



A Proposal for supporting the

**International MA Program
in Israel Studies**



**Strengthening the bond between Israel and the Diaspora
at Israel's leading Faculty of Humanities**

October 2014





The International MA Program in Israel Studies For Israeli and International Students

Israel is a small country with a high international profile. Despite its relatively modest geographic and population size, Israel is disproportionately represented in media coverage and academic discourse. Since its founding 60 years ago, Israel has, and continues to, evoke strong emotions and passions. In contrast to its portrayal in the international media and online, Israel is a vibrant democracy and dynamic multiethnic nation that grapples with complex internal and geopolitical issues. Gaining a true appreciation of Israel's complexities requires first-hand experiences, probing interdisciplinary analysis, and dialogue that encompasses a range of viewpoints.

In order to respond to the growing need to elevate the level of international discourse and provide a more nuanced picture of events in the region, the University of Haifa launched **the MA Program in Israel Studies** in October 2013. The new academic initiative is designed to address this need by offering graduate students a balanced, in-depth presentation of Israeli history, politics, society and culture. The goal of the Program is to cultivate the next generation of academics, diplomats and goodwill ambassadors who will strengthen ties between Israel and countries around the world.

The Program examines Israeli society from a variety of perspectives, including aliyah and migration, economics, politics, culture, religion, and the ties between Israel and Jewish communities abroad. The multidisciplinary curriculum includes courses in history, international relations, sociology, political science and religious studies, and includes weekly meetings with representatives from different sectors of Israeli society. Taught in English, the Program attracts international students from the USA, Europe and Asia – giving it a truly global reach.

Directed by noted historian Prof. Gur Alroey, Head of the Department of Israel Studies and the Chair of the School of History, and developed as an academic counterpart to the University's highly successful Ruderman MA Program in American Jewish Studies and the State of Israel, the International MA Program in Israel Studies will position the University of Haifa as the premiere academic home for the study of Israel and the Jewish Diaspora.

The University of Haifa's Israel Studies Department is uniquely positioned to offer this important program. The University is a microcosm of Israeli society dedicated to academic excellence and social responsibility. The campus is a living laboratory where Jews, Muslims, Christians, Druze, Bedouin and Bahá'ís study side by side. Students experience a dynamic, cultural mosaic where faculty members and students of all ethnic backgrounds encounter and engage, becoming acquainted with one another and, even when disagreeing, learn to understand and respect each other. In this setting, students will experience the relevant issues of a democratic, multicultural, multiethnic society.



Being the only liberal arts university in the north of Israel, the University of Haifa attracts students from cities, towns, and villages from the surrounding areas, as well as students from other areas who want the opportunity to experience Haifa. We are proud to be the university that most accurately mirrors Israeli society, reflecting all of her varied populations. For many of our students, the university campus is the first meaningful point of contact with "the other" in Israeli society. As such, the University plays an important role in strengthening the fabric of Israeli society and serving as a role model for coexistence and tolerance.

Program Overview

The Program builds on the University of Haifa's scholarly excellence, rich curriculum and unique institutional resources offered in the fields of Jewish and Israeli history, Middle Eastern politics and society.

Courses will be subdivided into the following three academic categories:

- History of Zionism and the State of Israel, 1881-1967
- Jewish Diasporas in the 20th Century: A Transnational Perspective
- Contemporary Israel: Sociology, Minorities, Law, and Culture

History of Zionism and the State of Israel, 1881-1967

Students will become acquainted with the main trends in Zionist ideology and its key thinkers, the evolution of the Zionist ideas over time and the criticism and internal debates that have accompanied Zionism from its inception. Students will learn the ways in which the *Yishuv* (the Jewish community in Palestine) and later, Israeli society, has been consolidated through succeeding widespread waves of immigration, starting with the period of the first Aliyah until the first two decades of the State of Israel.

Jewish Diasporas in the 20th Century: A Transnational Perspective

One of the distinctive elements of the program is that it encourages students to examine Israeli history within the context of twentieth-century Jewish history and to think more seriously about the mutual, complex, and ambivalent interrelations between the State of Israel and the Jewish Diaspora. Courses will examine the histories of the major Jewish communities in the English-speaking world, Central and Eastern Europe, North Africa and the Arab world. Students will learn about the far-reaching transformations which shaped the Jewish world during one of the most turbulent centuries, and the dynamic processes which continue shifting old balances and reshaping the landscape of the Jewish world.

Contemporary Israel: Sociology, Minorities, Law and Culture

Students will learn about the social structure and tensions in contemporary Israel, its political system, legal institutions and its multicultural character. In addition, faculty-led field trips and tours will give students the opportunity to become acquainted with Israel's landscape and geography, and meet weekly with representatives from different sectors that make up Israeli society: Palestinian-Israelis, Druze, the national-religious, ultra-Orthodox, Russian immigrants, Ethiopians, residents of development towns, kibbutz residents and the veteran population.

The annual field campus is the highlight of the Israel Studies program. Students, together with academic program staff, will spend three days and two nights in one of the country's most historically rich regions exploring the area's complexities from the past and present. Students will meet public figures and Israeli citizens with the aim to develop dialogue and familiarity with Israeli society.



Program Assessment/Evaluation

We recognize that assessment is an integral, ongoing component of academic life and an important tool to improve the learning experience of our students. The program will be evaluated on a number of levels:

- Evidence of International Standing: We will track the number of annual requests for program information, the GPA of applicants, year-to-year increases in applicants/participants, and student satisfaction with the learning experience.
- Evidence of Learning Outcomes: We will determine whether students are achieving graduate program learning objectives, including assessment of

projects and graduate theses, and whether strategies used to assist students in reaching their learning outcomes should be modified.

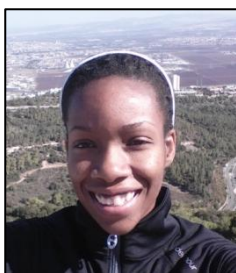
- Evidence of Impact: While it is still premature to measure success of graduates, we plan to track the career paths of our graduates and their contributions to strengthening the bond between Israel and the Diaspora.

Students

The 2014/5 graduate program attracted 45 applications from students, of which 17 were enrolled. The growing interest in the program led to a doubling of the students accepted to the program this year compared to the previous year. The current group of students comes from a wide range of academic backgrounds, including peace and conflict studies, history, security studies, and engineering. Students enrolled in this year's cohort come from all over the globe, including Turkey, China, Holland, Germany, Italy, and the United States. Two Israelis students are also enrolled. Nearly half of the students are Jewish.

Going forward, the Program will seek to admit 25 students annually. The program is extremely selective and aims to produce graduates who will be focused on developing careers in academia, security-related positions and public service.

Current Participants



Blair Cadet

Blair holds a BA in Political Science from the University of Massachusetts. She wrote her undergraduate thesis on drone strikes, which sparked her interest in Israel's intelligence expertise and the Middle East. Blair chose to study at the MA program because she wanted to deepen her knowledge of the region and explore her interests in culture and history. She has volunteered as a student activist, entrepreneur/website designer, speaks fluent French, and worked on a goat farm. Her future career plans include pursuing a PhD in Strategic Studies. "Studying in Israel is the best way to form my own opinions about the rules of war and combating international terrorism."

Metthijs van der Beek






Metthijs holds a BA from Erasmus University Rotterdam and an MA in international relations. His dissertation focused on the history of the peace movement during the Cold War Period. He is interested in pursuing an academic career with a specialization in human rights and translational justice. "I was impressed by the Program's balanced approach to studying Israel's history, the political situation and the culture. Like Israel, Holland is a multi-cultural society." Metthijs is keeping a blog of his experiences and hopes to contribute to peace efforts and create real change in his country.

Educational Leadership



Professor Gur Alroey is the Head of the School of History and of the International MA Program in Israel Studies. Prof. Alroey is an accomplished scholar of Jewish migration, including immigration to Palestine in the late 19th and early 20th century, and a dedicated young leader in the discipline of Israel studies. In the twelve years since completing his Ph.D. at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, he has been a historian at the University of Haifa, publishing five books and over 30 articles. Prof. Alroey has revitalized study of the history of aliyah, viewing it within the context of the general Jewish migration from Europe at the turn of the 20th century. He was a visiting professor at the Taub Center for Israel Studies at NYU and Columbia University from 2009 to 2011. In 2013 he received the Young Scholar Award from the Association of Israel Studies.

Academic Staff

<p>Prof. Yossi Ben Artzi, formerly University Rector, specializes in the history of the Land of Israel in the modern period and the history of the city of Haifa. His most recent book, <i>Turning the Desert into the Carmel</i>, deals with the settlement of the Carmel in the British Mandate period. Prof. Ben Artzi received his PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.</p>	
<p>Dr. Zur Shalev researches early modern European cultural and intellectual history, with particular interest in geographical and religious thought and Oriental scholarship. Dr. Shalev was a Buber Fellow from 2012 to 2014. Dr. Shalev completed his PhD studies at Princeton University.</p>	
<p>Prof. Oz Almog is a sociologist and historian at Haifa University, specializing in semiotics, the sociological history of Israel society, Israeli popular and dominant culture, and Israeli ethnic groups and subcultures.</p>	
<p>Dr. Esther Carmel-Hakim holds a PhD in Israel Studies from the University of Haifa. Dr. Carmel-Hakim was a visiting lecturer and researcher at Brandeis University (2004-5). Her teaching and research interests include: Women's Zionist Organizations; Women in Israel; Women on the Kibbutz.</p>	
<p>Dr. Nimrod Hagiladi received his PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2012. He was previously a Taub-Schusterman Post-Doctoral fellow at the Taub Center for Israel Studies, New York University. His main research interests include the modern history of Israel during the Mandate period and the early years of Israel.</p>	

The University of Haifa's International School (UHIS)

Administrative support for the program is provided by the University of Haifa's International School, which has been running a successful Study Abroad Program for over 40 years. The School has a worldwide reputation for its academic accomplishments, emphasis on cultural immersion with the local population, and a caring environment. Our philosophy includes an emphasis on academic excellence, integration with the local Israeli population through common living quarters and community involvement, and a rich schedule of social and cultural activities. Today over 1000 students from 40 different countries are enrolled annually in 16 UHIS graduate programs that are unique in their integrated approach towards the international student.



Conclusion

The University of Haifa has a well-earned reputation for and interdisciplinary learning. As one of Israel's leading research institutions, the University invests resources in creating cutting-edge programs that provide training for Israel's current and future leadership in a wide range of important fields. The newly-launched graduate program will help to cultivate the next generation of academics, diplomats and goodwill ambassadors who will build a greater understanding of Israel and strengthen ties between Israel and countries around the world.

Request for Support

We invite you to support the **International MA in Israel Studies**. Your generous support will enable the University of Haifa to attract the brightest students and strengthen Israel's ties with countries around the world.

- ❖ A gift of \$200,000 will provide **annual scholarship support for 20 students** in the MA program. Scholarships will assist international students with tuition fees, dormitory accommodations, and living stipends.
- ❖ A gift of \$500,000 will enable the **University of Haifa** to name the **International MA Program in Israel Studies** in your honor.

Donor Recognition

The University of Haifa prominently honors the generosity of its donors with graduated levels of recognition.

- ❖ The naming of the **International MA Program in Israel Studies** will be celebrated with a festive dedication ceremony.
- ❖ Your support will be credited in professional journals, University publications, websites and at events held. Fellowship recipients will include your name in all correspondence and signatures.
- ❖ Scholarship recipients will provide letters of gratitude and/or written updates on their progress in their studies

Thank you for your kind consideration of this request.

About the University of Haifa

As the largest research university in the country's northern region and academic home to a community of students that most accurately mirrors Israeli society, the University of Haifa is of unique strategic importance to the State of Israel. It enrolls the largest number of military and security personnel, who study alongside civilians from all walks of life - Haredi and secular Jews, new immigrants, Arabs, and Druze.

The University's mission is to cultivate academic excellence, create a shared Israeli experience, and promote democratic values in an environment of tolerance and multiculturalism. It is such an environment that contributes to outstanding research and a community of exceptional, creative, and productive alumni. We believe that fostering outstanding research while strengthening Israel's northern region and promoting an environment of multiculturalism is of strategic importance for the continued existence and prosperity of the State of Israel.

The University of Haifa stands atop Mount Carmel, where Haifa's southern boundary verges on the Carmel National Park. Over 18,000 students study here for undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degrees. The University of Haifa is fully committed to academic excellence, which is expressed in its many and diverse interdisciplinary and international programs and collaborations with academic institutions around the world. The University of Haifa has gained an international reputation in many research areas, and is Israel's leading university in the humanities, education, social sciences, and marine research.

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