Course Description

The course examines and analyzes cases and episodes of political violence and terrorism in Israel. In doing this, the course will backtrack to the early years of the state, and when necessary, to the pre-state era, in order to learn about the origins and sources of violent and terrorist groups and organizations whose operations and activities, or the fingerprints of their activities, we still experience in the present. In engaging in such a historical journey, we will familiarize ourselves with different backgrounds and contexts that motivated individuals and groups to engage in violent, at times indiscriminate, political behavior.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

First, we will establish the conceptual and theoretical basis for the study of political violence and extremism. We will relate to several orienting questions. What is political violence? Is there a difference between civil disobedience, political violence and...
terrorism? Can we measure political violence? What are the mechanisms driving violence? When does contention turn violent and why does it happen in some cases and not in others? What are the forms of political violence and extremism in Israel?

Second, we will investigate the historical roots of political violence in the Israeli case.

Third, we will examine prominent forms of political violence in Israel, investigating each [case study] separately: ethnic violence; religious violence, and nationalist violence and terrorism. Linking theory to evidence will be of particular concern. This is by no means an exhaustive list, and in each case, a mix of conceptual and empirical material will be introduced, in order to expose students to a wide range of examples. Students will explore how the potential for political violence develops, and which personal, institutional and environmental factors can encourage or mitigate the transition to the violent acts.

Finally, we will discuss current trends in the study of political violence and extremism. We will also discuss methods of preventing and mitigating political violence

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**Course Goals**

The purpose of the course is to provide you with knowledge of the various approaches used to study political violence and extremism and to help you understand the ways in which theories of political violence could be applied to the Israeli context. Thus, we will utilize particular cases of political violence in the Israeli case as examples of larger phenomena.

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**Grading**

*Class Attendance and Participation:* This course is best as a conversation or debate, not as a one-way lecture. You should read the assigned material in advance, be prepared to answer questions about it critically, and participate actively in our class discussions. If you feel that you cannot actively participate, see us as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements.

*A case-study essay* – For weeks 2-13, you must submit a critical newspaper article based on that week’s readings. The assignment is done in pairs (no more than two people working together in each group, no exceptions). You should not exceed two pages. You are asked to demonstrate your understanding of a leading question or central debate on any topic of your choice covered in the weekly readings; clarify the arguments, analysis, or critique brought to the subject. In simple words, use the research you’ve presented to analyze a current Israeli event. It would be best if you began by quickly summarizing the main idea of the article. Then present one/two arguments that particularly stand out to you (perhaps they are intriguing, contradict or support earlier readings, relate to
overarching themes of violence, etc.) and the excerpts (i.e., quotes) or data from the text that support these points. You must submit your case study essay to the TA via email before the relevant class session. Any standard font is acceptable. Please use standard citation procedures. All late work, unless excused in advance by the course lecturer, or justified by medical certificate, will be penalized at a rate of five percent per day. It is best to let the lecturer/TA know as soon as possible if there will be an issue in submitting the paper on time. This will account for 20% of your overall grade.

**Take-home exam:** Exploration of a particular case study or set of cases relevant to the theme of this course. It cannot be a mere review of theoretical literature, or simply a narrative account of a particular case. It must have an argument, a conceptual framework, an empirical "field" (case or cases, or data, etc.) Students will be free to choose the topic for their final assignment. This will account for 80% of your overall grade.

**All plagiarism issues will be handled with in accordance with the IDC bulletin and policies.**

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**Lecturer Office Hours**

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**Additional Notes**

The course readings are introductory-level. The required reading material will be posted on the course website (available under your myIDC).

*Please note: **Schedule and readings are subject to change.** Pay attention and always check the course website for the latest!*

There are a number of good journals that treat the themes in this course.

Among some you might find useful would be:
Reading List

Part I: Conceptual and Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Political Violence

Week 1: What is Political Violence?


Week 2: Exposure to Political Violence and Terrorism


Week 3 (Nov 13): Assessing and Explaining Political Violence Across and Within societies -- Guest Lecture – Prof. Carly Wayne

Canetti, D., Hall, B. J., Rapaport, C., & Wayne, C. (2013). Exposure to political violence and


**Week 4: What are the mechanisms driving political violence? Competing explanations of political violence (the individual-level, organizational-level and the state)**


**Part II: Historical Roots of Political Violence in Israel**

**Week 5: Historical Roots of Political Violence in Israel**


**Part III: Empirical Issues in the Study of Political Violence: The Israeli Context**

**Week 6: Ethnicity and Violence, the Black Panthers (in Israel).**


**Week 7: Linking Religion and Political Violence**


**Week 8: Cyber Terrorism and Political Attitudes - Guest lecture -- Prof. Daphna Canetti**

(Dean of The Paul and Herta Amir Faculty of Social Sciences, The University of Haifa).


**Week 9: The Case of Israeli-Arab Violence**


**Week 10: The Kahanist Culture of Violence**


**Week 11: ‘Settle for Nothing’ – The Vigilantism of the Jewish Settler Movement and the Underground**


Eiran, Ehud, and Peter Krause. 2018 "Old (Molotov) cocktails in new bottles?" Price–tag" and settler violence in Israel and the West Bank." Terrorism and political violence 30, (4): 637-657. To be discussed by a student

**Week 12: The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin**


Perliger, A. (2017). The role of civil wars and elections in inducing political assassinations. Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 40(8), 684-700. To be discussed by a student

**Part VI: Where Do We Go from Here?**
**Week 13: Trends in the Study of Political Violence in Israeli Politics**

