



Course program and reading list

Semester 1 Year 2023

School: Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy & Strategy B.A

Political Strategy in Israel

Lecturer:

Dr. Maoz Rosenthal mrosenthal@runi.ac.il

Teaching Assistant:

Ms. Sofia Kobzantsev kobzantsev.sofia@post.runi.ac.il

Course No.:	Course Type :	Weekly Hours :	Credit:
4606	Lecture	2	2

Course Requirements :	Group Code :	Language:
Final Paper	232460601	English



Course Description

The course will follow the path of a party coming up with a policy program, presenting a part of it as a campaign program, getting elected, and forming a coalition. The stages are set following the Austen-Smith and Banks classic model, which we will closely study and use. The AS&B game theoretic model is called the legislative game, and its logic follows the following path: Each party would develop its policy intentions based on the policy issues set on the Israeli policy agenda, relating to existing policy alternatives, their dimensions, and implications. The next stage would include turning policy wills into strategic policy positions. Election results would be announced (without the first campaign). Following this 'election' parties would receive a given amount of Knesset seats they can use. Based on these values, parties form a government coalition that faces ongoing opposition. The coalition would have to be based on a majority in Knesset. When the coalition loses the Knesset's confidence then, a new bargaining process begins (which could yield a new election). After formation, the coalition would need to agree on a large-

scale reform (government system, public sector structure, reforming higher education, etc.) and push it through legislation in the Knesset.



Course Goals

The main reasoning that this course follows is that political decisions are based on a calculation that takes other players' goals, interests, and reasoning into account. This class relates to the political arena as a competitive high-stakes environment, where a failure in strategic reasoning yields party loss either in elections or in coalition formation interactions. Assuming that practice is a valuable teacher, we will practice this reasoning within a simulated environment. The simulation is active and based on class participation. It also based on academic research and analysis of political processes. At the end of this class, the students would be familiar with the way political strategy is practiced and analyzed.



Grading

The course is based on active group-based participation: **NO SHOW WILL FAIL YOU AND YOUR GROUP.**

Also: Students are expected to have previous academic knowledge on the Israeli government structure. Those without such knowledge will have to attend a lecture meeting with Dr. Rosenthal to close this gap.

The grade will be based on the following two components:

Participation, discussion, and presentations: 40% Attendance will be checked every meeting. People who will not show up for class more than four times for whatever reason will not be eligible for a final grade on this course.

Final paper: 60% Submission deadline: March 19th 2023

General Instructions for Paper Submission:

This is an essay papers structured in the format of introduction->presenting and developing the topic according to guidelines (see below)->conclusion>bibliography.

Academic writing and citing rules apply for the papers. Final paper is 6-10 pages long (including bibliography), font Times New Roman size 12 with 1.5 line spacing and the Microsoft Word (or your Open Office software) default margin size.

Any data when used should appear in clear tables in the paper itself while citing the sources you based your analysis on.

The papers should be submitted on time via MOODLE.

Any delay needs to be coordinated and approved by the T.A. at least a week before the preset date of submission. Any uncoordinated delay in submission would yield a zero

grade.

Paper General Guidelines

This paper's main aim is to study your ability to think analytically and strategically on the choices you made during the simulation. Thus, your main assignment here is to write an analytic narrative that contains the details of your moves, choices, other players' relevant moves and exogenous events. Beyond the narrative you need to account for your choices using the literature in this course's syllabus. That is, you have to combine description and thought. One without the other will yield a low grade.

Paper Questions

- Narrative: Present the main decisions your party took during the simulation. Start with the party platform positions' choices, coalition formation considerations, and policy choices.
- Analysis: Provide explanations on the maneuvers you took while referring to both general theories and scholarly accounts of the Israeli case.
- Discussion: Following the simulation and your analysis- what should be the optimal coalition formation phase strategy for the policy space niche you represented?

Party Roles:

Likud Labor

Center parties' union: Blue-White/Kulanu/Yesh Atid/Hatnua

Israel our home

Meretz

Shas

The Jewish Home

Joint List

By November 7th, please send the TA your RATED 3 most-preferred roles. We would then assign you to these roles and the game will begin. Those specifically interested in one party will need to give a very strong argument to be that party. Please consider that disappointments might happen in political life (and simulations).



Reading List

Week 1-2: Governability in Israel

Rosenthal, M. (2017). *Israel's Governability Crisis*. New-York: Lexington Books. Ch. 1-3

Week 3: Political Campaigns and political Ideology

Austen-Smith, D. and J. Banks (1988). Elections, Coalitions and Legislative Outcomes. *American Political Science Review*. 82(2): 405-422.

Budge, I. & M. McDonald (2006). Choices Parties Define Policy Alternatives in Representative Elections, 17 Countries 1945–1998. *Party Politics* 12 (4): 451–466.

Rosenthal, M. and D. Schneider (2019). Party Politics in a Multidimensional Policy Space: Chaos and Stability in Israel. *Association for Israel Studies Annual Meeting*.

Week 4: Political Campaigns and Public Policy

Green-Pedersen, C. (2007). The growing importance of issue competition: The changing nature of party competition in Western Europe. *Political studies*, 55(3), 607–628

Walgrave, S., Varone, F., & Dumont, P. (2006). Policy with or without parties? A comparative analysis of policy priorities and policy change in Belgium, 1991 to 2000. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 13(7), 1021–1038.

Week 5–6:

Class based work and presentations: choosing political ideologies and policy topics your party will endorse.

Week 7: Political Campaigns as Strategic Environments

Meguid, B. M. (2005). Competition between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success. *American Political Science Review*, 99(03), 347–359

Laver, M. (2005). Policy and the dynamics of political competition. *American Political Science Review*, 99(02), 263–281.

Week 8: Policy, Ideology and Voting Behavior in Israel

Arian, A., & Shamir, M. (2008). A Decade Later, the World Had Changed, the Cleavage Structure Remained: Israel 1996–2006. *Party Politics*, 14(6), 685–705.

Doron, G. (2005). Right as Opposed to Wrong as Opposed to Left: The Spatial Location of "Right Parties" on the Israeli Political Map. *Israel Studies*, 10(3), 29–53.

Week 9: Voting Behavior in Israel

Nachmias, D., Rosenthal, M., & Zubida, H. (2016). National party strategies in local elections: a theory and some evidence from the Israeli case. *Israel Affairs*, 22(2), 401–422.

Getmansky, A., & Zeitzoff, T. (2014). Terrorism and Voting: The Effect of Rocket Threat on Voting in Israeli elections. *American Political Science Review*, 108(03), 588–604

Bargsted, M. A., & Kedar, O. (2009). Coalition-targeted Duvergerian voting: how expectations affect voter choice under proportional representation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 53(2), 307–323.

Week 10–11: Electoral Campaign

Week 12: The Rules and Logic of Coalition Formation and Policy Design in Israel's Government and Knesset

Rosenthal, M. (2017). *Israel's Governability Crisis*. New-York: Lexington Books. Ch. 4–5

Week 13: Coalition Formation Game

Based on the 'election results' parties start bargaining and devise a coalition based on a majority in the Argov Knesset. Based on your votes' share you would receive a position in the coalition formation game. Each party is expected to bargain through the process while attaining its most favored outcome (in or out of the coalition, how many portfolios, which portfolios). Besides portfolios the parties negotiate for chairperson positions on Knesset committees. We will have the Knesset committee, the constitution, law and courts committee, foreign affairs committee, education committee and finance committee. You will need to decide which committees' chairpersonship goes to the opposition. It will have to be at least one committee. The opposition gets to sit on all committees.