



*Issues in Contemporary Society*  
(Soc 178Y)  
*Instructors: Dr. Avi Rose*

*Overview*

Zionism is the theory upon which the modern State of Israel is built. Over the past century, the Jewish and Arab populations in the Land of Israel have been trying to make this theory a reality, joined regularly by new groups of immigrants, refugees and short-term residents.

This course explores the connection between theory and practice, ideology and reality in the contemporary State of Israel. We will explore a variety of people, places and ideas that are shaping Israel, constantly expanding and questioning the definition and limits of the Zionist idea. Where has the society that Zionism created succeeded? What are its shortcomings and in what direction does it need to develop?

The course is primarily taught in the field through a series of weekly *Siyyurim* (excursions) to different locations and meetings with differing parties connected to today's Israel. A weekly seminar of discussion, preparation and debriefing will offer students space to consider and assess that which they experience in the field.

*Course Goals*

1. To provide students with a broad understanding of contemporary Israel society.
2. To offer students insight into the lives of different Israeli populations and places.
3. To develop students ability to look critically at Israeli society.
4. To engage in dialogue on the state of the State of Israel and the ways in which life and society here can change for the better.
5. To wrestle with our supportive and critical feelings concerning contemporary Israel.

*Course Objectives*

1. Students will learn about the various populations active in contemporary Israel.
2. Students will be able to engage in topical and critical conversation with representatives of these populations, with instructors and amongst peers.
3. Students will be able to better understand the challenges that face today's Israeli society and its attendant populations.
4. Students will be able to see the variety of life possibilities in contemporary Israel.
5. Students will be able to question their own connection to Israel

*Assessment/Grading*

- Participation and attendance in Wednesday field outings	30%
- Participation and attendance in Tuesday in-class discussions	30%
- Reflective Blog Posts: text and Photos (4)	20%
- Final Summary Paper (1)	20%

## Schedule of Weekly Field Visits and In-Class Discussions

### September

- 7 Seminar: *Introduction to Today's Tel Aviv*
- 8 Siyyur: *Jewish diversity and innovation in the White City*

### October

- 6 Seminar: *Israeli Society at a Crossroad: Post Rabin Israel and the Prospects for the Future*
- 7: Siyyur: *Rabin Museum on Israeli Society*
- 13 Seminar: *The Special-Needs Community In Israel*
- 14: Siyyur: *Shutaf and the Holon Museum in the Dark*
- 20 Seminar: *Haifa: A Different Israel.*
- 21: Siyyur: *Haifa: coexistence and conflict among Israel's citizens*
- 27 Seminar: *Marginalized populations in Israeli society*
- 28: Siyyur: *Asylum Seekers and the LGBTQ communities*

### November

- 3 Seminar: *Poverty and Periphery: Life outside the Big Cities*
- 4: Siyyur: *Southern Israel and its unique populations*
- 17 Seminar: *Micro Communities: New Israelis and Their Absorption*
- 18: Siyyur: *Gedera: meeting Ethiopian Israelis-- Tel Aviv: American Israelis*
- 24 Seminar: *Creative Expression in Israel Today: Art, Music, Design & Theatre*
- 25: Siyyur: *Graffiti and new music in Tel Aviv*

### December

- 1 Seminar: *Ben Gurion & Beyond: How Young Israelis interpret and enact Zionist Ideology*
- 2: Siyyur: *Sde Boker, Yerucham &, the Marva Tekkes*
- 8 Seminar: *Startup Nation: The Challenges and Successes.*
- 9: Siyyur: *Jizr Az Zarqa, Ramat Hanadiv & Zichron Ya'akov: Israeli startups new and old*