SYLLABUS
MODERN HEBREW LITERATURE IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

NE 325/SISJE 490a
3 credits

This survey of modern Hebrew literature and its major developments in the past 100 years includes selections of fiction and poetry by a range of writers from Europe, Israel and the U.S. Among the texts covered are pieces by H.N. Bialik, Dvorah Baron, S.Y. Agnon, Gabriel Preil, Yehuda Amichai, Aharon Appelfeld, Dan Pagis, A.B. Yehoshua, Amos Oz, Etgar Keret, Batya Gur, and more.

This course aims to illuminate some of the factors that make this literature distinctive and fascinating. Hebrew is a language that has been in continuous literary use over millennia. Dramatic historical circumstances and ideological forces fostered the revival of the language as a modern tongue and shaped Hebrew literary endeavors up through current time.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are expected to do the required reading, to attend class and to participate in class discussion. There will be several short written assignments, two quizzes and a take-home essay exam. This is a “W” course, which requires significant amounts of writing, editing, and revision. Final grades will be determined as follows:

Assignments:

#1. A close reading of a poem; 350-750 words (10%)

#2. A summary of one of the secondary sources in the recommended reading; 350-750 words (10%)

#3. A short essay; 500-750 words (10%)

#4. 2 quizzes; one at midterm and one during finals week (20%)

#5. Take-Home Essays: Three essays (750-1250 words). Questions will be distributed by midterm. Students may opt to write an 8-10 page term paper (2000-2500 words) in
lieu of the take-home essays, but they must propose a topic and receive the instructor’s permission before undertaking that option. (40%)

#6 Class participation (10%)

Students will receive feedback on each written assignment and will then rewrite to raise the grade. Students who wish to have their final essays returned to them should provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disabled Student Services, 448 Schmitz, 206-543-8924. If you have a letter from Disabled Student Services indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to the instructor and discuss the accommodations you might need for the class.

Turn off all cell phones during class!!

Be sure to keep a copy of any work you turn in and any work that the instructor returns to you. This is important in case an assignment gets misplaced, in case you wish to discuss a grade, and in case you wish to refer to feedback offered throughout the quarter. Please also keep a copy of this syllabus.

In cases of academic misconduct, such as plagiarism or receiving inappropriate assistance with assignments, offending students will be penalized in accordance with the policy of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Additional Credits: Any student who wishes to earn an additional 2-3 credits for reading some of these texts in the original Hebrew should make arrangements with the instructor.

REQUIRED TEXTS:


*Literary Murder*, by Batya Gur (Harper, 1993)

Selected poems and short fiction

Recommended readings

Recommended readings are listed in the syllabus. These readings are useful for bolstering understanding of the primary material and as resources for the writing assignments.
COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1. HEBREW LITERATURE: WHAT? WHERE? WHY?


WEEK 2. WRITERS OF THE HEBREW RENAISSANCE


WEEK 3. TRANSITIONS.


WEEK 4: CONTINUITY AND TRADITION: THE ART OF S.Y. AGNON


WEEK 5. HEBREW IN AMERICA.


WEEK 6: PIONEERS, ALIYAH AND THE KIBBUTZ


WEEK 7: INDEPENDENCE AND THE ARAB/ISRAELI CONFLICT


WEEK 8: RESPONSES TO THE HOLOCAUST


WEEK 9: DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Film: “Sallah”

Required Reading: Ephraim Kishon, “Absorbing Immigrants”


WEEK 10: POPULAR FICTION