

HEB 346
Hebrew via Popular Culture
Spring 2010

Meeting: MWF 9:00-10:00, MEZ 1.206

Unique no. : 41892

Instructor: Dr. Esther Raizen

Contact: raizen@austin.utexas.edu (best way to reach me), 475-6654

Office hours: MW 8-8:45, F 10-11:15, WMB 6.102 (please watch for announcements on occasional changes—these will come via e-mail)

Course Description:

The course, which builds upon HEB 412L, focuses on the acquisition of proficiency and communicative skills through the use of the various outlets of popular culture, among them television programs, films, newspapers, magazines, songs, jokes, street art, food, crafts, amulets, lullabies, popular games, and short stories. Among other activities, students will participate in a class blog, compose "talkback" entries, and produce an original cultural piece. Students enrolled in the class will be expected to advance to the intermediate-high level in composition, comprehension and conversation and be prepared to meet the requirements of the Hebrew program upper-division courses. They will also develop familiarity with the shifting trends in what has been considered "popular" in the culture of the *yishuv* and the State of Israel since the 1930s, and with Israeli history. The class will be taught entirely in Hebrew, and students will be expected to increase their vocabulary by 300 words or so and respond to a variety of registers. They will be using the internet in Hebrew on a regular basis.

The class will be performing with *Bereket*, the UT Middle East Ensemble, during its spring concert.

Important Dates:

January 19: First class day

February 3: 12th class day

March 15-20: Spring break

March 31: Passover, no assignment

April 5: Passover, no assignment

April 19: Memorial day (Israeli), class will meet in the evening

April 26: Cultural projects due

May 7: Last class day, portfolio due

Topics by weeks (tentative):

In general, Mondays will be dedicated in part to current events and news media, and Fridays will be "music" days; Wednesdays and Fridays will be dedicated to the following topics, by weeks:

January 19: What is "popular culture"?

January 25: The “sabra”
February 1: Youth culture
February 8: Love
February 15: Bureaucracy, government, citizenship
February 22: Food
March 1: Art; Arts and crafts
March 8: Between Ashkenazim and Sfaradim
March 22: Popular religion
March 29: Holidays and festivals
April 5: Army culture
April 12: Remembering the fallen
April 19: Euphemisms and dirty language
April 26: Raising a child
May 3: Presentation of cultural projects

Prerequisites:

Upper-division standing, intermediate (or above) level of Hebrew

Grading Policy:

Attendance and participation 20%
Homework assignments 15%
Weekly position papers 20%
Portfolio 15%
Class blog 10%
Original piece 20%
Note on the plus/minus system:

The University of Texas has started implementing the plus-minus system in the grading scheme used for undergraduate classes. You can find the details of this policy at <http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/plus-minus/>. For the purpose of this course, I will be using the following scale in assigning the final letter grade:

| | |
|----|--------|
| A | 92-100 |
| A- | 90-91 |
| B+ | 88-89 |
| B | 82-87 |
| B- | 80-81 |
| C+ | 78-79 |
| C | 72-77 |
| C- | 70-71 |
| D+ | 68-69 |

| | |
|----|-------|
| D | 62-67 |
| D- | 60-61 |
| F | 0-59 |

Texts:

Materials that will be posted on Blackboard; YouTube videos, haaretz.co.il, ynet.co.il, shiron.net, Wikipedia, and a variety of other internet resources. Note: You will be expected to run internet searches in Hebrew.

Hebrew/English English/Hebrew dictionary of your choice. **Bring the dictionary with you to class every day.**

Please note the following:

- I require perfect attendance. Excessive tardiness or absence from more than three classes, unless justified, will significantly reduce your class participation grade (after the third absence, you will lose 5 points of your 20 participation grade points for each absence; each tardiness will cost you 2.5 points). Unjustified absence for more than nine hours will result in a failing grade, regardless of grades accumulated in the course. Students who have to miss nine hours or more because of illness or other justified absences will be advised to drop the class.
- I expect active participation from all students. Perfect attendance does not guarantee a full class participation grade.
- Turn in assignments promptly on due date. Late homework will not be accepted for credit. No make-ups will be given for the midterm or final exam. Your lowest homework grade will be dropped at the end of the semester.
- I expect you to spend about nine hours every week on homework and class preparations.
- Talk to me! If you are running into difficulties, or when special needs arise, let me know right away—I will try to accommodate you to the best of my ability.

And some general UT policy notes:

- e-mail notification policy: All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.
- Accommodations for students with disabilities: Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with

Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed. *Please do not hesitate to talk to me to get the necessary assistance!*

- Religious Holy Days: Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. If you miss an examination, work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Austin that you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day.

- Policy on Scholastic Integrity: Students who violate University rules on scholastic

dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, visit the Student Judicial Services web site at www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs.

בהצלחה!