

# Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.

Autumn 2016 ~ Hebrew 2245  
**Israeli Film & Society**

Meeting Time/Location:

Instructor:

Office Hours:

Office:

Email:

Mailbox:

Israeli film, from the heroic nationalism of the 1950s to the conflicted identities of the present, offers a unique window on the history and society of the modern state of Israel. At the same time, the emergence of the Israeli film industry represents an important facet of modern Israeli culture. In this course, we will focus on both the aesthetic and thematic dimensions of Israeli films from 1948 to the present day, tracing the development of film production in Israel as well as the relationship between film and society.

This course is designed for anyone interested in Israeli culture and society, and assumes no previous knowledge about Israel. All films will include English subtitles and assigned readings will address Israeli cinema and related historical and social issues.

**This course fulfills the General Education category of Visual and Performing Arts**

Goals:

Students evaluate significant works of art in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students analyze, appreciate, and interpret significant works of art.
2. Students engage in informed observation and/or active participation in a discipline within the visual, spatial, and performing arts.

In this course, students will watch and interpret Hebrew and Israeli films from the beginning of the film industry to the present day. Students will analyze both the artistic and technical aspects of film, gaining familiarity with Israeli film and the art of film more generally.

**COURSE GOALS**

- ❖ To analyze Israeli films from a variety of perspectives, including themes (dramatic structure, historical events, characterization, setting, symbolism); visual elements (cinematography, editing, visual effects, lighting); sound and music; and ideology (political, moral, philosophical and social statements).
- ❖ To understand the development of the Israeli film industry, and its place in Israeli culture and society.

- ❖ To examine Israeli history and society through the prism of film, tracing the changing representations of major issues such as Zionism, Israeli identity, the immigrant experience, and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

#### **COURSE READER AND OTHER MATERIALS:**

Films, readings, links, and resources will be available on the course website, Carmen, or via the Secured Media Library. Please make sure that you have access to this class website, Carmen and the Secured Media Library and let me know *immediately* if you have trouble accessing either.

Assignments will vary in length, depending on the topic and the difficulty of the films and texts. Be sure to start **early** with the assignments; if you leave everything to the night before, there will be too much to read and view.

Viewing assignments will be available online through OSU's Secured Media Library ([drm.osu.edu/media](http://drm.osu.edu/media)) whenever possible and in many cases, available through services like Amazon and Netflix (check on [gowatchit.com](http://gowatchit.com)). Please note that assigned films are a critical part of the course; even if you have technical troubles viewing the films online, you are still responsible for viewing them. You can always stream the film from a campus computer site or a computer in the library. Remember that passive viewing is not enough. Take notes, record details, mark interesting scenes, scribble down questions to ask in class – we will be discussing and analyzing these films in detail.

Readings and viewings must be **completed by the day that they are assigned**. Please be sure to bring the assigned readings to class, because we will be referring to the text in our discussions.

On occasion, we will view clips from additional films in class. I will do my best to make these clips available, either on the class website or via the Secured Media Library, but that will not always be possible.

#### **REQUIREMENTS**

##### Attendance, Participation & Preparation (10%)

- Watch all of the films. Be sure to take notes for future reference in discussions and writing assignments. This will help you improve your ability to analyze, appreciate and interpret the films that we focus on.
  - Information about each film, including questions to keep in mind as you watch the film, is posted on the website. These questions will help you identify key aspects of the film for discussion, paper assignments and the final exam.
- Complete the assigned readings and viewings *before* class. Make sure to pace yourself – don't leave everything to the night before or the day of class because you'll have too much to process effectively.
- Participate in class discussions and in-class groups. This course revolves around class screenings and discussions of films, an essential part of developing skills for film

analysis. Come to class prepared to be an active participant: ready to talk about the films and readings, to consider different viewpoints and to ask questions. You will be graded on how you engage the material and other students, not how much you know about the subject. Not everyone feels comfortable participating in class, but if it's difficult for you to speak up in discussions, try to show your interest and preparation by asking questions, taking an active role in group work, and speaking to me outside of class.

- Quizzes may be given, particularly if students are not keeping up with the viewing and reading. Quiz questions will primarily ask you factual questions about assigned texts and films.

#### Film Journal (35%)

- Each week, students will submit a short (350 word) response to assigned readings. Responses are due online **each Wednesday by 9:00am**.
- This is your opportunity to question the films and texts that we will be reading and viewing and to analyze them.
- Two journal questions are posted with each week's viewing/reading assignments on the class website. Respond to **one** of the posted prompts, or choose your own topic. Please note, journals must be **analysis** of the week's material, not summaries or reviews.
- Suggested formats:
  - Start with a question or a statement of argument (thesis). Provide evidence to answer your own question or to support your argument, including specific references to and quotations from the text/film.
    - Note that while analyzing quotations is often a very effective way of close-reading, no more than 50 words (total) of quotations can count towards the 300 word limit.
    - A compare/contrast thesis is often a good way to start generating ideas. What is similar or different about two films or two scenes? Why are these similarities or differences significant?
  - Another possibility is a scene analysis. Choose a film scene or sequence, typically no more than 5 minutes long. Pose a question or statement of argument (thesis) about the scene. Provide evidence to answer your question or support your argument, focusing on aspects of film including but not limited to: narrative, point of view, character development, mise-en-scene, lighting, sound, camera shots, music, editing, acting, etc.
- The first journal that you submit will be graded on a 10-point scale, so that you have a sense of the way in which they will be evaluated. After that, journals will be submitted twice over the course of the semester, on October 7 and December 7th. Students will submit five journals to be graded for each half of the semester.
- 40% of the Reading Journal grade will come from submitting journals on time (10 total; 12 possible journals). 60% of the grade will be based on submissions in the middle and at the end of the semester.
- More information about the journal will be provided in class.

### Midterm (25%)

- A take-home midterm will be distributed on October 7<sup>th</sup>. It will be due (electronically) by October 12<sup>th</sup> by 11:59pm. Class will not meet on October 12<sup>th</sup>.
- The midterm must represent your own work. You may discuss the questions with other people, but you must write your own responses.
- If midterms submitted are substantially similar, suggesting that students wrote it together, those students will take an additional midterm in my office, at a mutually agreed upon time.
- Any midterm with a grade lower than a B may be rewritten and resubmitted. The final grade will be an average of the grades on the original and revised papers.

### Final Exam (30%)

- A cumulative final exam will be given at the end of the semester during the university scheduled time, **Thursday, December 15, 8am-9:45am**. No make-up exams will be given.

**Final grades** will be calculated as follows:

Attendance & Participation	10%
Film Journal	35%
Midterm	25%
Final Exam	30%

Grading scale: A (93-100) A- (90-92) B+ (87-89) B (83-86) B- (80-82) C+ (77-79) C (73-76) C- (70-72) D+ (67-69) D (60-66) E (below 60)

### CLASS POLICIES

Absences: To do well in this class, you need to be present and awake. Since things come up (illness, family issues, other commitments), you may be absent **two times** without penalty. After that absence, each addition unexcused absence will lower your overall grade, up to 5% per unexcused absence. This could potentially have a **major** effect on your grade – in fact, you could fail the class for missing too many classes.

- After two absences, please let me know **by email** if you need to miss class, preferably ahead of time. If you are ill for a significant period of time, or have other reasons that prevent you from attending class, please let me know as soon as possible. I will decide the grade penalty (up to 5% per absence) that will apply.
- 2 late arrivals or early departures (without explanation) will count as an absence.
- Sleeping through class lectures, discussion or film screenings will be treated like late arrival/early departure, which means the 2 occurrences will count as an absence.
- You are responsible for all material that you miss in class, including films, film clips, lectures, discussions and assignments. Make sure you have the contact information (email, phone number) for one or two other students in class so that you can get the information that you need.

In Class: Please do not read newspapers, email, websites, text messages, etc. during class. **No phone or computers are allowed during class without special arrangement.** Using a phone in any way during class, and especially during film screenings, will result in an automatic 0 for that session's Attendance and Participation grade. If you need to communicate with someone, step outside of the room for a minute and return when you're done.

Class Cancellations: If an emergency arises and I need to cancel class, I will send an email to the class, and ask that a sign be posted on the door. Please try to check your email before class in case anything comes up.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism – the representation of someone else's words or ideas as one's own – is a very serious offense, and will result in serious consequences. By plagiarism, I mean failing to acknowledge someone else's work or ideas (word for word or paraphrasing), as well as cheating on quizzes and tests. All suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/pdfs/csc\\_12-31-07.pdf](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf))

This is not to say that you cannot use other people's ideas, just that you must **acknowledge** your sources (orally or with footnotes) and try to **build** on those ideas (agree, disagree, modify, give your own examples). Please come and talk to me if you have any questions about this.

OSU has made Turnitin, a learning tool and plagiarism prevention system, available to instructors. For this class, you will submit your papers to Turnitin from Carmen. When grading your work, I will interpret the originality report, following Section A of OSU's Code of Conduct (plagiarism) as appropriate. For more information about Turnitin, please see Dropbox: the Turnitin Suite (for students): <https://odee.osu.edu/resourcecenter/carmen/dropbox-turnitin-suite-students>. Note that submitted papers become part of the OSU database.

Writing Center: The Writing Center ([www.cstw.osu.edu](http://www.cstw.osu.edu)) is a great (free!) resource on campus for helping improve your writing skills and work on specific assignments. You can set up an appointment or drop in at certain times for one-on-one help with your writing.

Contact Me: Please come talk to me over the course of the quarter if you have any problems or concerns, but also if you have questions or anything else that you'd like to talk about. It's great

to have the opportunity to get to know you outside of class. Office hours are a good time to catch me, but you can also email me to set up an appointment to talk.

For quick questions or concerns, email ([brenner.108@osu.edu](mailto:brenner.108@osu.edu)) is the best way to reach me. I will do my best to respond within 24 hours.

#### **DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://ods.osu.edu/>