Course Description: This is a course on the Arab-Israeli Conflict, from the emergence of the modern Zionist movement beginning in 1881 to the present day. We will start off by discussing the biblical foundations for the emergence of modern Zionism, the Jewish people’s links to the land of Israel through almost 2000 years of exile, and the idea of a return to the land in mid 19th century Europe. In parallel, we will discuss the Arab population’s connection to Palestine in an historical and religious context, beginning with the Muslim conquest of the modern Middle East and North Africa in the 7th century. We will then discuss Arab-Jewish competition for land and resources under the British Mandate, ultimately leading to a United Nations partition of the land into two states in 1947 and the emergence of Israel in 1948. We will fully explore Arab-Israeli wars as well as the opportunities, difficulties, and dilemmas in achieving peace. The rise of the PLO, Hamas, Hizballah, and the involvement of non-Arab Iran and Turkey will also be explored as part of this course. Video will be used to illustrate the complexity of the conflict and to demonstrate a range of opinions and perspectives, and current events will be discussed in class on a regular basis.

Course Requirements: There will be two take-home essays as well as a final exam. Both essays should be approximately 5-7 pages each, double-spaced, in 10 or 12 point font. The final exam will consist of short answer questions. A review sheet will be provided in advance of the final exam.

Grading will be calculated on the following basis:

Attendance and participation: 20%

Essay 1 – 25%

Essay 2 – 25%

Final Exam – 30%

Course Objectives: By the end of this course students should have a firm historically-based understanding of the core issues that divide not only Israelis and Palestinians, but Israelis and the broader Arab world from 1882 to the present day. Students will understand the differences between the Arabs and Israeli narratives regarding the Arab-Israeli Conflict, as well as divisions within both Israeli and Palestinian societies (and the broader Arab world) regarding how to understand and solve the conflict. Finally, we will discuss the emergence of non-Arab Iran and Turkey and the role they play in the Arab-Israeli Conflict.
**Teaching Method:** The course will consist of lectures, in-class critical examination of documents, maps, and video presentations. Class discussions will constitute a major part of the course; on that basis, students are urged to come to class prepared as well as to follow the news closely. Contemporary events will be discussed in light of their historical perspective.

**Texts:**

1). Alan Dowty, *Israel/Palestine* (Cambridge: Polity, 3rd edition, 2012). This book is also available in Kindle and Google as an Ebook. Both are reasonably priced. I am currently using the Kindle version. Page numbers may slightly differ among the print, Google, and Kindle versions, so please let me know which version you are using and we’ll make the small page number adjustments.

Also, please follow the news; it will inform class discussion. Some news sites with excellent news about Israel include Ha’aretz, The Jerusalem Post, The Times of Israel, and Arutz Sheva. The Palestine News Service provides news from the perspective of the Palestine Authority. Al-Jazeera is an important source of news that reflects a wide variety of Middle Eastern perspectives. Al-Hayat is the most influential Arabic language newspaper outside the Middle East. The New York Times and the Washington Post are excellent sources for news on Israel and the Middle East, as is the al-Monitor website. Relevant articles in general-interest periodicals such as The Economist, The Atlantic, Harpers, The Nation, The New Republic, and The New York Review of Books may be useful. Avoid blogs.

**July 11, 13, and 14 – Origins of Zionism to the Beginning of World War II, 1882-1939**

1). Dowty, Kindle version, Introduction and pp. 72-85

(Chapters 2 and 3, “The Jewish Story” and “The Arab Story” in Dowty are very highly recommended. Much of the reading will provide a broad perspective of what we will cover in class in Week 1.

A). The Balfour Declaration:


B). The Feisal-Weizmann Agreement:

http://www.icsresources.org/content/primarysourcedocs/FaisalWeizmannAgreement.pdf

(With Addendum below)

http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/5BFF833964EDB9BF85256CED00673D1F

3). Read the Peel Partition Plan

http://www.mideastweb.org/peelmaps.htm

**July 18, 20, and 21 – World War II, the aftermath, the 1948 War, Creating a State, and the Palestinian Refugee Problem –**

1). Dowty, pp. 85-103

2). The Arab Office Report to the Anglo-American Committee, 1946:

http://www.mideastweb.org/araboffice.htm


**July 25, 27, and 28 – The Sinai Campaign through the 1973 War –**

1). Dowty, 103-136,


http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/week-s-end/yom-kippur-s-tragic-hero-1.389898


August 1, 3, and 4 – Peace with Egypt through the Withdrawal from Lebanon, 1977-2000

1). Dowty – pp. 137-176

1). Cyrus Vance, ”The Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty,” *Middle East Journal*, 33:3 (1979) (This includes the text of the peace treaty)


August 8, 10, and 11 – From Camp David II to the Present – 2000-2016, Overview, Final exam

1). Dowty – 167 to end of book


5). Efraim Inbar, “Implications for Israel in a Transformed Middle East,” *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 19:1 (Spring 2015), 74-78


Other readings from newspapers and policy journals of contemporary significance may be assigned (or replace currently assigned articles if we agree as a class they are more relevant) as we get closer to the end of class.