HI 393 – The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
Time and Location – 3:30-4:45pm in CAS 116
Instructor – Walker Robins, Ph.D. (walk@bu.edu)
Office Hours – 10:30am-noon on Thursdays at 147 Bay State Road, Room 502

Description
This course explores the roots and development of one of the world’s most vexing conflicts—the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The approach of the course is historical, so emphasis will be placed on understanding the shifting historical contexts in which the conflict has developed and evolved. As we study this history, though, we will keep in mind that this history itself has been contested. Thus, the course will also focus on how the conflict has been interpreted and remembered by both Israelis and Palestinians.

Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of:

- the origins, development, and current status of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- the major events that have shaped the conflict.
- the varying contexts that have shaped the conflict.
- both Israeli and Palestinian interpretations of the conflict.

Students will also be able to develop and respond to historical questions about the conflict by building methodologies for answering such questions, finding and engaging appropriate source material, and constructing arguments rooted in source material.

Attendance and Participation
Attendance and participation in class work and discussion are expected. You do not have an attendance grade, but missing class time will harm your overall course work.

Electronics
Do not use cell phones in class.

Accommodations
If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at (617) 353-3658 or access@bu.edu to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. ODS is located at 25 Buick Street on the 3rd floor.

Academic Misconduct
Academic misconduct is unacceptable. So we are clear, this includes plagiarism, submission of work for multiple classes, purchasing work, fabrication of sources and fraud, as well as assisting other students in such acts. For BU’s Academic Integrity code, see: https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/
Beyond official university policy, personal integrity is extremely important to me. Please don’t devalue the work of your fellow students by cheating. Take pride in what you do and what you put your name on.

Assignments
Grades are not a measure of your worth or even a measure of the intrinsic value of your work. I view them as a tool in the learning process—a tool for identifying areas that we both need to work on over the course of the semester.

3 Exams (15% each)
The goal of these is to test your familiarity with the major terms, issues, and themes of the course.

1 4-Page Paper (15%)
This assignment asks you to critically engage primary source material in responding to a specific historical question.

Final Paper Project (40% total—10% on Source Write-Ups and 30% on Paper)
This assignment asks you to develop a 7-10 page research paper on a theme relating to the conflict.

Texts
The Israel-Arab Reader, eds. Laqueur and Rubin (Penguin, 2008) – bring to class everyday
Other readings will be posted online.

Schedule

1/22 – Introductions

1/24 – Ottoman Palestine
– Alan Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 1-21.
– excerpt from McCarthy, The Population of Palestine

1/29 – Zionism
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 22-46.

1/31 – Arab Nationalism
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 47-69.
– Azouri, “Program of the League of the Arab Fatherland”, IAR, 10.
2/5 – Early Encounters
– Alan Dowty, “A Question that Outweighs All Others: Yitzhak Epstein and the Recognition of the Arab Issue”

2/7 – WWI
– “The McMahon Letter”, IAR, 11-12
– “The Sykes-Picot Agreement”, IAR, 13-16
– “The Balfour Declaration,” IAR, 16

2/12 – Making the Post-War World
– General Syrian Congress, “Memorandum Presented to the King-Crane Commission”, IAR, 21-23

2/14 – Review

2/19 – NO CLASS (Monday Schedule)

2/21 – Exam I

2/26 – The Mandate and the Mandatory

2/28 – Development
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 74-80.

4-PAGER DUE 3/3 by 11:59pm — Submit through Blackboard

3/5 – Tension
3/7 – Revolt
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 80-83.

SPRING BREAK

3/19 – The Path to the UN

3/21 – 1948
– State of Israel, “Proclamation of Independence”, IAR, 81-83.
– UN General Assembly, “Resolution 194”, 83-86.

Source Write-Ups due 3/24 by 11:59pm

3/26 – The Meaning and Implications of 1948
– Nathan Alterman, “The Silver Platter” (1947)
– Palestinian Poems from the 1950s

3/28 – Review

4/2 – Exam II

4/4 – 1967
– Amos Oz, “The Meaning of Homeland.”
– Fawaz Turki, “To Be a Palestinian.”

4/9 – The Rise of the PLO
– Yasir Arafat, “Interview”, IAR, 135-139.

4/11 – Intifada
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 134-139.

4/16 – Oslo
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 140-148.
– Israel and PLO, “Declaration of Principles,” IAR, 413-422.

4/18 – The Collapse of Oslo
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 149-162.

4/23 – The Second Intifada
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 163-181.

4/25 – Paper Polish Day

4/30 – Impasse
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 182-254.

5/2 – Review and Prospect — Narrative and Memory
– Dowty, Israel/Palestine, 256-265.

FINAL – Exam III (Date TBA)