Between Past and Present: The Shaping of Israel’s Collective Memories

Dr. Oren Meyers

Course Number: 702.2285
Semester: Spring 2017
Class Time: Thursday, 12:00-3:00
Class Location:

Office Hours: Upon request
Location: Rabin Building, room # 8044
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Course Description:
The course deals with the ways in which societies shape their shared perceptions of the past through various cultural agents, and especially the mass media: news outlets, television, documentary and feature movies and more. Within this context, the course focuses on the construction of Israeli collective memory, as a reflection of ongoing negotiations and debates over Israeli identities, cultures and ideologies.

Course Requirements:
1. Class readings:
Upon the lecturer’s request, students will read mandatory assigned readings marked with an asterisk (*) in preparation for classroom discussions. All mandatory readings are scanned in the Moodle system. Upon request, students will email the lecturer brief responses to the readings.

2. Elaboration assignment:
Each student will choose one of the assigned mandatory readings and prepare a short presentation that provides information that was not discussed in the reading, but is relevant for a better understanding of it. For example: the students can discuss the (personal/political/intellectual) biographies of the authors of the articles, or of individuals discussed in them; students can elaborate on the historical events discussed in the articles, or the popular culture that characterized the era addressed in the article etc. Students will inform me about their choice of their elaboration topic by March 23, 2017.

3. Class presentation of additional readings:
Each student will choose one additional reading from the syllabus, or a different relevant reading dealing with collective memory research s/he has located on his/her own and will present it in class. Students will inform me about their choice of reading by March 9, 2017.
Please note: most additional readings are not scanned in Moodle and you will have to locate them in the library. A choice of reading that does not appear on the list is welcomed, but it requires the lecturer’s approval. Student presentations will be circulated prior to our meeting, till Tuesday evening.

4. Final assignment:
4a. Undergraduate students will write a take-home exam, to be distributed at the end our last meeting. Students taking the exam will be requested to answer three (out of five) comprehensive essay questions that will test the students' knowledge and understanding of the readings, the lectures and class discussions. Undergraduate students will submit their take-home exams by June 15, 2017.
4b. Graduate students will write a short research paper (up to 10 pages). They will first discuss the topic of their research paper with me; next; they will submit a short research proposal, by April 20, 2017. Graduate students will submit the final research papers by June 29, 2017.
**Final Grade:**
Attendance and active participation in class discussion, submission of reading reports: 10%
Elaboration assignment: 10%
Class presentation of a selected reading: 10%
Take home exam/research paper: 70%

**Course Outline and Reading List**

**Introduction: The fundamentals of collective memory research**


**Between personal and collective memories**


**Changing and competing memory versions**


**Between Memory and Historiography**


**National/global identities and collective memory**


Liebman, C. S. and Don-Yehiya, E. 1983. *Civil Religion in Israel: Traditional Judaism and


Memory and trauma


Media and Memory


**Conclusion, circulation of take home exam**