepts such as politics, gender, nationalism, ethnicity, religion, environment, globalization, and popular culture, and will also examine marginalized and frequently overlooked social groups. Students will develop a complex and multi-layered understanding of a diverse society, read a wide range of anthropological work on Israel, and will write a final paper on one of the topics or sites this seminar will cover. A few short films and film excerpts will be viewed in class.

Course requirements and evaluation:
1. Attendance and Participation (20%)
   Students are expected to attend all classes, complete the reading assignments before class, and come to class prepared to participate in discussions. All readings are posted on LATTE. Readings will amount to approximately 75-150 pages per week. More than two unexcused absences will result in a reduction of your participation grade. Please bring copies of readings (print or electronic) to class.

2. Reading Responses (15%)
   Each student is required to submit at least 10 reading responses 100-150 words long on reading materials. Please email them before class session by 12 PM. Alternatively, you may choose to email one longer set of reading responses that cover both Monday and Wednesday’s readings by Monday morning. In your reading responses, you may outline the key points of the readings, highlight what was interesting/confusing/significant to you, raise questions, and relate your thoughts to other readings or contemporary events. Late posts will not be accepted. These will be graded pass/fail. Each student must get at least 10 passing responses to get the full score.

3. Class discussion (15%)
   In each class will have at least one discussion Leader, whose representative evaluation of positions represented in the readings for their chosen day will lead (with me) the discussion of reading materials of the same day, and will link the reading materials to the broader context of the seminar. In the first week of class, the students will sign up for the day they will be help me lead the discussion. The students who should guide the discussion will send me email with an outline of their ideas discussed Class at least one full day before the class.
4. Final Paper (50% - 10%, 10%, 30%)
There will be one final paper (7 double spaced pages). A hand out of guidelines and expectation for this exercise will be distributed. Each paper you turn in must have a bibliography. You may use the format you see in this syllabus to cite your sources. If you are in doubt about citation methods, please see me.

Timetable for submission of the final paper:
- A paper proposal (describing the paper’s general topic and proposed sources of data) will be due on Wednesday, Nov. 2th (10%).
- A thesis, preliminary outline and bibliography will be due on or before Wednesday, Nov 28th (10%).
- The final paper will be due on Monday, Dec. 14th (30%).

Evaluation for Graduate Students
Your final paper should be about 15 double-spaced pages (50%)

Late Policy: All written work must be turned in on due dates indicated. If you anticipate problems turning in the assignment on time, please contact me up to 24 hours prior to the due date.

Expected workload: Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, research, weekly reading responses, class preparation, studying, etc.).

Academic integrity: Students are required to follow the University’s academic integrity policies in all of their academic work. For more information, please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities and the instructor. Allegations of academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS - Library guides.

Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

Class conduct: You may not use hand-held electronic devices in class. Cell phones should be silenced before entering class. I trust that you will restrict usage of laptop computers and tablets to classroom purposes (e.g. taking notes, consulting class readings). Any non-classroom use of electronic devices will result in a significant deduction from your participation grade. Your participation is expected to be thoughtful and respectful of others. Please allow other participants to articulate themselves fully.
Week One: Introduction to Israeli society I

8/29 - Introduction to the course

8/31 - Introduction of Israeli society I - The Israeli Paradox:

Markowitz and Nir Avieli. 2015. The Israeli Paradox, Ethnologie Française, 2 (45).


Week Two: Introduction of Israeli society II

9/5 - No class - Labor Day

9/7


Week Three - From melting pot to mosaic? - An introduction to the political and social disputes

9/12


9/14


Week Four: political and social disputes - Mizrahi-Ashkenazi

9/19 - Identity and Politics
9/21 **Space and Ethnicity**


**Week Five - political and social disputes - Israeli-Palestinian I**

9/26 **Palestinian citizens of Israel:**


9/28 **In the West Bank:**


**Week Six: - Israeli-Palestinian II - Space, nature and resistance:**

10/3 – No class

10/5


**Week Seven: Judaism, religion and the state**

**10/10**


10/12 - No class

**Week Eight: Nationalism and Materiality in Culture**

**10/17** - Nationalism, Globalization and power through food:


**10/19** - Materiality and Popular Culture:


**Week Nine - Startup Nation? Class, economy and resistance**

**10/24** - No class

10/26


**Week Ten - Body and Gender:**

10/31


11/2

*First submission - paper proposal for final paper*


**Week Eleven – “The situation” I - Military, Terror and Everyday Life**

11/7


Hirsch, Dafna. 2011. "Hummus is best when it is fresh and made by Arabs": The gourmetization of hummus in Israel and the return of the repressed Arab. American Ethnologist 38.4: 617-630.

11/9


Week Twelve - The situation II - Resistance and its price
11/14


11/16 - No class

Week Thirteen - The conflict and its impact on society and culture
11/21


11/23 –

No class - Thanksgiving holiday

Week Fourteen
11/28 - US-Israel relations

Second submission - preliminary outline and bibliography for final paper


Ethnography, anthropology and the boycott
11/30 - **Hope and Ethnography in hazardous areas**


**Week Fifteen**

12/5 **The anthropology in Israel:**


Anthropologists for Dialogue on Israel & Palestine
http://www.anthrodialogue.org/#personal-stories/advfd

Anthropologists for the Boycott of Israeli Academic Institutions
https://anthroboycott.wordpress.com/

12/7 **Course completion and conclusion**

12/14 **Submission of the final paper**