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Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

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# **Teaching and Learning about Israel:** Assessing the Impact of Israeli Faculty on American Students

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## Executive Summary

In 2005, the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE) initiated a program to place visiting Israeli professors (VIPs) on university campuses in the United States. The program seeks to expose students at colleges and universities to serious academic study about modern Israel through the placement of Israeli academics in temporary positions, thereby enhancing student understanding of Israel's culture, government, and society as well as the domestic and international challenges the country faces. The program is designed to encourage host institutions to further expand the study of Israel and facilitate balanced and reasoned discussion of Israel (Koren & Einhorn, 2010).

### Methods

This study is based on a survey of over 200 students who took courses from an AICE visiting Israeli professor in spring 2011. The students were surveyed at the beginning of the course and a year later. The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) research team also visited eight campuses in fall 2011. During site visits researchers interviewed visiting Israeli professors, their department chairs and/or deans; observed AICE classes; and conducted focus groups and small group interviews with students. The visits provided valuable background information and helped to inform the design of the survey and subsequent interview protocols. Data from site visits and surveys were further supplemented by interviews

with more than 80 fall 2011 survey respondents. In the surveys, interviews, and focus groups, CMJS explored student responses to the courses as well as changes in their opinions and understanding of Israel in the year following enrollment. In order to contextualize their experiences in their AICE courses, CMJS also examined public discourse on Israel at the students' universities.

### Findings

*Campuses in this study cannot be considered pro- or anti-Israel, and lack of involvement, rather than activism, characterizes most students in the study despite their enrollment in courses about Israel.*

Students on the same campus described the political atmosphere in widely divergent terms. In separate interviews, students described their school as pro-Israel, anti-Israel, and apolitical. Also, campuses which were considered hotbeds of activity one year were calm and quiet the following year. Most students, despite their having been enrolled in courses about Israel, were unaware of Israel-related events on their campuses, and few who were aware attended such activities. Likewise, students usually knew about groups such as Students for Israel or Students for Justice in Palestine, but few other than leaders or activists within such groups knew about or attended their activities.

Only 41% of surveyed students said they were at all engaged in political activities, and of those, only 38% (15% of all students) said they were at all engaged in activities concerning Israel or the Middle East. Jewish students expressed interest in advocating for Israel (66% saying “very much”), but it was not something most of them actually did in the public sphere.

Even more pervasive than apathy toward events, however, was rejection of the discourse students thought the programs and rallies represented. Students reacted negatively to the language and behavior on the quad describing it as “angry,” “extreme,” “nasty,” “not respectful,” “ignorant,” or “volatile.” Students, representing a variety of opinions about the conflict, agreed that the rhetoric was “off-putting.” They were more receptive to, and appreciated, the more moderate and academic discourse of the classroom.

*AICE courses attract a diverse population.*

The visiting Israeli professors’ classes in this study included Jews, Christians, and Muslims, those of other religions or no religion at all. Jewish students were drawn disproportionately to these courses about Israel, nonetheless, non-Jews outnumbered Jews more than two to one. Therefore, this research explores the impact of Israel classes on both populations.

AICE courses include American and foreign students as well as students majoring or double majoring in many different areas of study. Slightly more than 50% of respondents majored in international relations, international studies, political science, or history. Others majored in science, language or literature, business, social science, economics, journalism, or

religious studies. From interviews it is clear that many of the AICE students aspired to careers in government, diplomatic leadership, or international law. Nonetheless, few participated in political activities on campus.

*Most Jewish students in the AICE courses have strong Jewish educational backgrounds and felt deeply connected to Israel before they enrolled in their AICE classes*

Jewish students scored highly on all measures of previous Jewish education and involvement: 40% attended day schools; 61% attended Jewish summer camps; and over half participated in Jewish youth groups. These participation rates were considerably higher than those of most Jewish college or university students as represented by a sample of Taglit-Birthright Israel applicants. Also, almost 30% of Jewish AICE students had been to Israel more than once since they were 18, and over two-thirds had “very much” a sense of connection to Israel before they enrolled in their visiting Israeli professors’ classes. This created a “ceiling effect,” limiting the extent to which one could expect greater connection or involvement with Israel after taking AICE course.

*Visiting Israeli professors fulfill important needs for their academic departments, providing courses on Israel that would otherwise not be offered.*

Department chairs and administrators emphasized the importance of having someone teach Israel on campus, and they gave a variety of reasons for needing AICE courses: no one on the faculty specialized in Israel, Israel was not being taught in Middle East studies, international relations students

needed to understand the Arab-Israeli conflict to be knowledgeable in their field, or an existing survey course in modern Jewish history could not give adequate attention to Israel. Almost all agreed that there was considerable student demand for courses about Israel, and stated they would like to be able to create permanent faculty positions to teach the subject. Unfortunately, most were unable to fund such positions on their own.

*According to students, the visiting Israeli professors presented unbiased classes and created classroom experiences conducive to learning.*

Students were almost unanimous (97%) in their assessment that classes had expanded their knowledge of Israel. They reported that lectures presented multiple perspectives, that differing opinions in classes were consistently treated respectfully, and that the discourse was open and polite. Over 90% of students said their VIP presented a balanced perspective on Israel, and most students who had taken other courses about Israel said that their VIP classes were more objective and unbiased than classes taken previously.

Students described their VIPs as “authentic,” with knowledge of the situation in Israel and the Middle East that could only be offered by someone who had lived in the region. Although few students (less than one-third of non-Jews and only 20% of Jews) said they enrolled in their AICE courses because the professor was Israeli, they came away with an appreciation of the knowledge, authenticity, and balanced approaches that their VIPs brought to their classrooms.

*Students believe their VIP courses provided them with substantial content knowledge and an appreciation of the complexity of the*

*Israeli-Palestinian conflict but did little to change their opinions on Israel’s political situation.*

Students talked about having a greater understanding of Israel. Over three-quarters of survey respondents said their VIP course had “very much” increased their understanding of Israel. They said they had “broadened” their views and developed a “richer background and history” of the subject. Students were introduced to multiple perspectives and were now able to think more critically about the topic and recognize its complexity and nuance.

Most Jewish students started out feeling highly positive about Israel and no significant change occurred after having taken an AICE course. Among non-Jewish students, some who had no position formed opinions by the second survey. Students in their survey responses and interviews often said that their opinions had not changed, but they had learned to see other perspectives and could understand how different groups might have different narratives.

*AICE courses appear to have piqued continued student interest in Israel.*

A year after taking a course on Israel with a VIP, most Jewish students (51%) and 40% of non-Jewish students were eager to follow the news about Israel. Slightly more of both groups were interested in following the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. Some expressed interest in taking additional courses or studying Hebrew, but these numbers are small in comparison to those interested in following the news. Many survey respondents were juniors or seniors when they took their AICE course and, in interviews, some noted that they had little opportunity to pursue such interests in

graduate school or while trying to establish careers. Actual news consumption appears to have decreased from Year 1 to Year 2, but this probably can be attributed to requirements to follow the news or read specific news articles about Israel while students were in their VIP classes.

Students, especially Jewish students (51%) reported being “very much” interested in visiting Israel one year after completing their AICE course. In interviews students expressed the same interest, but most acknowledged that such trips would have to be postponed until after they found jobs and embarked on their careers.

*Jewish students continued to feel strongly connected and committed to Israel. Exposure to multiple narratives and unbiased class discussions, facilitated by the AICE courses, increased their knowledge and sustained their positions.*

Jewish students entered their AICE courses highly connected to Israel. Most had visited at least once (80%) and many had visited more than once. Given the fact that most felt strongly attachment to Israel when they enrolled in their AICE course(s) (70% felt

“very much” connected to Israel in Year 1), it is not surprising that there was no statistically significant change in Year 2. Nonetheless, in interviews and in open-ended responses students revealed the depth of their ties to Israel and explained that those ties remained strong despite their exposure to critiques of Israel and the narratives of Israeli Arabs and Palestinians.

### **Conclusion**

The findings in this report point to the importance of continuing to make serious study of Israel a part of the curriculum of higher education. AICE provides opportunities for students to learn about Israel in academically rigorous classroom environments and engage with historical and political issues in a critical and respectful manner. Too many campuses do not offer this possibility. For universities struggling in the current economic climate, courses about Israel may be out of reach unless outside sources support visiting professors, graduate student development, and the training of faculty. AICE was established to promote the normalization of teaching about Israel in the academy. Although much has been accomplished, much remains to be done.



## Contents

List of Tables and Figures.....	6
Introduction.....	7
The Quad.....	15
The Classroom.....	21
Takeaways.....	29
Conclusions.....	41
Appendix A: Methods.....	1
Appendix B: Israel and Palestine Related Activities on AICE Campus.....	39

## Tables and Figures

Figure 1: Political Engagement .....	10
Figure 2: Activities Related to Israel.....	11
Figure 3: Political Self-Characterization.....	11
Figure 4: Students by Religion .....	16
Table 1: Student Majors.....	16
Figure 5: Jewish Education and Background .....	17
Figure 6: Ability to Discuss Israel.....	18
Figure 7: Importance attached to Activities Related to Israel .....	18
Figure 8: Connection to Israel .....	19
Figure 9: Motivations for Taking AICE Courses .....	19
Figure 10: Course Assessment.....	25
Figure 11: Expanding Knowledge.....	29
Figure 12: Thinking about Israel, All Respondents .....	33
Figure 13: Thinking about Israel: Comparison of Jewish and Non-Jewish Students .....	33
Figure 14: West Bank Settlements .....	34
Figure 15: Status of Jerusalem.....	34
Figure 16: Continued Study .....	35
Figure 17: Following News from Israel and the Middle East .....	36
Figure 18: Seeking News from Israel.....	36
Figure 19: News Sources .....	37
Figure 20: Visiting the Middle East .....	37
Figure 21: Connection to Israel .....	39

## Introduction

Elite University is a top-tier school with a large Jewish population and a student body with a reputation for being “socially aware.” The university offers several courses on the Middle East, but there was no course specifically focused on Israel until Avi, the visiting Israeli professor [VIP] came to campus. The political science department chair feels that it is “imperative” to have someone with expertise on Israel, given the interest level among students in the conflict and in Israel more broadly. Avi says that while students know a great deal about the region, they are missing background information critical to understanding Israel, and it is his job to fill in the gaps. The students at Elite know where Israel is and what the Green Line is, but Avi realizes that he needs to allow much more time to fill in the background for the course than he had originally planned.

Jewish and non-Jewish students fill the VIP’s classes in approximately equal numbers. Josh, a Jewish student, went on Birthright the previous summer and stayed to study in a Conservative yeshiva. That experience led him to Avi’s Israel and Democracy course. Shira, a Jewish day school graduate majoring in international relations, spent time in Israel in high school. She described her experience in the same course:

I realized I knew a lot about Israel’s foreign affairs, but I didn’t really know much about Israel’s domestic affairs, which I think you’ll find of many kids who go to Jewish day school. You grow up learning a lot about Israel in its context of the countries that surround it, but you don’t really learn

about what’s going on within Israel. I thought this was the perfect opportunity that I’ve never really had before. ... I learned so much and I really think I can better understand Israel as a whole and its relationship with the Arab countries because of what I learned in this course.

A non-Jewish student, James, said he was also really interested in the class, particularly in how it dealt with the Arab population. While he had taken many classes on the Middle East, he had not taken a course specifically focused on Israel before. He described himself as someone who “always considers both sides of the spectrum” when it comes to issues in the Middle East: “As it turned [out], this class focused on both sides of the issue.” His views about Israel were not changed by the course, but he was surprised to learn about the differences of opinion within Israeli society.

These are only three examples of students who took courses with visiting Israeli professors (VIPs) during the spring semester of 2010-11. As a result of their experiences in those courses, they became aware that the history, sociology, culture, and politics of the land were more complex than they had imagined. They were exposed to civil and academically rigorous discussion of Israel in the classroom and came away with new ways of thinking about the country and its people.

In 2005, the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise initiated an effort to place visiting Israeli professors (VIPs) at prestigious American universities lacking formal

courses on Israel. Elite University is one example of a school that benefited from the AICE program. Although the program intended to, and largely did, place VIPs at schools with large Jewish populations, this class, and others like it, attracted many non-Jews as well as Jews. In fact, a major impact of the program is exposing non-Jewish as well as Jewish students to serious scholarship and rational discourse about Israel.

This report will discuss the impact of the VIP program on classroom environments and learning experiences, including changes in student attitudes among those who take VIP-led courses. It follows students of 15<sup>1</sup> Israeli visiting professors from the beginning of their coursework with the VIPs through a

full year later. It draws on surveys administered at the beginning and one year after completion of the AICE courses, individual student interviews, and campus visits (including classroom observations, interviews with faculty and administrators, and focus groups with students). The report begins with a discussion of Israel on the quad—the atmosphere that provides the context in which classroom learning takes place. The second section describes the students who took the VIP classes. The third section describes the classroom and students' impressions of the courses they took. The final section discusses takeaways: how student opinions and understanding of Israel changed and the extent to which their interest was stimulated to study and explore the topic further.

## The Quad

*At Big Eastern University, Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) built an Apartheid Wall. Students for Israel decided to host a “Peace Rally” across the quad from the wall. According to Jill, a leader of Big Eastern Students for Israel, about 250 people turned out for the rally. The group’s president gave a speech saying the presence of the Apartheid Wall and statements comparing Gaza to the Holocaust made Jewish students feel unsafe on campus. He argued that the university should be a place where people talk to each other and work together. Jill claims that SJP refused to work with Students for Israel. Her group even offered to help the Palestinians with a fundraiser to send money for humanitarian aid in Gaza or the West Bank. But she acknowledges that hostility between the two groups alienates supporters on both sides. George, a pro-Palestinian Christian Arab says he did not attend the rallies because SJP was only hurting its own cause by “provoking the other side...with their Wall and provocative signs.” He thinks members of SJP are “anarchists or socialists,” and he doesn’t want to be part of that. Similarly, Daniel, a Jewish student, describes himself as “a very big supporter of Israel,” but the response to Apartheid Week by the Students for Israel “really turned me off.” He does not support the group’s demand for 100% agreement with the Israeli government. A year later, he still avoids any involvement in Students for Israel.*

Students in interviews expressed diverse opinions about their campuses. A university, characterized by one student as having such a dominant Jewish population that there was no anti-Israel voice on campus, was

described by another student as “probably more anti-Israel than pro-Israel by virtue of being a college campus where most people are liberal.” Another school was described by students as being “largely pro-Israel,” having “a pretty strong anti-Israel movement,” and as a “fairly apolitical campus.” The campuses considered here range in size from 5,000 to over 30,000 students and contain many different sub-communities. A student’s social network, activities, and other bases for association may have implications for how he or she views the campus atmosphere. Also, pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian activity and their relationship to each other are influenced by current events and change from year to year or even month to month. A campus that appears to be a hotbed of anti-Israel fervor at one point in October can quietly enjoy an apolitical celebration of Israeli culture in May.

It is not possible, then, to characterize a campus as pro-Israel or anti-Israel. All universities involved in the study have more pro-Israel than anti-Israel groups on campus. Israel groups include AIPAC, Students for Israel, Hasbara fellows (an Aish HaTorah sponsored-organization that brings student ‘fellows’ to Israel for a 16-day program), Peace Now, JStreet, Christians United for Israel, and Hillel organizations. Some campuses have their own, independent Israel groups as well. Palestinian groups include Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP); the Boycott, Divest, and Sanction movement (BDS); the Arab Student Association (ASA); and the Muslim Student Association (MSA) or Muslim Student Union (MSU). MSA chapters are primarily religious

organizations, leaving the advocacy for the Palestinian cause to SJP or ASA. (See Appendix B for complete table of Israel and Palestinian related political activity at the universities included in this study).

Most campuses in the study have activities around Israeli Apartheid Week. These tend to be specifically anti-Israel rather than celebrations of Palestinian or Muslim culture and are run, in some cases, by off-campus organizations. Israel Week, in this table, refers to either or both an Israel activism week such as Israel Peace Week or an Israel cultural celebration, such as Israel Fest or Israelpalooza. Such events are usually sponsored or cosponsored by Hillel but do not include Jewish Culture Month or Jewish Culture Week which usually involve, but do not focus exclusively on, Israel. In 2010-11 and 2011-12, Israel Weeks took place at 12 of the 15 campuses in our study. Almost equal numbers of universities held Jewish cultural events on their campuses. BDS campaigns took place on 11 campuses, but the BDS activities were usually coordinated by non-university organizations.

There was little in the way of openly hostile public interactions between pro and anti-Israel students on any of these campuses in

2010-11. Articles in campus papers featured debates between members of the faculty who were respectful of each other's positions. News sources reported a few divisive events: an invitation to Norman Finkelstein to speak, an attempted but failed effort at BDS, a controversial Holocaust week presentation (according to an article in the campus paper), and an event allegedly comparing the creation of the State of Israel to the Holocaust. Nonetheless, the students interviewed for this study reported that their campuses were, for the most part, quiet in 2011-12.

### Student Involvement

The students in VIP classes revealed a variety of levels and forms of involvement with political issues. Despite their academic interest in political science and international relations and, indeed, majoring in those fields, the majority of students (59%), Jews and non-Jews, were "not at all" involved in political activity. Jewish students, however, were significantly more engaged than their non-Jewish counterparts. Almost half of Jewish students were engaged at least in some form of activity (47%), while only 38% of non-Jewish students were similarly engaged (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Political Engagement

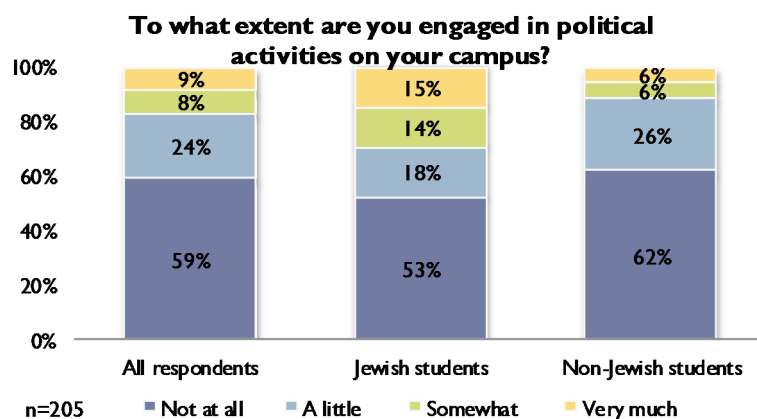
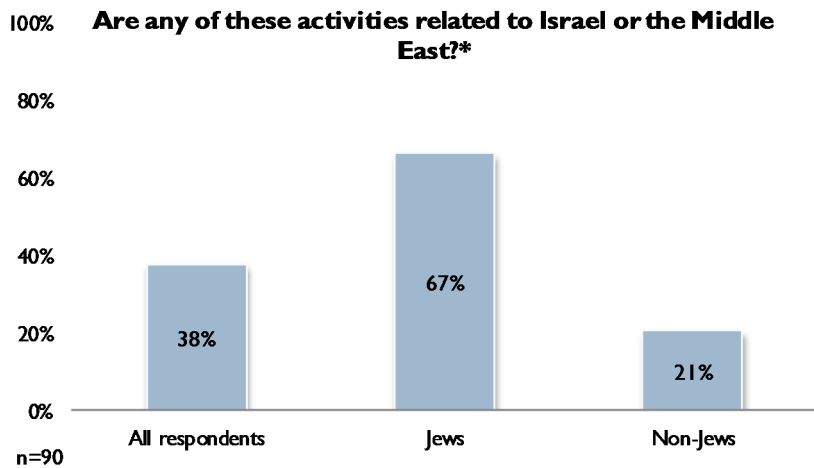


Figure 1 Significant difference between Jews and non-Jews: weighted  $X^2=9.62$ ,  $df=204$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$

The difference between Jewish and non-Jewish students' involvement in political activities is statistically significant, and the difference is even more pronounced for political activities related to Israel and the Middle East (Figure 2). Among those Jewish students who were engaged in political activities, two-thirds noted some involvement in Israel or the Middle East. Among non-Jews, only 21% of those involved in political activities were involved in activities concerning Israel or the Middle East.

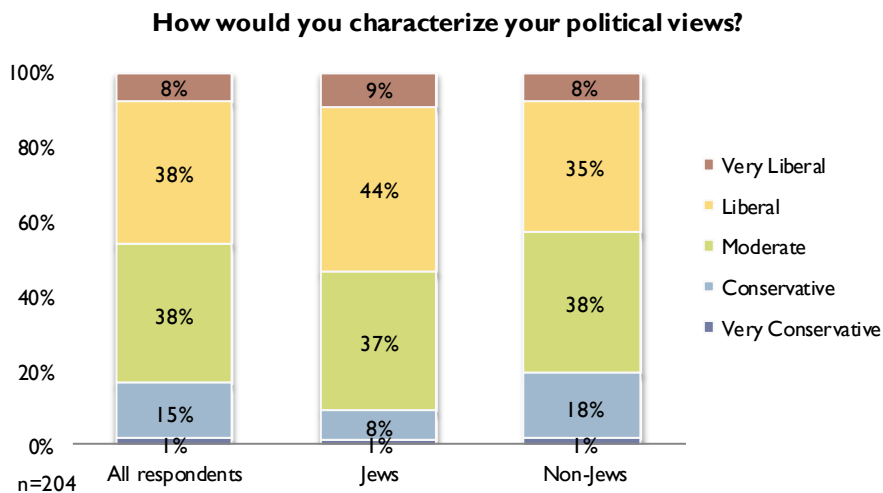
Most students identified themselves as liberal or politically moderate. Very few identified with the more extreme positions of very liberal (8%) or very conservative (1%). A somewhat higher percentage of Jewish students identified as liberal (44%) as opposed to non-Jewish (35%), while more non-Jewish students said they are conservative (18%) as opposed to Jewish students (8%). These differences, however, are not statistically significant (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Activities Related to Israel



\*Percent of respondents engaged in any political activities who responded "Yes" that these activities were related to Israel or the Middle East.

Figure 3: Political Self-Characterization



## Debate on the Quad

Many of the students interviewed for the study talked about Israel groups and events—both cultural and political. They were aware of the existence of these activities, but few were actively involved. Students at the campuses where incidents were reported were aware of them, but few had attended the events. One could assume that students who enrolled in courses on Israel would be at least as aware as other students about these events, and possibly more so, but their attendance at these activities was low and the events appeared to have little salience except for those students in leadership roles.

Of the students who were involved, some organized events, while others attended programs or simply walked by a table on the quad. One student leader explained, “Last year during Israel Week, we brought in speakers from across the country. We got a huge grant from the Israel on Campus Coalition, and we’ve been able to really reach out to people, bring them in, and attract a wide variety of students to our events.” Four students mentioned an Israel week at this university, although two admitted it was something they were only vaguely aware of. At another school, a Jewish student said that he knew there was an Israel week or day but could not remember exactly what it was. He acknowledged never having participated in it and, although he was thinking about paying more attention to it, when we spoke to him, he did not know when it was happening. A student at another school spoke about an attempt to bridge the gap between the “Students for Israel” group and SJP but noted:

*Most students are not very political. Everybody is busy...yes, there are students involved in it...[but] I don't think it's a whole lot of people. Many people are just fed up with the conflict, I guess.*

More surprising, perhaps, than the general apathy towards advocacy events was the rejection of the stridency of the discourse. It may be that this was, in part, one of the characteristics that defined the sample—students took courses with scholars in order to avoid the bias (or perception of bias) in the media or on the quad. Students on both sides of the conflict and those with neutral or no opinions reacted negatively to the language and behavior of advocacy. Students, Jewish and non-Jewish, used terms such as “angry,” “extreme,” “nasty,” “not respectful,” “ignorant,” “or “volatile” to describe the rhetoric on the quad. Some students were uncomfortable voicing their ideas outside the safety of their classes. A Christian student from a campus with a large Muslim population said, “Everyone’s not really into topics like that. It’s a touchy subject. They don’t want to speak about that because they don’t want to offend other people...I rarely hear anything about that.” Students from different religious backgrounds and different campuses agree that the rhetoric of extremism is off-putting. A student talking about BDS said, “It’s not an issue right now at [university] because that movement is too extreme for [this] campus.” Non-Jews were also turned off by the rhetoric of advocacy groups. An Arab-American used to be involved in SJP, but said “they’re kind of like crazy, and I’m all for the cause and stuff, but I kind of stopped showing up.”



Even some pro-Israel students felt alienated by pro-Israel rhetoric they viewed as extreme. Leaders of some Israel groups were cognizant of such feelings and tried to distinguish themselves from their opponents by focusing on Israel apart from the conflict. One student leader said her group tried not to “polarize” or “alienate.” She explained, “When you come off as looking extreme, they will turn away from you. We let Students for Justice in Palestine do that.” But the overall impression from interviews with students on these campuses was that the students—even those engaged in the subject matter in the classroom—avoided open discussion of the conflict outside of class. The small percentage of students who were involved were knowledgeable and vocal to different degrees, but most students were apathetic. As described by a peer at Big Eastern, “Most of the students... couldn’t recognize Israel or Palestine on a map.” Or, at another university, “Outside of my classes, I never encountered anyone... that cared enough.”

Furthermore, students in interviews made distinctions between antisemitism and anti-Israel events. An example of the former was

documented on only one campus, where students did not associate it with anti-Israel sentiment. Few students interviewed for this report, including the most Jewishly committed students whom one might expect to be alert and sensitive to any forms of antisemitism on campus, associated anti-Israel activity with antisemitism or feared students who were hostile to Israel. The students interviewed for this study were sensitive to ignorance and indifference about Israel and anti-Israel or anti-Zionist rhetoric but did not interpret such rhetoric as antisemitic or otherwise threatening to themselves. If anything, such an association was considered off-putting. One student noted, “I am a very big supporter of Israel... it’s definitely good that there’s such a strong pro-Israel group [on campus]... but personally, I just thought it was much too extreme, and it deters me a lot of the time.”

Students—at least those interviewed for this study—were more receptive to the kind of discourse they found in their VIP classrooms. The next section discusses the students: their religious identification, Jewish education, and interest in Israel.



## The Students

*About 60% of respondents in Zvi's classes at State University are Jewish, and he thinks many are majoring in Jewish studies. Sara, a Jewish student in one of his classes, is majoring in communications with a minor in history. She's involved in many activities on campus from student government to competitive sports. Like many of the Jewish students in this study, Sara has a rich Jewish background. She attended Jewish supplementary school for "more than 12 years" and attended Jewish summer camp as well. She was an active participant in North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY) and has visited Israel both as a student and to spend time with a relative. She studied for six weeks at Hebrew University and participated in a leadership program in the West Bank for Jewish and Arab students. She grew up idealizing Israel, but her experience in the West Bank opened her eyes to "the other side." She remains devoted to Israel and enrolled in Zvi's courses because of her Jewish upbringing, her experience in the West Bank, and her overall experience in Israel.*

*Michael is a non-Jewish student majoring in finance and economic consulting. He's an avid investor in the stock market, reads the Wall Street Journal regularly, and belongs to a consulting club, Toast Masters International, and College Mentors for Kids. Over the previous summer, he had an internship at a large agricultural processing company but aspires to work for an investment management company when he graduates. He took the course with Zvi*

*because he needed one more arts and humanities course and the topic looked interesting. As a Christian, he explains, Jerusalem and Israel have particular resonance for him.*

*Zvi is particularly pleased that non-Jews take his courses. Many are majoring in political science and are also taking Middle Eastern Studies classes with Arab professors. These students told Zvi that they wanted to hear the "other side" or "round out" their knowledge of the topic, and he is glad to be able to provide them with that opportunity. He feels they add to the quality of the class conversation and ask questions that Jewish students may be embarrassed to ask.*

This study examines both Jewish and non-Jewish students in AICE courses. The latter group represents the majority of students affected by the AICE program. As Zvi suggested, they also may have a positive influence on classes by raising issues and asking questions that Jewish students might be embarrassed to ask such as, "Who was Herzl?" As well, their presence can help change the tone about Israel outside of class—creating a setting in which Jewish students can feel comfortable having such conversations. The knowledge they absorb through the AICE classes can help them create more civil and intelligent discourse about Israel and the Middle East in the classroom and on the quad. Further, non-Jewish as well as Jewish students will be leaders and voters of the future.

Most respondents from the 15 campuses are not Jewish. One-third of the students identify as Christian with an almost equal number identifying as “no religion.” Jews comprise only 30% of the sample. Student distribution by religion as they defined themselves in the 2011 survey can be seen in Figure 4.

University administrators and VIPs hope their courses will draw students from across the spectrum of interests in the academy, and, for the most part, this is the case. The classes are diverse in terms of religion, majors, gender, and political identification. None of the universities involved viewed the AICE Israel courses as designed to enhance Jewish identity or build the self-confidence of Jewish students.

Slightly over half of the survey respondents are male and most of the students (two-thirds) were third and fourth year students when they enrolled in the AICE course, reflecting the level of courses (300 or 400 level or their equivalents) offered by VIPs. Almost 20% of Year 2 respondents had

graduated by the time of the second survey in January 2012.

Eight of the 15 professors whose courses we studied were hosted by Jewish studies departments, but their courses were usually listed or cross-listed in history, political science, and/or international relations. The majority of survey respondents majored in these fields. More than 20% of both years’ survey respondents had double majors, and thus there is some double counting, but a clear concentration of students in these fields reflects the field foci of the VIPs themselves and the departments in which their courses were listed. The sciences (biology, chemistry, physics, pre-med, and environmental, and health sciences) represent 8% of respondents, and a few of these students have double majors as well. “Other” includes fields as diverse as criminology, law, education, music, and philosophy. Only 2% of survey respondents said they had a major in Jewish studies, and a similarly small percentage had a minor in the field (Table 1).

Figure 4: Students by Religion

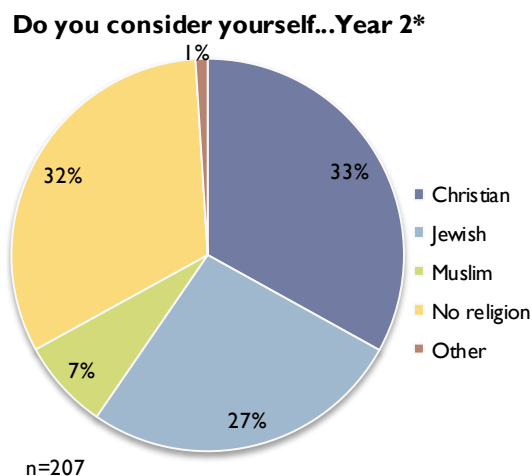


Table 1: Student Majors

Subject majors	Percent of Respondents
History	23%
Political Science	18%
International Relations/Studies	15%
Sciences	8%
Language/Literature/Film	8%
Business	7%
Anthropology/Sociology	6%
Psychology	6%
Middle East Studies	5%
Economics	4%
Communication/Journalism	4%
Jewish Studies	2%
Religion	2%
Other/Blank	13%

**Jewish Students**

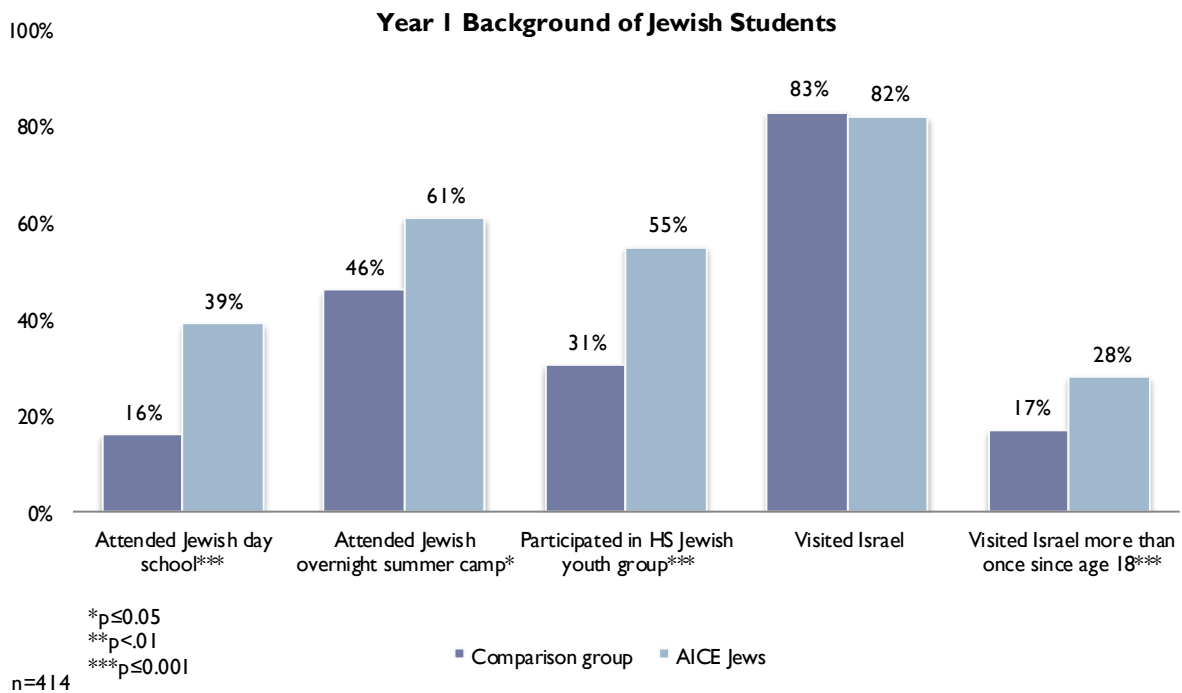
Most of the Jewish students who responded to the survey score highly on all measures of previous Jewish education and involvement. This can be seen in the chart below comparing the AICE students in 2011 with a selection of Taglit applicants from the same schools. The former had significantly more formal and informal Jewish education and visits to Israel. Fully 40% of the Jewish AICE students had attended day schools compared with only 16% of the Taglit group. Over 60% had attended an overnight camp that had Shabbat services or a Jewish educational program as opposed to 46% in the comparison group, and over half participated in youth group during high school compared to less than one-third of the

Taglit group. In addition, 39% of the AICE Jewish students enrolled in at least one course specifically focused on Israel prior to the one they took in spring 2011.

Over 80% of both groups had been to Israel. For Taglit applicants, this reflects the purpose of their application to the program. For AICE students, it is part of their overall involvement in Jewish life and education. Over a quarter of AICE students (28%) visited Israel at least twice since turning 18; this is true for only 17% of the Taglit students (Figure 5).

Also in response to questions in the baseline survey, students revealed substantial interest in and attachment to Israel. On every measure of confidence in their ability to

Figure 5: Jewish Education and Background



discuss Israel, a significantly higher percentage of AICE Jewish students in comparison with Taglit students, felt “very confident” (Figure 6).

The interest of Jewish students in Israel can also be seen in the importance they attached to Israel-related activities. Two-thirds claimed that advocating for Israel was extremely important to them (note that this does not mean that they engaged in

advocacy). Similarly 70% said that understanding the place of Israel in Judaism was “very important,” and 65% said the same about being aware of important issues in Israeli society (Figure 7).

Given their Jewish backgrounds, self-perceived knowledge of Israel, and the value they attach to Israel-related activities, it is not surprising that over two-thirds of the Jewish students responding to the first

Figure 6: Ability to Discuss Israel

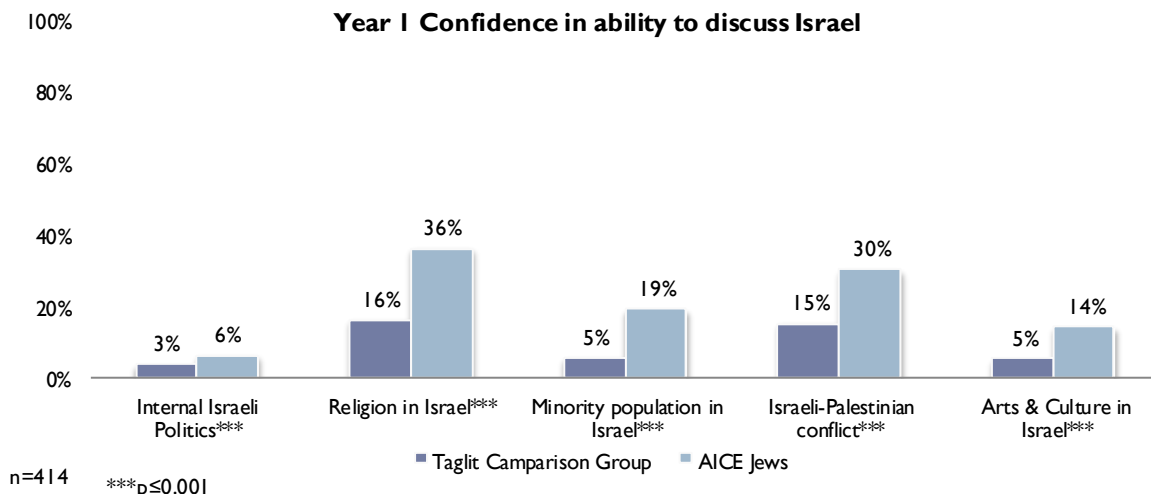
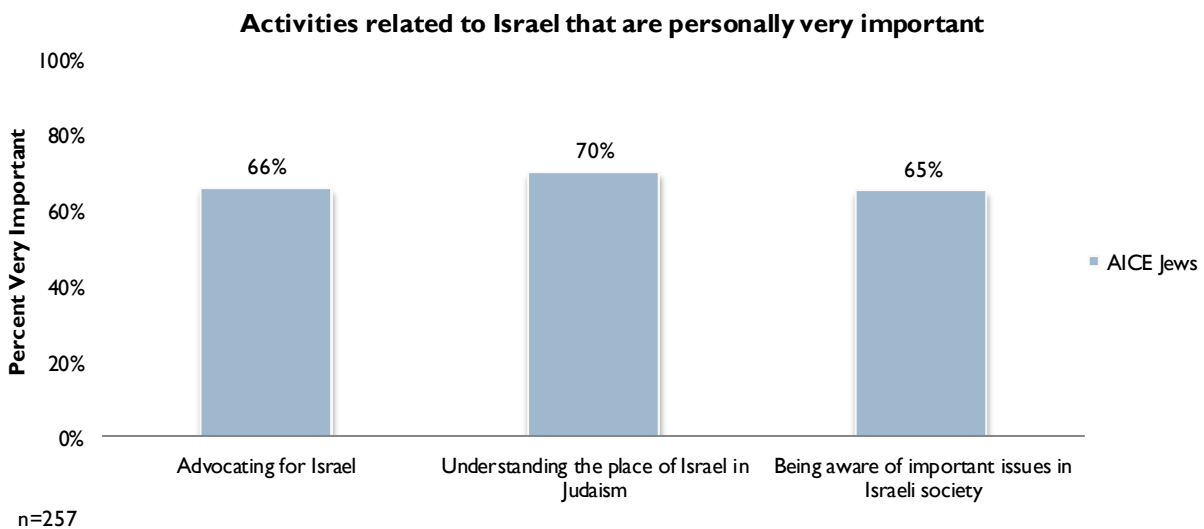


Figure 7: Importance attached to Activities Related to Israel



survey said they felt “very much” connected to Israel (Figure 8).

In short, the Jewish students were highly engaged and connected to Israel before they began their AICE courses. This creates a “ceiling effect,” limiting the extent to which one can expect these students to become significantly more connected or involved as a result of taking a course on Israel.

**Interest in Israel**

Students enroll in courses about Israel for a variety of reasons, e.g., to meet curriculum requirements or because they are interested or already involved in pro-Israel, pro-Palestinian, or peace advocacy (Figure 9).

Both Jewish and non-Jewish students were “very much” motivated by “interest in the Middle East,” and both groups were influenced by course descriptions in university catalogs. The professor being Israeli was important to a larger percentage of non-Jews than Jews, but was not as important to most students as interest in the subject matter or fulfilling a requirement. The AICE courses often served to meet requirements for majors or minors, and in some cases, for general education. For one university’s ROTC program, the VIP’s class fulfilled the requirement for a course on the Middle East.

Among Jewish students, the most widely held motivation for taking the course was

Figure 8: Connection to Israel

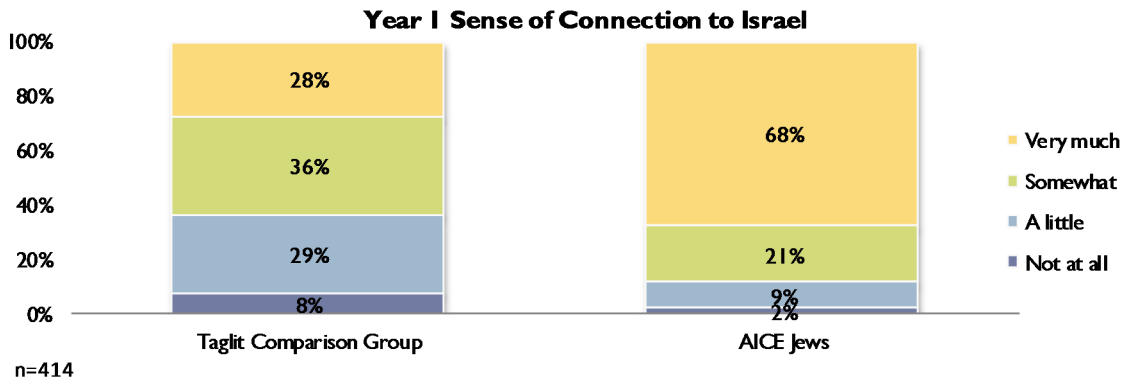
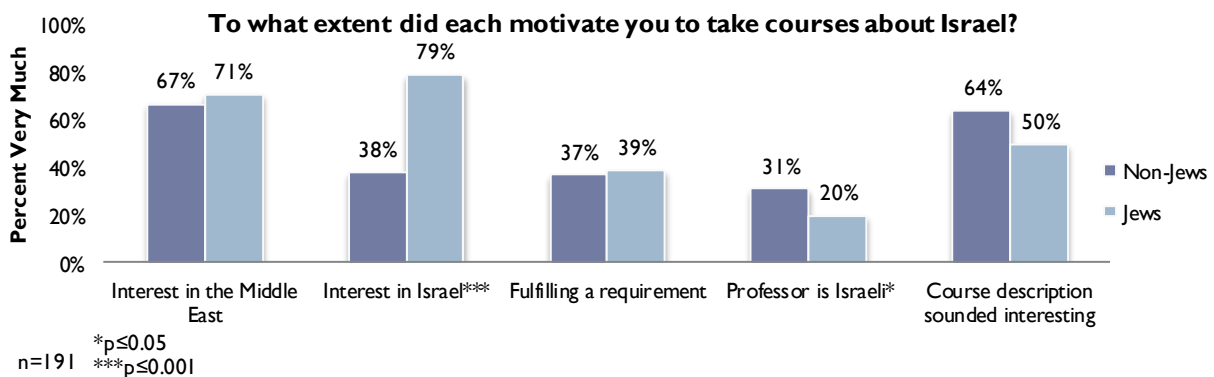


Figure 8: Statistically significant difference between the AICE Jews and the Birthright comparison group: weighted  $\chi^2=52.18$ ,  $df=413$ ,  $p<0.001$

Figure 9: Motivations for Taking AICE Courses



“interest in Israel.” Some have long-standing curiosity about Israel. Others have been or are planning to go on Taglit. Some, like a student double-majoring in psychology and history, wanted to be able to counter anti-Israel arguments. An Orthodox student who often found himself subject to questions about the conflict because of his day school background decided “that instead of being ignorant, we have these classes at [university] that I could just take and get credit for.” He heard positive reports about the professor from his fellow students and decided to “try it out.” An Israeli student took an AICE course because he missed being “back home.” And a student who described himself as “half-Jewish” with “no religion” said he had a “natural fascination with the history of my people, what the Jews have been through and how we’ve dealt with it. It was mostly academic curiosity mixed with personal attachment to the subject.”

Non-Jewish students had other reasons. Over one-third were motivated to take an AICE course to fulfill a requirement. Children of Palestinians and other Arab-American students took an AICE course because it was an opportunity to learn something about the ‘other side’ or, as one of them said, because he wanted to meet an Israeli. Others simply felt ignorant about the region, the conflict, and its history. A

Christian student admitted she knew very little about the history of the region. Another, who was majoring in international relations, said “I wanted to have an understanding of the things that I see in the news all the time.” She had taken a course that was not about Israel with the VIP the previous semester and had enjoyed his class and “teaching style.” A history major who identified as Christian said that understanding Israel was important in understanding the politics of the Middle East, American foreign policy, and “the international system since 1948.” Further, the course “was a way to broaden [his] understanding and expose [himself] to alternative views.” This is a student who said he regularly reads the New York Times, the Guardian, and Foreign Policy Magazine online.

Despite some of the students’ interest in studying with an Israeli, this opportunity was a major factor in deciding to enroll for only about one-third of Jewish students and 20% of the non-Jews. More salient was interest in a subject that often dominates the news and has particular emotional resonance for students of all backgrounds. Most students enrolled in their AICE courses because they were interested in the Middle East or thought the course description sounded interesting.



## The Classroom

*Lincoln State is a large public university with a sizeable and prestigious Jewish studies program. The program's chair would like to add more courses about Israel, but there is no budget for permanent faculty appointments in that area. He is grateful for the funding for the AICE VIP, recognizing that the scholarship and teaching expertise offered by the VIP would otherwise be out of reach. The goal of Jewish studies at Lincoln State is to be an "academically rigorous program" requiring students to read, write, and think critically. It is open to, and indeed attracts majors and minors from all faiths and ethnic groups. "This is not synagogue education. We're not trying to teach them to be better Jews." But the chair hopes that the AICE VIP will help Jewish and non-Jewish students become more knowledgeable about Israel.*

*"Anat," the VIP at Lincoln State teaches courses on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Zionism, and Israeli politics. Her classes are full and include Muslim students as well as Christians and Jews, Israelis as well as Arabs. Unlike other VIPs, Anat thinks 90% of her students arrive in her class very opinionated. But consistent with her peers, she says they come in with very little knowledge of the subject. Although her goal is not to change their opinions, at least not radically, "they change their initial opinion. They...become more aware of other possibilities, and they weigh the entire scenario in a much more serious fashion than previously. When I hear those reactions, I know that I did an okay job. If I managed to convince them that this is a more complicated conflict, a more multi-*

*layered issue to observe, and there are lots of variables in this equation, I think I did my job (or at least an important part of it)."*

In 2010-11, 21 VIPs taught 75 courses. Only ten of these courses were focused on the VIP's particular areas of study and were not directly about Israel; five were graduate courses. In 2007-08, more than half of the AICE courses were specifically about the conflict between Israel and its neighbors. In 2008-09, this proportion decreased to 39%, and in 2010-11, to just 18%. As the program has matured, professors from different fields with different interests have taught about a variety of topics on modern Israel, topics that extend beyond Zionism and the history of the state. Examples from 2010-11 include: Israel's Environment: Sustainable Development in the Promised Land; Tel Aviv: Site, Symbol, City; Religious-Secular Divide in Israel, and Multiple Voices of Israeli Society. From conversations with department chairs it is clear that these kinds of courses would not be taught at the host universities without the expertise of the AICE VIPs.

Probably no course in our study avoided the topic of the conflict completely. Some were history courses focusing on Zionism and the creation of the state. Others concerned the religion, culture, and politics of modern Israel. Since the courses about the conflict had larger enrollments, and because more of the courses at the 15 schools included in our study focused on the conflict, the majority of students surveyed and interviewed had studied the conflict as a major portion of learning with their AICE VIPs.

Nonetheless, most courses expanded upon the traditional narratives about Israel. VIPs used Israel, sometimes in a comparative context, to explore theoretical constructs in their disciplines. A VIP teaching in political science, for example, argued that Israel can be thought of as a laboratory for the study of state formation. As a young country, Israel supports a “new” language and “new institutions.” He used the course to help students understand how individuals construct a state. Another VIP said, “I always envelope or harness historical events in models and theories” to avoid bogging the class down in chronologies of events. Department chairs look for this ability in VIPs—to go beyond Israel in their teaching. For example, the administrator of a West Coast school described how the VIP there made his teaching “part of history, literary culture, and other kinds of intellectual discourses.” While not wanting him to “over theorize” the subject, she hoped he would present information that students could “do something with.”

### **Building a department and meeting a need**

On almost every campus included in the study, the AICE VIPs fulfill important needs for their academic departments by providing courses on Israel that would otherwise not be offered. Department chairs and administrators emphasized the importance of having someone teach Israel on campus for a number of reasons: courses about Israel were not being taught in Middle East studies, or because a survey course in modern Jewish history could not give adequate attention to Israel. At a prestigious private university, the department chair explained that the presence of the VIP showcased the need within the department to bring on a full-time faculty member. Several

universities hosting AICE VIPs shared this concern. At a public university with a large and well-respected Jewish studies department, there were no courses on Israel other than those taught by the VIP. According to the department chair, courses on Zionism and the history of Israel had not been taught in more than a decade. Though the department wished to add a permanent faculty member to teach about Israel, it did not have the resources to bring this to fruition. The situation was the same at a private university with a small Jewish studies program, the few faculty affiliated with Jewish studies had other course commitments and none specialized in Israel. Although permanently including courses on Israel was a high priority for department chairs, financial constraints meant that Israel courses could only be offered by VIPs. Department chairs on VIP campuses wanted to improve their Israel offerings but had to rely on the AICE program for financial support; otherwise they were unable to fund these positions.

Chairs and administrators interviewed for this study, however, were unanimous that the demand for courses on Israel is present and growing, and they stressed the importance of meeting that demand with fair and academically sophisticated teaching. Student demand is based on interest in the subject, as seen in Figure 9 above. Students take the courses because they are interested in Israel (especially Jewish students) and the Middle East. But as administrators and chairs made clear in interviews, the academy itself has an interest in education about Israel. As a department chair argued,

*The university is not a hermetically sealed environment. Students will go home at night and become involved in political discussions with roommates and friends and they will*

*have to be able to hold their own in these discussions. If they can hold their own and find out about Israel in a coherent, well-defended way, taught with scholarly merit and integrity, they'll feel much better about it.*

### **Benefit of having an Israeli professor**

Although having an Israeli instructor was not a major motivation to enroll in the AICE courses (see above, Figure 9), students in response to the second survey identified several benefits associated with having an Israeli professor. Many said that the fact that the VIPs had lived and taught in Israel, served in the IDF, lived on kibbutz, or personally experienced the conflict lent “authenticity” to their classes. Students also explained that the experience of living in Israel means that VIPs understand the society, culture, and politics in a different way. “It’s imperative to have an Israeli professor for a history of Israel class—or at least someone who’s lived there a long time. To understand deeply, you can’t learn the culture from a book,” a Jewish student said. This student explained that his learning experience was richer because “we had a primary source in the classroom—someone who had served in the army and lived through some of the turmoil that goes on on a daily basis.” A Muslim student at a large public university described learning about the Arab-Israeli conflict from an Israeli professor:

*It’s not [an] artificial experience that anyone can get from a book. He can tell us exactly how it is there and how much tension there is between two countries... It’s one thing to talk about the issue and it’s another thing to discuss it with somebody who’s lived and is currently living there.*

A VIP’s personal experience taking cover in a bomb shelter during the Gulf War impressed another student:

*At one point he was talking about something that happened in the 90s and then he showed a picture of his town which was bombed and I think that really touched a lot of people, the fact that he was there. It was his house. He explained how he had to run to his bomb shelter and that makes it a lot more real I think....It definitely captured the attention of everyone in the room.*

Students also said that they could “trust” the visiting Israeli professors’ assessment of events because they lived in the region and had “first-hand knowledge” of the situation.

At the same time, students believed that their VIP conveyed greater interest and enthusiasm for their subject matter. A Jewish student said of his professor, “Because she was Israeli and lived there, she knew a lot about it and had a vested interest in the topic instead of going through the motions as other teachers. You could tell she enjoyed teaching it and the content. That made it more interesting.”

Yet it is important to remember, as the department chairs often pointed out, that the fact that a professor was Israeli was not enough to make a difference with students: “It has to be someone of [the VIP’s] caliber. It’s the combination of being thoughtful and experienced as an Israeli. It enables her to address questions that...students have. She can address them both intellectually and experientially.” Other department chairs said they were indifferent to the VIP’s nationality but admitted that it did make a difference to students and their learning experience. More important, however, was the credibility the VIPs achieved through balanced and fair presentation of subject matter.

### Balance, not counterbalance

Students on different campuses told stories of previous experiences in classes and encounters with professors who misrepresented Israel or simply excluded Israel from their syllabi. Interviews uncovered examples of biased teaching at 6 of the 15 universities included in this study. A non-Jewish student described her course with the VIP as “the exact opposite” of other courses she had taken on the Middle East. “I’m a Middle Eastern studies major,” she said, “and we always hear about how bad Israel is and how it causes so many problems. To actually hear from the other side is eye opening. I didn’t know anything about Israel [before] that wasn’t biased.” At another university Israel was missing from courses offered on the Middle East. According to a Jewish student there, “You learn about the Middle Eastern countries, but Israel isn’t one of them.” In a focus group, students said that faculty bias at their university was “not uncommon”: “I think a lot of poli sci [sic] and history teachers here will totally give you a bias depending on if they’re more conservative or liberal.” A second participant agreed, saying “It happens all too often.”

A student majoring in international relations at a large state university changed her major after a negative experience in a course on the conflict in the Middle East. She felt she had to adopt the professor’s views if she wanted to pass the course.

Department chairs suggested that the presence of VIPs is a way to offset the perceived bias of other courses taught about the Middle East, Israel, or the conflict, but they stressed that they, as administrators, were not interested in balancing anti-Israel classes with pro-Israel classes. Rather, they

relied on the VIPs to provide fair and balanced courses that exposed students to multiple narratives and different points of view. The VIPs also entirely rejected the idea that their teaching should serve as a balance to whatever anti-Israel courses there were on campuses. They drew a line between their personal opinions and their teaching.

*You cannot ignore Israel’s flaws and shortcomings—its historical failings. If students feel you aren’t leveling with them, it will be entirely deleterious and destructive to Israel’s image and interest. And this [being honest/balanced] is also the university’s mission.*

Although he hoped that his students would emerge from his class with a more positive view of Israel, the VIP understood and completely concurred with the university’s goal that his course that be “in accordance with academic standards and keep the students satisfied and challenged at the same time.” Other VIPs expressed similar sentiments. While acknowledging that there is a lot of bias in the media and in other courses the university may offer, VIPs felt it was not their job to offset such bias but rather to present a fair and intellectually honest course.

Students described how their courses with VIPs differed from previous coursework on the region, noting the contrast in tone and in the material covered throughout the semester. “The class was more objective than other similar classes,” said a Christian student majoring in international studies with a Middle East concentration. A student majoring in Jewish studies had taken other courses on the Middle East at her university. She remarked, “The major difference [in the course with the VIP] was the even-handedness of the professor.” A student who

had studied in Egypt and majored in international relations noted that her Egyptian professors “had a different point of view of how things happened.” In contrast, the course with the VIP “was very neutral.”

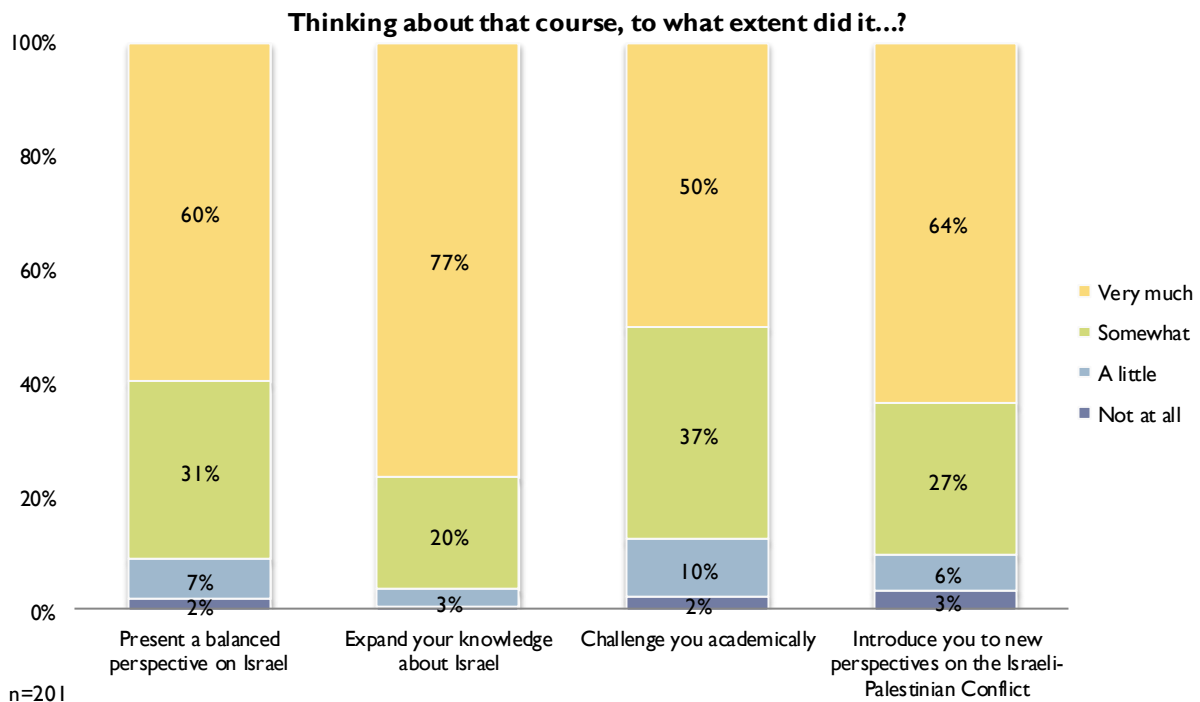
Two-thirds of the students who participated in the interviews considered their professors unbiased, and the survey results mirrored their opinions (see Figure 10). Many explained that their professors were “neutral” or “balanced” and addressed “both sides” of different issues. Students of the professor who tried to offer “selections on a menu,” for example, said that he had let them arrive at their own opinions. One student said, “The instructor never took a side, so you could objectively come to your own conclusion if you wanted to. [The VIP] was excellent... forcing you to think outside the box.” A student of the VIP who cautioned against ignoring Israel’s flaws and shortcomings said the professor did “a very good job of keeping his arguments neutral.”

Non-Jewish as well as Jewish students were nearly unanimous on these questions.

Jewish and non-Jewish students appreciated that VIPs established classroom environments conducive to analysis of facts. One said her VIP “presented an unbiased view on all the material. She didn’t say Israel is so great—she did a good job of showing us the issues, what’s really going on here.” Students also noted that the visiting professors used a variety of course materials to explore different sides of the issue, and were surprised when they read primary source materials from Hamas or other groups “fighting against Israel.”

Several students were surprised that Israeli professors could be objective or neutral when teaching Israel. A non-Jewish student at a university in the East said, “It surprised me when he was very willing to argue both ends of the issues and be very moderate in his ideas and opinions.” A Jewish student at

Figure 10: Course Assessment



the same university expressed initial concerns that an Israeli professor would be biased. The student admitted:

*After finding out that [the professor] was Israeli, I was almost...I wouldn't say turned off, but just sort of worried that it would be...a biased and one-sided class. And honestly, I would've felt the same way had the professor been Arab or of Palestinian descent....But he was just awesome, not biased at all, a strong believer in the peace process and a two-state solution. I think he structured the class very, very well.*

### Classroom Discourse

VIPs used their teaching to model the ways they want students to enter the conversation about Israel, and the students noticed and appreciated the quality of the discourse. They used words including “open,” “polite,” “respectful,” and “balanced” to describe their classroom conversations. The consensus among the great majority of students was that their VIPs created environments in which students with different opinions and backgrounds were comfortable sharing their thoughts, asking questions, and engaging in debate. In the words of a Jewish student: “What I appreciated was [that] all the discussion was very respectful. People came to class with the intention of learning about conflict, not defending it or defending against it.” Students credited their VIPs with maintaining open environments. According to an international relations major:

Even with people coming from different biases, [the course] was very well run in the sense that no one was out to offend another person. It was like one person would present their side and the other person would present another side.

### Overall

In addition to having presented unbiased classes, students in interviews and in their survey responses conveyed their appreciation for the courses. Naturally, some students were dissatisfied, but these numbers were small. At 11 of the 15 schools, all respondents said their knowledge had been expanded somewhat or very much. None said “not at all” or “a little.” At the other four schools where students were not unanimous, they were nearly so. On questions of being challenged academically or being presented with new perspectives, there was a little more variety in responses, but by far the majority of students agreed that their AICE course had presented a balanced perspective, challenged them academically, introduced them to new perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian question, and expanded their knowledge overall.

In interviews, Jewish and non-Jewish students alike were often effusive: “I loved [the VIP’s] course, and it was like everything that I wanted to be doing my last semester of college.” The course was “definitely one of my favorite classes that I took at [university]...and I was really impressed with the teacher.” At another large state school, students commented favorably about their VIP: “I feel like she did such a wonderful job explaining the history and the importance and significance of that. I took a lot away from that class and...I realize how significant just taking that class was.” A student at a fourth school described her VIP as “the number one thing that stood out” about her course on Zionism because he was so unbiased in his presentation. For a Jewish student it was “[the] best course in [my] university

experience.” From a Muslim student at another university: “I talked to a few people from that class and we were really all impressed.” And from a Christian student: “It was a really interesting class—I think it should be mandatory for any college student.”

In sum, students believed the VIPs presented fair and balanced courses, modeled civil

discourse, and created an atmosphere in which students could question and apply critical thinking. The vast majority of students appreciated the opportunity they had to learn from Israeli scholars. The next section discusses how their classes affected their opinions and understanding of Israel.





## Takeaways

*Yael, the VIP at Midwest University, suspects her students came into her classes with a great deal of ignorance, but she believes she has given them the information they need to develop “sensitivity.” For her, teaching at Midwest is “not political—it’s mostly about knowing rather than not knowing. It’s not about a specific opinion.” When asked about how Yael’s course affected their understanding of Israel, students, Jewish and non-Jewish, confirmed that the class had influenced them. In a course on the conflict, the students came away with more nuanced views of Israel, more knowledge of the subject, and a deeper understanding of “the other side.” Tony, a Christian student in one of Yael’s classes, said he had “virtually zero prior knowledge about the roots of the conflict before taking the class....Now I have a more balanced outlook.” Liz, a Jewish student had thought about the conflict but had “never chosen any type of side.” She realized through the course “that at the end of the day, people are just people and everyone wants the same*

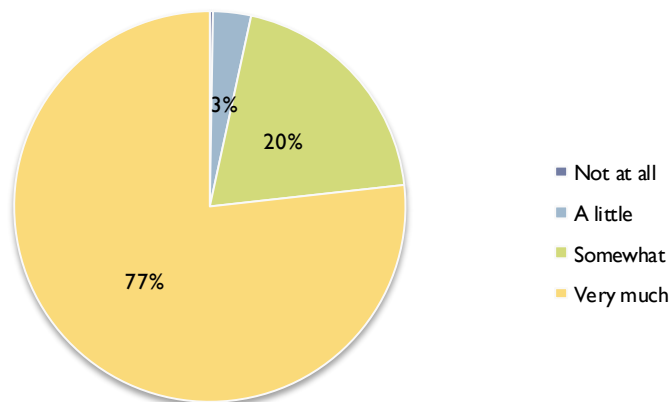
*things, whether its water, food, places to pray, whatever.” Another Jewish student, however, was not moved by the class. The class had expanded his knowledge of Israel and introduced him to new perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but he was “already kind of very pro-Israel, and the class reinforced that.”*

### Understanding

Students were asked in the 2012 survey about the extent to which their spring 2011 course had expanded their knowledge about Israel (Figure 11). In response, 77% said “very much” and an additional 20% said “somewhat.” Considering that many students in Year 1 thought they already knew a substantial amount about Israel—74% said they felt somewhat or very confident about discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict less than a month into their course—it is notable that so many feel they learned more.

Figure 11: Expanding Knowledge

Thinking about that course, to what extent did it expand your knowledge about Israel?



n=203

In response to the question regarding how the course affected their views on Israel and the Middle East, both Jewish and non-Jewish students emphasized the considerable growth in knowledge about Israel. Students described the experience as “eye opening” and said it had helped them become “more informed.”

Regardless of pre-existing political biases, most students claimed to have “broadened” their views, expanded their “knowledge base,” or developed “a richer background and history.” For example, a Jewish student said she had only learned the pro-Israel story in high school: “We are very pro-Israel; I think it’s pretty obvious, but the course showed both perspectives....I’m finally understanding what people actually believe and think...and how people’s lives are affected ... and how there is a system that’s circular.” An Arab student who had questioned Israel’s right to exist “because I’m an Arab, and that’s what we do,” admitted, “I kind of get it more. There had to be some land for the Jews to live in.” He still sympathized with the Palestinian cause, but he now “definitely [saw] some light in the Israeli argument.” Some students came into their courses without prior opinions and little exposure to the topic. A Christian student wrote, “Before taking this course, I knew next to nothing about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Taking this class opened my eyes to the situation from both the perspectives of the Israelis and the Palestinians.”

### History and the conflict

In interviews, students were asked about specific information they learned. Many were struck by particular aspects of the conflict. For example, a Jewish student who said she had learned about the Jewish people

her “entire life” admitted that she had known little about the history of the conflict before she took the course. Her earlier learning had “barely scratched the surface.” Another Jewish student said “[The course] helped me understand the early history of modern Israel and the declarations that preceded it, and how those contradictory declarations caused so many problems later on.” Other students responded to open-ended questions on the survey. One such Jewish student wrote, “It was a course introducing me to many facets of the Zionist movement, hence giving me a better idea of Israel’s history (also in relation to the problem of land and Israel’s relation to its neighbors).” Students, Jewish and non-Jewish, said they were surprised to learn that Zionist thought took different forms, that Israelis were not monolithic in their positions on the conflict, and that Palestinians and the leaders of Arab countries could be in disagreement. When asked how his course on Israel had influenced him, a Jewish student wrote:

*Significantly! I was familiar with the basics of the conflict prior to the course. However, the professor did an excellent job introducing and explaining the many variables that effect (sic) and contribute to the current situation in Israel and the Middle East. We learned how both the former and the latter interact, but also how the different factions within [each] deal with each other.*

### Israel’s internal issues

Students also reflected on the diversity of Israeli society and the issue of Jewish identity within Israel. A student with no religion wrote in the survey that the course had given her “a well-rounded perspective on multiple social groups and political ideas in Israel, expounding upon the complexity of its cultural origins and how this affects the

lives of Israelis, Palestinians and outside observers to the present.” One of her classmates was struck by the diversity of views among Israelis and how often the government of Israel may have failed to represent the majority of its citizens. One Asian-American student noted that many members of different ethnic groups grew up with “one-sided” narratives and appreciated that the VIP “helped us see the different sides to the issue much more.” When she went to Israel, she visited the religious “touristy” sights, but now understood that Israel is much more secular than she had thought. She was also struck by the different “culture of what it means to go into the military”:

*This romanticized idea of how a soldier goes off to serve in the military and then comes home and visits for the weekend that the mother is supposed to prepare his favorite meal and just be like oh, we're so happy you're home so here are your favorite foods...and also learning about, just growing in...the U.S., when I think of the military and being required to go, it sounds like you have to leave your family, you won't see your kids for a really long time. It's very different than the U.S. because Israel is so much smaller, so it's much easier for you to go home for the weekend because where you're stationed probably isn't abroad like it would be in the U.S. military.*

A Jewish student from a different university noted that his AICE course had given him a much greater understanding of the Israeli political system and “how its many parties reflect the very diverse and heterogeneous population of the Jewish state.” Another was particularly struck by questions of Jewish identity in Israel. He came away with a sense of “how complex and involving Israeli identity is and how many different things play into it...and what role [that] plays or should play or shouldn't play in politics and

religion and just daily life, and I came away really wanting to go to Israel.”

Non-Jewish students were surprised to learn that “while the [Israeli] government is based around Western ideas, it's still a very Jewish, unique form of government and culture,” but they and their Jewish counterparts were also surprised to learn the extent of Israel's economic development.

### Complexity and nuance

The two most salient “takeaways” from the AICE courses are the awareness of the complexity of Israel and the existence of multiple narratives and perspectives. Israeli society and the conflict are not simply “messy,” but, in the eyes of some students, do not lend themselves to workable resolutions. Frustration showed in many of the students' words. “The fact that it's always a struggle to figure out the real facts, because there's so much debate, and so many different perspectives, that you can't just accept one person[']s view[']” unsettled a Jewish student. A Christian student also expressed her frustration:

*This is a really complex problem...it has no simple solution....I can definitely see both sides of the issues....I really do wish that this conflict could be resolved, but I'm not really sure how it would be....And so that...leaves me really confused and frustrated.*

A repeated theme in the interviews and surveys was a description of the students' increased awareness and appreciation of different narratives, e.g., “multiple lenses to look through” or “meta stories.” The courses allowed some students to realize, for the first time perhaps, that there are Israelis and Palestinians working toward a peaceful resolution. One Jewish political science major explained that the course taught her

that “[t]he only side I’m on is on the side of peace”:

*I truly believe that in any conflict, whether it's political or just within your own immediate life, within the relationships [among] your friends and your family, whatever the conflict is about, if you want to end that conflict, it's not about who's right or wrong. It's not about pointing fingers and making accusations towards one side or the other. I mean those are the kinds of things that keep people entrenched in their positions that maybe started this conflict in the first place. And that to move forward into conflict resolution, you can't be taking a side and you can't be playing the blame game.*

### Perceptions and Opinions

The opinions and attitudes of both Jewish and non-Jewish students changed little in the year between the first survey and the second. Survey responses, however, suggest and interview data support the conclusion that many students, Jewish and non-Jewish, shifted their stances on Israel, albeit to a limited extent. Figure 12 shows that although 10% or more of all respondents in Year 1 had no opinion about whether Israel could be deemed a high-tech powerhouse, a religious fundamentalist society, or a militaristic society, most of those had formed opinions by the time of the second survey. This move from no opinion to having an opinion was most pronounced among non-Jews.

The largest differences in the data were less the changes from Year 1 to Year 2 than the differences between Jews and non-Jews. Most Jewish students strongly agreed in both years that Israel is a refuge for persecuted Jews, a high tech powerhouse,

and a diverse multi-cultural society (see Figure 13). Much lower percentages of non-Jews strongly agreed with these perceptions. In Year 2, 61% of Jewish students strongly agreed that they think of Israel as a refuge for persecuted Jews while only 23% of non-Jews held that opinion. Also in Year 2, almost two-thirds of Jewish students regarded Israel as a high-tech powerhouse, but only one-third of non-Jewish students held that opinion. A similar difference exists for the perception of Israel as a diverse multi-cultural society.

The survey also asked two questions directly related to the peace process: one on the settlements in the West Bank, the other on willingness to compromise on the status of Jerusalem. The changes are small and may be related to factors outside VIP courses, but the data suggest movement from no opinion to opinions among the non-Jews and from an unequivocal stance to a more nuanced position among Jewish students. Forty percent of non-Jews at the beginning of their AICE course were undecided on the issue of dismantling settlements in exchange for peace (Figure 14). In Year 2, only 18% of non-Jewish respondents had no opinion on the settlements, while the number willing to dismantle some of the settlements as part of a peace process rose from 23% in Year 1 to 49% in Year 2. Also 18% Jewish students in Year 1 said none of the settlements should be dismantled compared to 7% in Year 2. The percentage willing to dismantle some settlements for peace grew from 45% to 56% between Year 1 and Year 2.

In regards to the status of Jerusalem, overall student responses in Year 1 and Year 2 were very similar, as the subtleties of arguments pro and con may have been inadequate to

Figure 12: Thinking about Israel, All Respondents

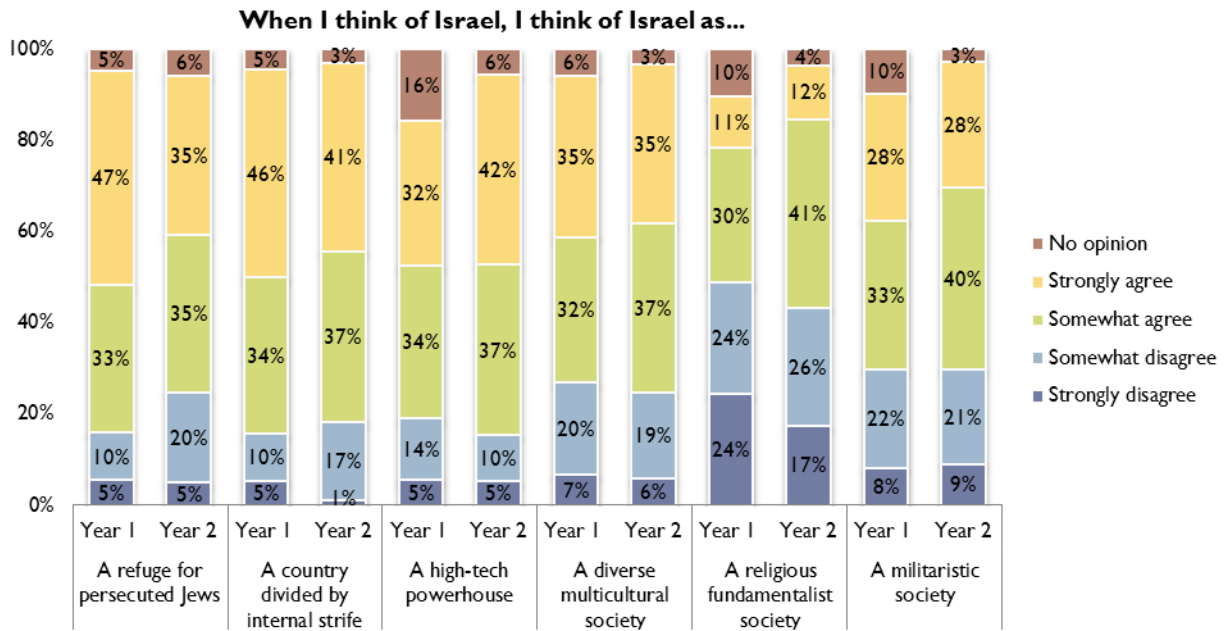
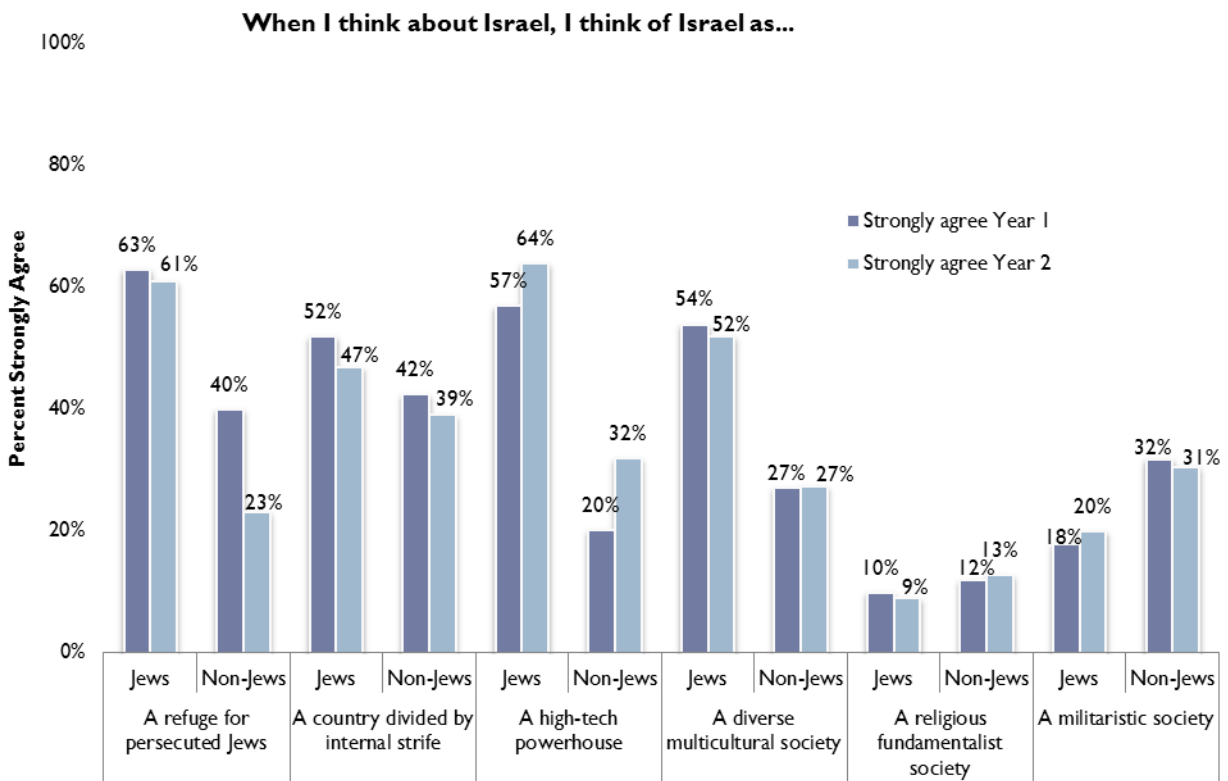


Figure 13: Thinking About Israel: Comparison of Jewish and Non-Jewish Students



sway many of the students one way or the other (Figure 15). None of the differences on these questions are statistically significant. Although 71% of survey respondents answered an open-ended question: “How, if at all, have your views on Israel and the Middle East changed over the course of the past year,” almost all explained that the change was in their knowledge rather than in their opinions. The most representative response was that of a student who identified with no religion:

[The course] gave me a well-rounded perspective on multiple social groups and political ideas in Israel, expounding upon the

complexity of its cultural origins and how this affects the lives of Israelis, Palestinians, and outside observers to the present.

Some students said the course had only confirmed their convictions. A non-Jewish student majoring in international relations said the course had made him even prouder of Israel “because I saw that despite the innumerable struggles it has to face, it still is a robust, continuously self-questioning democracy seeking to improve itself.” A modern Orthodox Jew with a strong commitment to Israel said she thought she was looking at the issue of the settlements from a “broader” point of view. She took the

Figure 14: West Bank Settlements

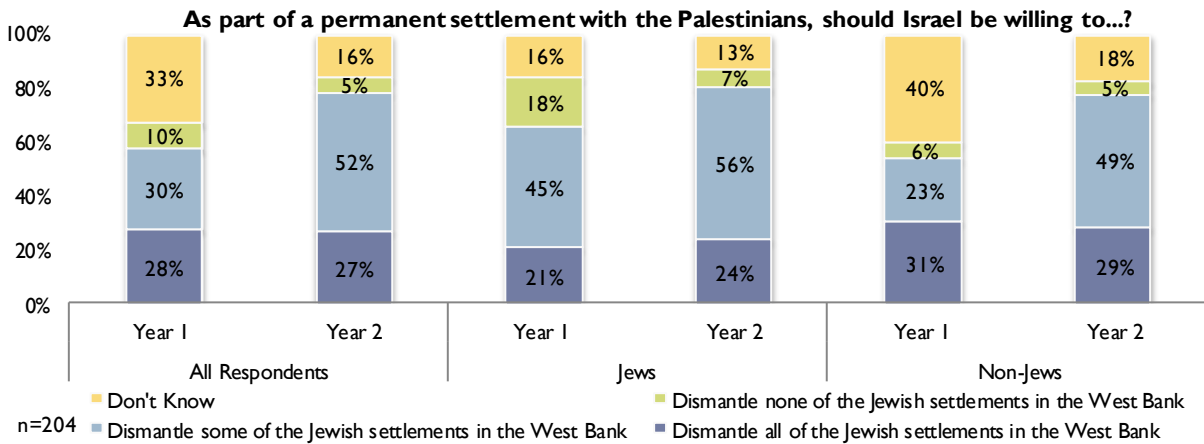
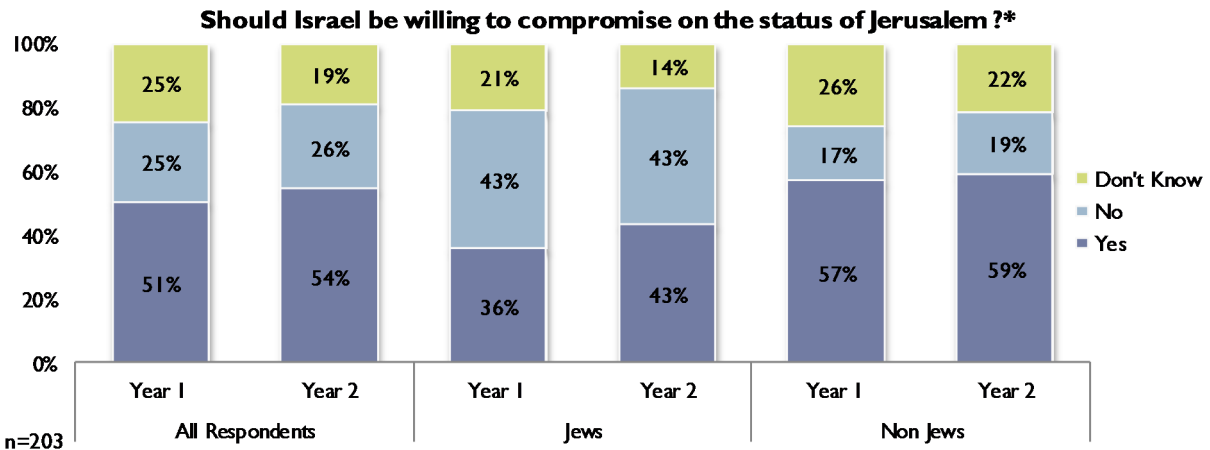


Figure 15: Status of Jerusalem



\*In the framework of a permanent peace with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to compromise on the status of Jerusalem as a united city under Israeli jurisdiction?

VIP course in order to see “other people’s perceptions as opposed to how I was brought up and the things I’ve taken at face value as someone growing up in a modern Orthodox community.” The settlements and other issues of the conflict were never a “black and white dichotomy” for her despite her active participation in a “Students for Israel” organization. Nonetheless, the VIP course affected her. In studying the conflict, she gained a “deeper insight into the feelings and emotions of the people involved.”

**Interest in Israel revisited**

Students described their interest in studying more about Israel and the Middle East, and learning the languages of the region (Figure 16). Not surprisingly, a statistically higher percentage of Jews were interested in studying Hebrew than were non-Jews, and a higher percentage of non-Jewish students were interested in studying Arabic. Jews and non-Jews had similar levels of interest in continuing to take courses about Israel and the Middle East.

Students also described their interest in following Israel, the Middle East, and the conflict in the news. The levels of interest in following news of the region is greater than either the interest in taking courses or studying languages, and although the differences between results for Jews and non-Jews on the interest in following news about Israel may appear sizeable, they are not significant (see Figure 17).

Two-thirds of the AICE students said the course on Israel had introduced them to new news sources, but there is no evidence that this introduction changed their reading or viewing habits. The slight decrease seen in the percentage of students seeking news about Israel daily or more often may be explained by the fact that they were in AICE classes at the time of the first survey. They may have been required to follow the news daily, or the class itself might have kept their interest high. The difference from year to year is not statistically significant, but Jewish students seek news of Israel more often than do non-Jewish students (Figure 18).

Figure 16: Continued Study

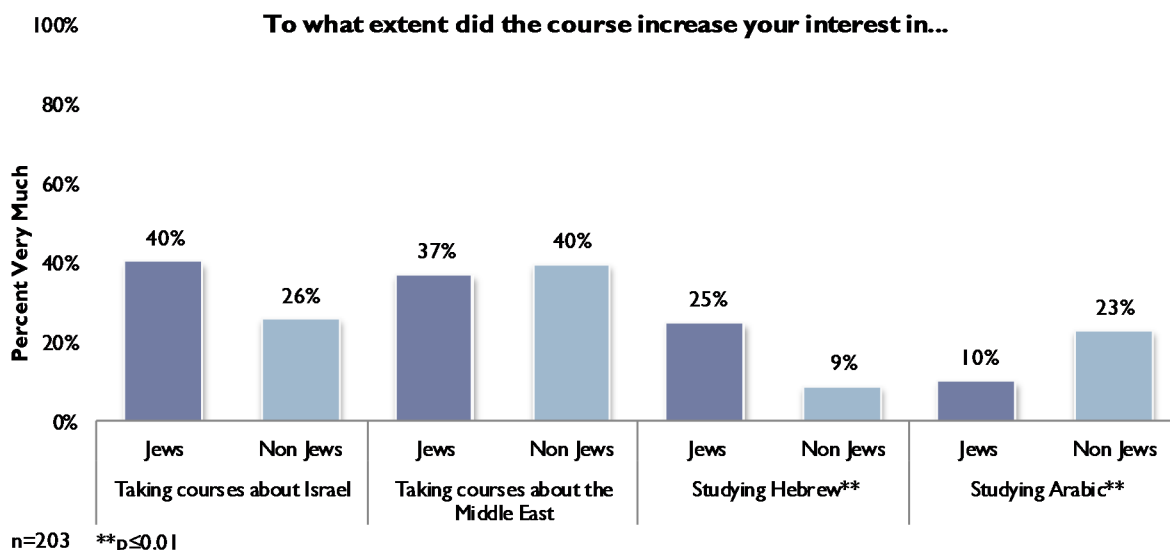
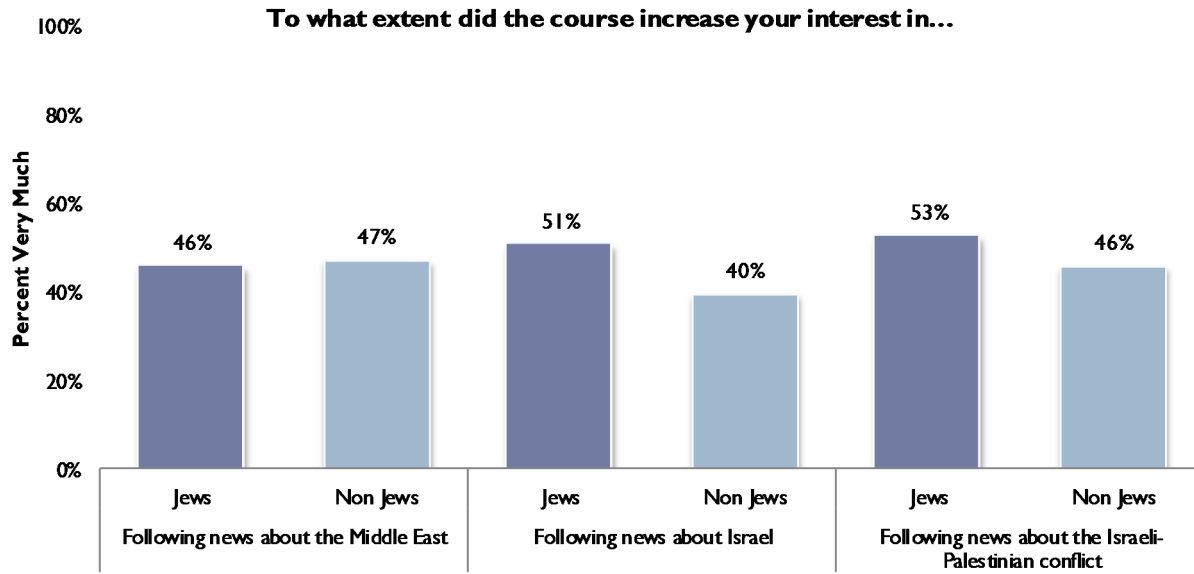
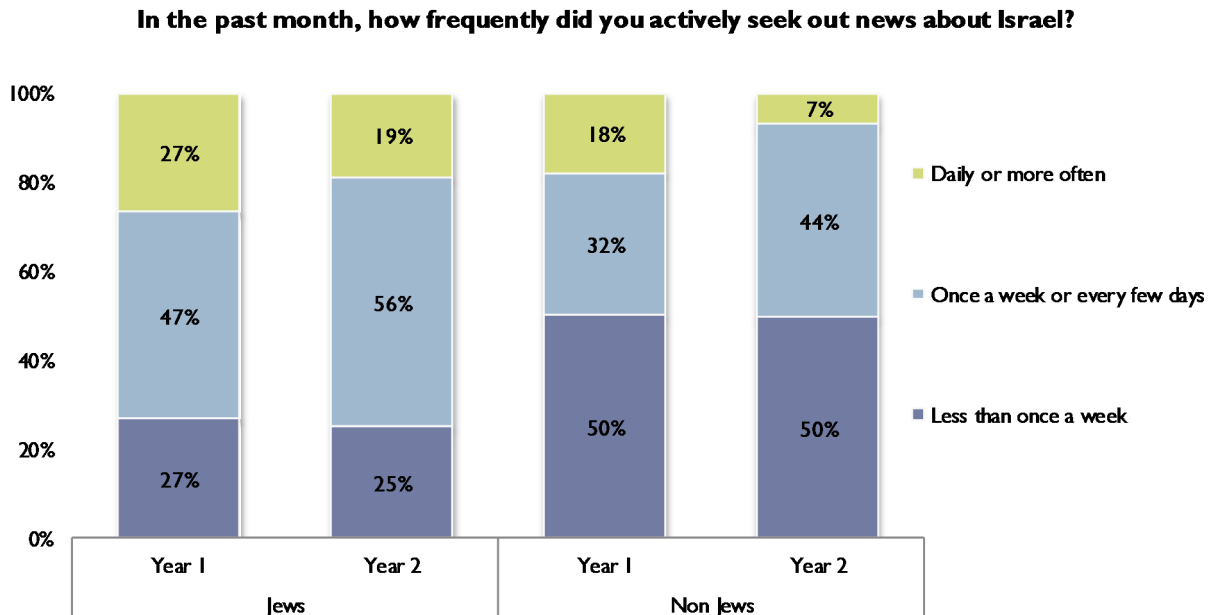


Figure 17: Following News from Israel and the Middle East



n=203

Figure 18: Seeking News about Israel



n=203



Students were also asked about the media they used for finding news about Israel, and again there was no significant change from Year 1 to Year 2 (Figure 19). The significant differences that did exist regarding media use were between Jews and non-Jews, and that difference persisted from the first year to the second.

Students were also asked about their interest in visiting Israel or the Middle East. As can

be seen in Figure 20, more than half of the Jewish students and over a third of the non-Jewish students are “very much” interested in traveling to the region. Interviewees with family in the Middle East outside of Israel were as eager to visit the region as students with family in Israel. The former reported plans to visit family in the West Bank, Syria, and Lebanon, though these plans were dependent on the political situation. Jewish students wanted to go to Israel.

Figure 19: News Sources<sup>ii</sup>

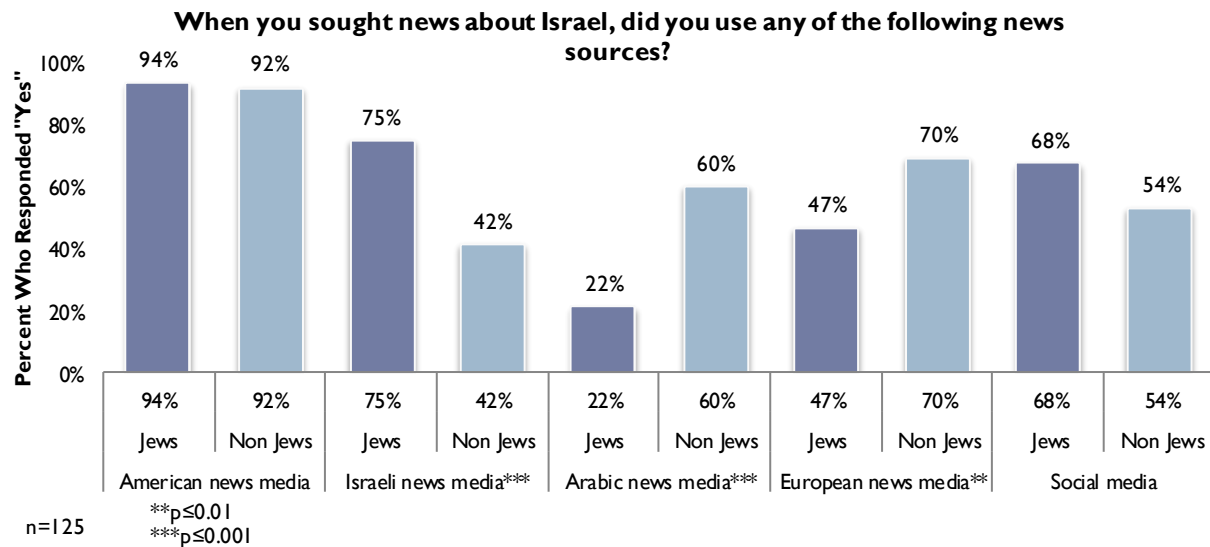
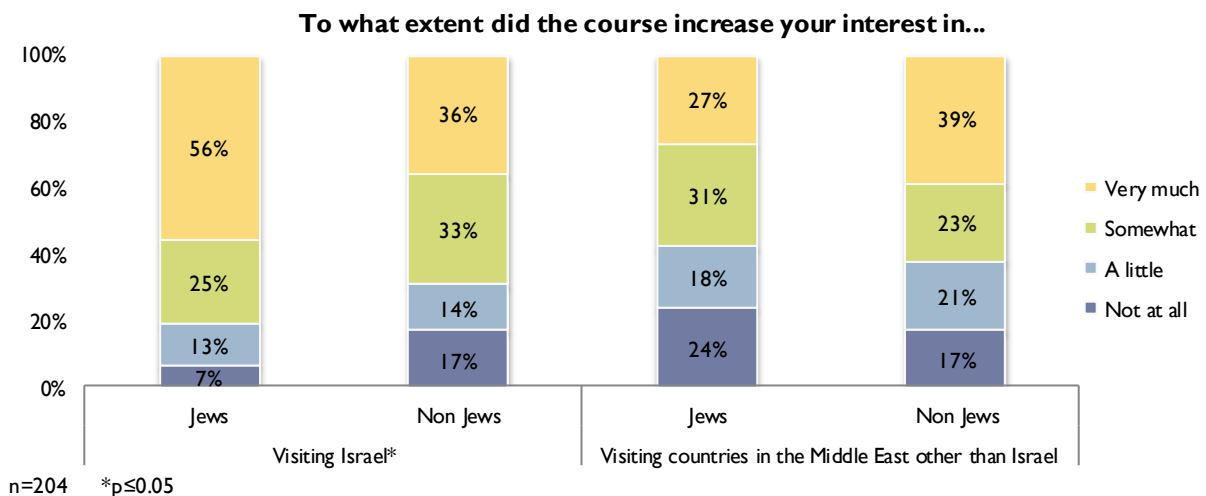


Figure 20: Visiting the Middle East



Most Jewish students in this study had visited Israel, and many had spent extensive time in Israel. They spoke about wanting to “go back,” either independently or through a study abroad program. Many Jewish students had specific plans to visit Israel, including to visit family or friends, travel on Taglit, spend a semester abroad at an Israeli university, or even make aliyah. Those who had not been to Israel were eager to go. One such student wanted to go on Taglit, “but something else has always come up. It’s important to me...I don’t want to look back after I’m 26 or 27 and regret not going... I belong [in Israel] at least once.” Another student was eager to serve in the Israeli army:

*It would be incredible to go into the IDF and work as a military analyst—not sure at what point in my life. Making aliyah is something I consider [and] would do it in a perfect world.*

Another student was in Israel when we interviewed her. She had made aliyah, completed ulpan, and was being inducted into the IDF the next morning.

Non-Jewish students were also interested in traveling to Israel and wanted to learn about the country and culture for themselves. A Muslim student said,

*I really would like to go to Israel and Palestine. I know that since Palestine is an Islam-based country, people would expect me to go there. But I also would like to go to Israel. It’s a beautiful country from what I see on the computer, on TV, what people talk about, historical places that I learned about in class. I’d love to go to that place and meet the people.*

Visiting Israel, and visiting often, is only one of the Jewish behaviors that characterize the AICE Jewish students. Most of the

Jewish survey respondents are Jewishly active and involved and deeply committed to Israel. Given the extent of that commitment, one could hardly expect a greater sense of connection to develop from taking a course on Israel with an Israeli professor. Indeed, the surveys show no significant change in the measures of connection from Year 1 to Year 2. Given that there is no change, what is the nature of Jewish students’ connection to Israel? The next section explores this question.

### Connection

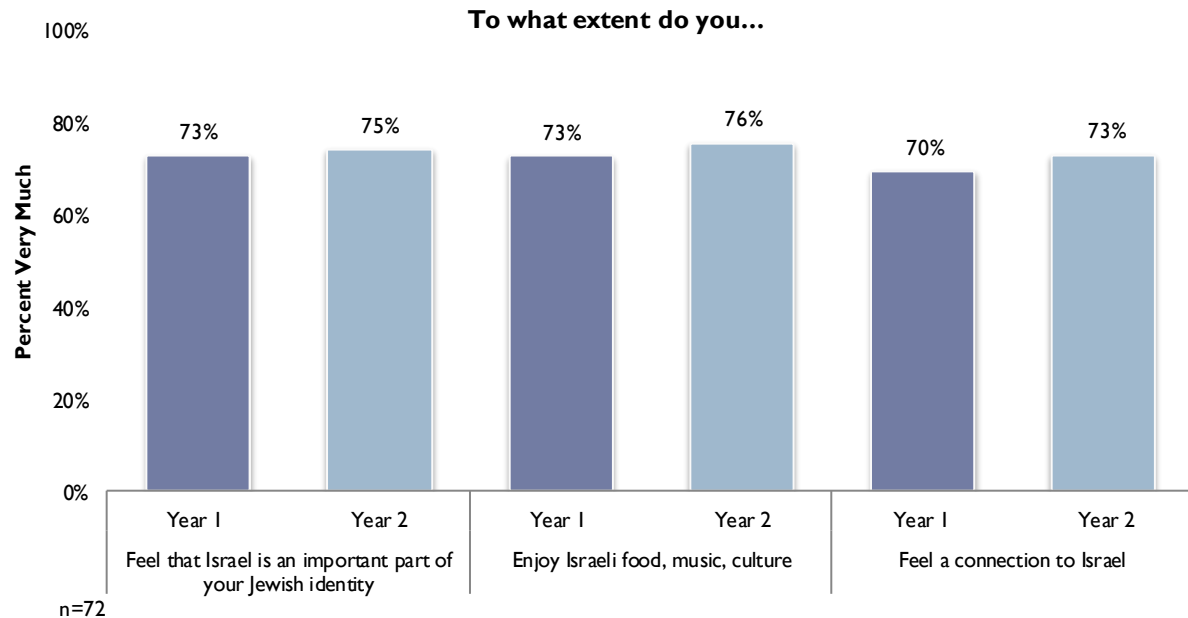
A separate set of survey questions asked Jewish students about their feelings of connections and to what extent they considered Israel an important part of their Jewish identity (Figure 21). Three-quarters said that Israel is “very much” a part of the Jewish identity and similar numbers are “very much” connected to Israel (73%). They enjoy Israeli food, music, and culture, as they did when they first enrolled in their AICE courses.

The quantitative data alone, however, do not reveal the depth or developing strength of that connection. Most Jewish students responded to an open-ended question about their feelings in the survey. About a third of those wrote about the impact of Israel experiences:

*It’s a cliché, so I’m not going to say it, but I can at least understand how many gap year alumni say, ‘I live in America, but Israel is my home.’ I’m never going to be able to escape a connection to Israel, and I see myself going back soon. (Nb., I spent summer 2011 in Israel).*

Most expressed some sense of connection or increased connection. Several said that they “could not be more connected than [they]

Figure 21: Connection to Israel



already [are] without living there.” And another exclaimed, “My feelings have not changed since age 13 that I love Israel like it is my home.” A few students mentioned their connection while voicing concern about Israeli politics or the situation in Israel. A survey respondent wrote:

*I haven't had a desire to visit Israel until more recently....I do feel a connection to Israel, but that doesn't mean that I support Israel's endeavors 100%. I feel like Israel holds the upper hand in the conflict, but even so, there is a need for some sort of compromise and [a] need for both governments to work together.*

A policy analysis major expressed similar sentiments in an interview: “I always heard [about] the Gaza strip, West Bank...but didn't understand what was going on there, who was living there, or why Jews started building there.” He felt he received a “twisted,” “biased view” from his Israeli father and the Jewish camp he attended, but he maintained that he is still pro-Israel, has

visited Israel recently, and plans to go back. He is active in the students for Israel group on his campus as well as a Jewish-Muslim dialogue group. Like so many of his peers, his basic sense of connectedness cannot be doubted. Another student who said he is “right wing” believes Israel has increasingly put itself in a worse position in peace negotiations by continuing to build settlements. Nonetheless his emotional ties run deep:

*I love Israel, and fully believe in its necessity. However, in my life, I cannot remember a time the population has been more divided, whether politically, economically, or religiously. This widespread division has forced me to take a look in the mirror concerning what I love about Israel, and how my relationship with Israel should continue.*

A few students said the course had helped to enhance their connection or deepen it through greater knowledge, but the ties had been established earlier. As one such student

said, he feels “an even greater connection to the country than before. Although having traveled to Israel numerous times, my connection was always fairly high.”

For most Jewish students, the course experience affirmed their attachment to Israel and grounded their feelings in facts—enriching what they already knew and providing a broader base of information. “I am really attached to Israel and this class was relevant and helped me understand more about Israeli society that I didn’t know,” an exchange student said. He explained that although he thought he knew Israel well, the course had provided greater context and depth.

Although an academic class is not intended to promote Israel attachment in students, sophisticated instruction can nevertheless support existing ties. “Going to Israel or taking the course on Zionism were not life-changing,” one student said, “but they did reaffirm for me my Jewish cultural identity which is a very big part of who I am.” A business student gave a similar response, “My father grew up in Israel and has passed this identity on to his daughters. This class helped to shape my views, however, I feel that they are somewhat inherent in me—they are part of who I am.”

## Conclusions

Students in this report came to courses about Israel for various reasons, including fulfilling a requirement, seeking an “easy A,” or because their friends were taking the class. Most students, however, were interested in Israel and the Middle East. They wanted to hear and weigh new facts and ideas, apply critical thinking skills, and develop a better understanding of Israel and its region. Although some students already held opinions about Israel and the region and felt they were well informed, others admitted that they had little background in the subject matter. Whatever their prior knowledge, students hoped that the courses would lead to a more sophisticated understanding of the topics.

Both the VIPs and the department chairs or university administrators who brought them to campus agreed that in order to address that need the VIPs’ had to teach academically serious and thoughtful courses. From the students’ reports, they succeeded. Balance was the characteristic of their teaching that students most often mentioned as a quality they desired and experienced in the VIP courses. Students used the terms “fair,” “balanced,” and “unbiased” to describe the VIPs and credited them for presenting different perspectives and “multiple narratives.”

Compared to student learning, student political opinions on Israel changed little between the first and second year surveys. Many, however, if they had strong opinions at the beginning of their AICE course, could at least understand where “the other side was coming from” by its end. Students who were

interested in advocacy maintained their interest, but the courses did not foster new enthusiasm for activism. Overall, students in these courses—Christian, Jewish, and Muslim—said they had become more “open-minded.”

But most importantly, Jewish and non-Jewish students said that the courses helped them develop an increased understanding of Israel and the region. In this, they attested to a key success of the AICE program. Students learned about contemporary Israel—from the economy and Israel’s high-tech industry to its current religious debates. Some students developed an interest in Israeli film and literature. Others learned about the diversity of Israeli society or the range of Zionist thought. Some students found that, for many Israelis, internal issues such as military service, environmental problems, minority group rights, and water rights were of as much concern if not more, than the issue of borders.

AICE, through the placement of VIPs at U.S. universities, appears to have met the goal of deepening the student knowledge of Israeli culture, government, society, and domestic and international challenges. Given that many of the students in our sample are majoring in political science and international relations with hopes of pursuing careers in or related to these fields, it is possible that their positive experiences with the VIPs will improve the quality of the discourse in the public square and provide for a better educated cadre of political and diplomatic leaders in the future. As well, it is possible that the sophistication and

respectfulness of the discourse in the classroom will find its way to the quad, the dormitories, and campus life.

There remains, however, much to be accomplished. Although AICE has succeeded in bringing VIPs to campuses where Israel courses might otherwise not be taught, there are still campuses without Israel-focused courses. During this current time of economic crisis, particularly at public universities, the future of the program is not clear. Particularly in the financially strapped arena of higher education, there is a need to support many other institutions in providing balanced and expert teaching about Israel for their students. The early hope that AICE could seed self-funded visiting professorships or permanent chairs has not been realized. As well, those interested in continuing to promote the normalization of Israel in the academy will have to continue to support graduate student development and prepare “indigenous”

faculty to teach the subject. Other kinds of programs may need to be developed and supported as well including: regional academic conferences for undergraduate and graduate students and faculty, study tours for faculty who may not be planning to teach about Israel but could promote a greater understanding of Israel on campus through courses in their fields, and development seminars for administrators and department chairs to facilitate additional fundraising for some of these VIP positions.

Future challenges, however, should not obscure the successes of the program. Increasing numbers of students have been able to study and develop their understanding of Israel. For Jewish students, pre-existing commitments to Israel have been reinforced with knowledge. Most importantly, however, Jews and non-Jews alike have experienced increased understanding of the nuances and complexity of contemporary Israel.

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<sup>i</sup>Of the 21 schools that were part of the AICE program in 2010-11, we were able to get permission to conduct our survey at 15. We visited two additional schools where we conducted interviews with faculty and administrators but were not allowed to speak with students. See Appendix B for full methodology.

<sup>ii</sup>Examples given in survey for types of media:

American news media (e.g., Wall Street Journal, CNN, etc.)

Israeli news media (e.g., Haaretz, Ynet News, etc.)

Arabic news media (e.g., Al Jazeera, Asharq Alawsat, etc.)

European news media (e.g., BBC, Sky Network, etc.)

Social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, etc.)

## Appendix A: Methods

### Study Design

This study is an evaluation of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise's (AICE) Visiting Israeli Professors (VIP) program for the 2010-2011 academic year. Every year, the AICE VIP program provides grants with the support of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation to at least 20 universities in the United States to offset the cost of hiring a visiting professor to teach about Israel. AICE VIPs teach four courses during the year, at least two of which relate to modern Israel. Twenty-one VIPs were appointed for the 2010-2011 academic year. Of these, three were appointed for a single semester and one was appointed for one semester at one university and one semester at another university.

This study consisted of three phases: site visits, surveys, and interviews.

### Site Visits

During the Fall 2010 semester, CMJS researchers visited eight campuses where VIPs were teaching courses about Israel. The researchers performed several tasks in the course of their visits:

#### *Class Observation*

Researchers observed at least one class taught by the VIP at each campus they visited in order to get a feel for what the courses were like.

#### *Focus Groups*

Students who were enrolled in AICE courses about Israel during the Fall 2010 semester were recruited to participate in a focus group about the course. The focus groups explored students' attitudes and behaviors regarding Israel and their reactions to various courses about Israel on campus. Participants were asked to discuss their motivations for studying about or in Israel, barriers to taking such courses or studying abroad in Israel, reactions to the courses themselves, classroom dynamics, attitudes toward Israel, and how they thought their attitudes may or may not have changed based on what they had learned in such courses. Students who participated in the focus groups were offered a \$20 cash incentive to thank them for their assistance with the research.

#### *Key Informant Interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the VIPs and their department chairs. These interviews focused on the professors' goals for the courses and their assessment of student responses to the courses, as well as the overall place of Israel studies within the department's curriculum.

## Surveys

### *Year 1 Survey*

In order to assess the impact of AICE courses on students, we sought to conduct a survey of students enrolled in AICE courses about Israel during the Spring 2011 semester. To ensure that the impact of the course was not underestimated and to ensure that all enrolled students had the opportunity to participate while students who were not enrolled were excluded, we attempted to survey the students as close as possible to the beginning of the semester but after most students had finished dropping or adding courses.

Fifteen universities with VIPs consented to allow us to survey students enrolled in VIPs' courses about Israel during the Spring 2011 semester. Five of the 15 schools provided lists of all students enrolled in the VIPs' courses, thus ensuring that we had a complete record of enrollees and their contact information. The remaining ten schools required us to use an opt-in procedure, whereby a sign-up sheet was passed around the class for students willing to participate could provide their names and e-mail addresses. Alternatively, an e-mail was sent on our behalf by the VIPs' host departments to enrolled students, who could then e-mail us to indicate their willingness to complete the survey. Overall, 489 students were enrolled in VIPs' courses about Israel at these 15 universities, including 221 from schools that provided full enrollment lists and 268 from opt-in schools. Of the 268 students from opt-in schools, 157 (59%) provided us with contact information.

Ultimately, the survey was sent to all 378 students for whom we had contact information available. Invitations to complete the survey were sent approximately two weeks after each university started classes for the Spring 2011 semester, with the first invitations being sent on February 8, 2011. Reminders were sent by e-mail to students who had not yet completed the survey on February 11, February 17, February 24, and March 3. Additionally, 131 research subjects who had not yet completed a survey and for whom CMJS had telephone numbers were called by CMJS researchers on February 15, February 28, or March 1, 2011.

The survey closed on March 7, 2011. Overall, 270 students completed the survey for a response rate of 55% (AAPOR RR2; 71% for students for whom contact information was available). Each student who completed the survey received a \$25 Amazon.com® gift card via e-mail as a token of our appreciation for their participation in our research.



Table A1. Student Enrollment and Survey Completion, Spring 2011

University	List or Opt-In	Total Enrollment	Contact Information Available to CMJS	% Contactable	Completed Surveys	Response Rate
1	Opt-in	46	33	72%	27	59%
2	Opt-in	59	32	54%	32	54%
3	List	9	9	100%	5	56%
4	List	75	75	100%	40	53%
5	List	101	101	100%	60	59%
6	Opt-in	50	36	72%	27	54%
7	Opt-in	5	4	80%	3	60%
8	List	22	22	100%	17	77%
9	List	14	14	100%	12	86%
10	Opt-in	15	7	47%	7	47%
11	Opt-in	50	8	16%	8	16%
12	Opt-in	19	19	100%	17	89%
13	Opt-in	7	6	86%	6	86%
14	Opt-in	10	5	50%	5	50%
15	Opt-in	7	7	100%	4	57%
Overall		489	378	77%	270	55%

In order to account for any bias systematically introduced into the data by differential school-specific response rates, design weights were computed. Design weights for a stratified survey such as this are simply the inverse of the school-specific response rate:

$$w_h = \frac{N_h}{n_h}$$

where  $n_h$  is the achieved sample in stratum  $h$  and  $N_h$  is the population size of stratum  $h$ . Thus, each case is assigned a weight equal to the number of elements in the population frame it “represents.”

Ideally, having defined design weights, post stratification weights would then be calculated in order to adjust for any differences between the distribution of known characteristics of the achieved sample and known characteristics of the frame. Unfortunately, we lacked sufficient information about the frame (i.e., characteristics of all students enrolled in AICE courses) to calculate such weights. Accordingly, the Year 1 survey data are analyzed in this study using only design weights.

We had anticipated that Jewish students enrolled in the AICE courses about Israel would broadly resemble the college-aged Jewish population as a whole. Accordingly, at the time of the Year 1 survey, we included some questions for comparison on a simultaneous survey of applicants to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program attending the same schools. An initial review of survey responses revealed that the students enrolled in the AICE courses had substantially more formal and informal Jewish education than their Taglit counterparts. They also displayed far stronger connection to Israel. It became clear that there was simply no valid comparison to be made between the Jewish students enrolled in AICE courses and their same-school counterparts who had applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program. Accordingly, we subsequently dropped the comparison group from our analysis.

### *Year 2 Survey*

To assess whether respondents' attitudes or behaviors had changed in the year since the beginning of their AICE courses, a follow-up survey was conducted during the Spring 2012 semester. All respondents to the Year 1 survey were sent invitations by e-mail to complete the follow-up survey on February 7, 2012. Reminders were sent to anyone who had not yet completed the survey on February 14, February 21, February 24, February 28, March 1, March 5, and March 6. The survey was closed on March 7, 2012. Overall, 207 respondents completed the survey for a response rate of 76% (AAPOR RR2). As was the case in Year 1, students who completed the Year 2 survey were sent a \$25 Amazon.com® gift card via e-mail as a token of appreciation for their participation in the research.

In order to maintain comparability with the overall sampling frame (i.e., all students enrolled in the AICE courses surveyed in Spring 2011), the data had to be weighted in two stages. In the first stage, the data were weighted to account for differences in response rate to the Year 2 survey by school, gender, age (over 21 vs. 21 and under), and religious identity (Jewish vs. not Jewish). This resulted in 120 exhaustive and mutually exclusive weighting categories<sup>1</sup>, each representing the intersection of these four variables. Transitional weights were thus calculated as:

$$w_{sgar} = \frac{N_{sgar}}{n_{sgar}}$$

where

*s* = school

*g* = gender

*a* = age

*r* = religious identity

These transitional weights adjusted the achieved sample of the Year 2 survey to reflect the known characteristics of the achieved sample of the Year 1 survey. Final weights for the Year 2 survey were computed by multiplying these transitional weights by the design weights from the Year 1 survey. The final weights thus adjusted the achieved sample of the Year 2 survey to reflect the known characteristics of the overall sampling frame. These weights were used for all Year 2 analyses and to assess changes in the attitudes and behaviors of respondents who completed both surveys.

### **Interviews**

For the sake of maximizing our ability to identify change among students who were enrolled in VIPs' courses about Israel during the Spring 2011 semester, we sought to conduct 75 semi-structured interviews with respondents to the Year 1 survey during the Fall 2011 semester. At the request of the funder, we sought to oversample Jewish respondents. We sought to interview 40-45 students who identified in the Year 1 survey as having been raised as Jews and another 30-35 who identified as having been raised as Christians, Muslims, in some other religion, or in no religion.

Students were randomly selected to be interviewed, with consideration given to the need to have a balanced sample by gender, representation of all schools in the study, and the aforementioned religious

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<sup>1</sup> Not all of these categories had respondents in the dataset; there were few enough students in most of the schools in the study to ensure that not every gender-age-religion category yielded respondents.

mix. Students were contacted using phone numbers and e-mail addresses they provided at the end of the Year 1 survey. Ultimately, all students who provided usable contact information on the Year 1 survey were given the opportunity to participate.

Recruitment to participate in the interviews occurred in six waves, as described in Table A2. Each wave received at least one e-mail reminder, and respondents from some waves were called as well.

Table A2. Waves of Interview Recruitment

Wave	Launch Date	Subjects Invited	Phone Reminder Dates	E-mail Reminder Dates
1	October 11	22	October 26 November 3	October 19 November 3, 28 December 5
2	October 28	49	November 3	November 3, 30 December 5
3	November 2	21		November 14
4	November 7	27		November 15
5	November 9	26	November 16	November 16 December 5
6	November 16	108		November 28 December 5

Respondents were offered an incentive of \$25 to be interviewed. Interviews were conducted over the phone by CMJS researchers between October 17 and December 12, 2011. A total of 84 interviews were completed. Of these, 71 were recorded and transcribed; for the remaining 13, equipment failure prevented recording. Fortunately, interviewers took comprehensive notes during 10 of these interviews.

Of the 84 interviewees, 51 were raised as Jews and 33 in either another religion or no religion. Thirty-eight were women and 46 were men. At least one student was interviewed from 13 of the 15 schools in the study.

## **Student Focus Group Protocol**

### **Background/goals and motivations**

- Let's begin by everyone sharing a bit about themselves: where you're from, your year in school, and your major.
- What did you know about Israel [or this topic] before taking this course? Where had you studied or learned about Israel [this topic/the region, etc – can vary according to the course] before this course, if at all? [Probe for travel experiences/Israel trips, previous coursework in relevant subjects, religious education (day school/part time school), summer camp, family/personal connections, etc.]
- Why did you decide to take this class? What did you hope to learn and how has that changed over the term so far?

### **The course**

- What is the experience of taking the course like for you? What is the nature of discourse? How would you describe classroom dynamics? What is challenging or even frustrating?
- How is this course different, if at all, from other courses you may have taken on the subject [or in Israel Studies, Jewish Studies, IR, etc]?

### **Outcomes**

- What have you learned so far this semester about [course topic] that surprised you or changed the way you think about (topic)?
- To what extent would you say that your understanding of Israel has changed and in what ways? [Probe for learning re: politics, culture, economics, etc. ]
- In what ways, if any, do you feel the course has affected your ability to talk or communicate about Israel or [course topic] (or its culture, history, society, politics, or place in the Middle East? [Probe for examples of when they might have spoken or written about the topic in a way they might not have been able to imagine doing before ]
- What plans do you have for enrolling in other classes or exploring other learning opportunities about Israel or [topic]?
  - Probe for future travel or study
  - Probe for whether they've actually looked into possibilities and which ones.

### **Wrap up**

- Is there anything else you would like to discuss about your experiences in this course or other courses about Israel at [campus]?

## VIP Interview Protocol

### Introduction/Background

#### A bit about you

Home university appointment

Stage in career

Career objectives

### Goals for courses about Israel

What do you want to accomplish in your course(s) about Israel? And why?

- How, if at all do you think your goals for these courses differ from your **department's or university's administration?** (probe for whether they've ever had this conversation and how it has played out)
- How, if at all, do you think your goals for these courses differ from **AICE's?**
- What goals do you think the **students'** had when the enrolled? What do you think they hope to learn? (probe for whether these goals are evolving) Why do you think they take these courses?

### The teaching experience

Let's talk about the teaching experience. What's working and what isn't?

- What about this experience is gratifying?
- What is challenging or even frustrating?

### Outcomes

Tell me what you think students are learning in your class. (Content areas, new points of view, questioning, and critical thinking)

- Is there a shared sense of a common understanding coming out of the course? Did you think there would be?
- To what extent do you think your students now have a better understanding
  - Of Israel and its complexity?
  - Of the theory of (discipline) as examined through the lens of Israel?
  - Of the value of studying Israel in order to understand the nuances of conflict?

What, if any, influence do you think you or these courses are having outside the classroom?

## Department Chairs Interview Protocol

**Name:**

**Visiting Professor:**

**University:**

**Department:**

### Existing Opportunities

1. First, let's talk a little about **existing opportunities** for students to learn about Israel on campus
  - Courses
  - Informal learning opportunities
  - Resources
  - Israel study abroad opportunities
  
2. What, if any, impression do you have of **how Israel is treated in the classroom** by other professors on campus—(specifically with regard to the war in Gaza)?
  
3. What are the **catalysts or obstacles** (if any) to course offerings about Israel on campus?
  - Number
  - Variety
 (If obstacles,) How might such obstacles can be eliminated or diminished?

### *The VIP Program*

1. Now let's talk about the **students** and what you know about their responses to \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her courses. How is the program working for them?
  
2. Tell me about what your VIP's **effect on other faculty** in your **outside the** department. **On you.**
  
3. How does your VIP's work **fit in with the work of your department**? probes:
  - filling in gaps,
  - replacing potential FT appointments,
  - placeholders for faculty who have left,
  - experimentation with something entirely new,
  
4. How does your VIP's work fit into **the larger university**?
  - relationship to other courses about Israel being taught on campus – synergies or counteraction)
  - extracurricular involvement

### Next Year and Beyond

1. Tell me about your **plans for the future** in regard to course offerings about Israel.
  - adding more courses,
  - hiring full-time person,
  - part-time person,
  - working with other departments

### Funding Requirements

1. I just want to spend a little time talking about money. I understand that the Schusterman Family Foundation provides half the salary for your VIP. Where does the rest of the money come from?
  - university contributions
  - outside resources to support Israel courses and programming
  - how such resources have been raised and can be increased in the future
2. What might be some ways to enhance the quality of learning about Israel on campus in the future?

## Year 1 Survey

### A Little About You

Are you currently...

- A first-year student (freshman)
- A second-year student (sophomore)
- A third-year student (junior)
- A fourth-year student (senior)
- An undergraduate student (other)
- A graduate student
- Not a student

If responded a first year to undergraduate (other) student.

Have you decided on a major or majors?

- Yes
- No

If responded they have decided on a major or majors.

What is/are your major/s?

What is your major? \_\_\_\_\_

If currently a graduate student:

In what department/s are you enrolled as a graduate student?

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you...

- Female
- Male

In what year were you born...

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you consider yourself to be...?

- Christian
- Jewish
- Muslim
- No Religion
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

If considers themselves Jewish:

Were you raised...?

- Secular/Culturally Jewish
- Just Jewish
- Reform
- Conservative
- Reconstructionist
- Orthodox
- No religion
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



**Courses about Israel**

Are you currently enrolled in any courses focused specifically on Israel?

- Yes
- No

**If currently enrolled in any courses focused specifically on Israel.**

How many courses are you currently taking that specifically focus on Israel? (You will have the opportunity to tell us about up to three courses.)

- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

**If taking one course about Israel:**

Please fill out the following information about the course you are currently taking that is focused specifically on Israel:

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

**If taking one or more course about Israel:**

Please fill out the following information about the first course you are currently taking that is focused specifically on Israel:

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

**If taking two or more course about Israel:**

Please fill out the following information about the second course you are currently taking that is focused specifically on Israel:

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

If taking three or more course about Israel:

Please fill out the following information about the third course you are currently taking that is focused specifically on Israel:

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Before the current semester, did you ever take any college course specifically focused on Israel?

- Yes
- No

If they had ever taken any college course specifically focused on Israel before the current semester.

How many courses focused specifically on Israel did you take prior to this semester? (You will have the opportunity to tell us about up to three courses.)

- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

If they had taken one course specifically focused on Israel before the current semester:

Please fill out the following information about the course you took prior to this semester that was focused specifically on Israel?

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

If they had taken one or more courses specifically focused on Israel before the current semester:

Please fill out the following information about the first course you took prior to this semester that was focused specifically on Israel?

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

If they had taken two or more courses specifically focused on Israel before the current semester:

Please fill out the following information about the second course you took prior to this semester that was focused specifically on Israel?

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

If they had taken three or more courses specifically focused on Israel before the current semester:

Please fill out the following information about the third course you took prior to this semester that was focused specifically on Israel?

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

If they had taken one or more courses specifically focused on Israel before the current semester:

Thinking about your most recently completed course that focused specifically on Israel, to what extent did the course...

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very much
Expand your knowledge about Israel?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Present a balanced perspective on Israel?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If currently enrolled in one or more courses specifically focused on Israel:

Do you have any other motivations for taking the course/s about Israel you are currently taking?

- Yes
- No

If they answered they have any other motivations for taking the course/s about Israel they are currently taking.

What are they?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Activities**

To what extent are you engaged in any political activities on your campus?

- Not at all
- A little
- Somewhat
- Very much

If a little or more engaged in political activities on their campus.

Are any of these activities related to Israel or the Middle East?

- Yes
- No

If responded their activities are related to Israel or the Middle East.

With what organization/s on campus do you participate in political activities related to Israel or the Middle East?

\_\_\_\_\_

In the past month, how frequently did you seek news about Israel?

- Never
- Once or twice
- Once a week
- Every few days
- Once a day
- Several times a day

If sought out news about Israel at least once in the past month.

When you sought news about Israel, did you use any of the following sources?

	Yes	No
American news media (e.g., CNN, Wall Street Journal, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Israeli news media (e.g., Ha'aretz, Ynet, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arabic news media (e.g., Al-Jazeera, Asharq al-Awsat, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
European news media (e.g., BBC, Sky Network, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocacy organizations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the past month, how often did you engage in any of the following activities?

	Never	Once or twice	Once a week	Every few days	Once a day	Several times a day
Listening to Israeli music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading Israeli literature and/or fiction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Viewing Israeli films and/or TV shows	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting Israeli websites and/or blogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the past month, how often did you engage in any of the following activities?

	Never	Once or twice	Once a week	Every few days	Once a day	Several times a day
Actively seeking news about the Middle East <i>other than Israel</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listening to music from Middle Eastern countries <i>other than Israel</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading literature and/or non-fiction from Middle Eastern countries <i>other than Israel</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Viewing films and/or TV shows from Middle Eastern countries <i>other than Israel</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Viewing websites and/or blogs pertaining to from Middle Eastern countries <i>other than Israel</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the past month, how often have you discussed Israel with family and/or friends?

- Never
- Once or twice
- Once a week
- Every few days
- Once a day
- Several times a day

If responded they had discussed Israel at least once in the past month with family and/or friends.

What topics about Israel did you discuss?

---

## Your Views

How important are each of the following to you personally?

	Not important	A little important	Somewhat important	Very important
Learning more about the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Studying the societies of other countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning the history of Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Studying Israel in a comparative context	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about non-Western societies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How important are each of the following to you personally?

	Not important	A little important	Somewhat important	Very important
Advocating for Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocating for Palestinian rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding the place of Israel in the Jewish religion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being aware of important issues in Israeli society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helping work for peace in the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staying informed about the situation in the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If someone were to ask you about the following topics, how confident do you feel in your ability to discuss them?

	Not at all confident	A little confident	Somewhat confident	Very confident
Internal Israeli politics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religion in Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minority populations in Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Israeli-Palestinian conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arts and culture in Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To what extent do you feel knowledgeable about...?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very much
The history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The challenges facing Israel today	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The position of Palestinians living in areas controlled by Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relations between Israel and other countries in the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If respondent answered they consider themselves Jewish.

To what extent do you...

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very much
Feel that Israel is an important part of your Jewish identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enjoy Israeli food, music, or customs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel a connection to Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

When I think of Israel, I think of Israel as...

	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
A refuge for persecuted Jews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A country divided by internal strife	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A high-tech powerhouse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A diverse multicultural society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A religious fundamentalist society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A militaristic society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As part of a permanent settlement with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to...?

- Dismantle all of the Jewish settlements in the West Banks
- Dismantle some of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank
- Dismantle none of the settlements in the West Bank
- Don't know

In the framework of a permanent peace with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to compromise on the status of Jerusalem as a united city under Israeli jurisdiction?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

As the framework for a permanent peace settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which of the following options, do you support?

- A one-state solution
- A two-state solution
- Don't know

How reliable do you consider each of the following possible sources of information about Israel?

	Not at all reliable	A little reliable	Somewhat reliable	Very reliable
CNN	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Al Jazeera	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wall Street Journal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fox News	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The New York Times	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Haaretz	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Daily Show with Jon Stewart	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In general, how would you characterize your political views?

- Very conservative
- Conservative
- Moderate
- Liberal
- Very Liberal

### Your Background

In what country were you and your parents born?

	United States	Canada	Israel	Former Soviet Union	Other
You	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parent 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parent 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If their they were born in an “other” country

In what country were you born?

\_\_\_\_\_

If their first parent was born in an “other” country

In what country was your first parent born?

\_\_\_\_\_

If their second parent was born in an “other” country

In what country was your second parent born?

\_\_\_\_\_

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”.

During grades 1-12, did you ever attend a full-time Jewish day school?

- Yes
- No

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...” and they had ever attended a full-time Jewish day school.

For how many years did you attend such a school?

- 1 or less
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12 or more

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”.

During grades 1-12, did you ever attend a supplementary Jewish school, like a Hebrew school or Sunday school?

- Yes
- No

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...” and they had ever attended a supplementary Jewish day school.

For how many years did you attend such a school?

- 1 or less
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12 or more

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”.

Did you attend an overnight camp that had Shabbat services or a Jewish educational program while growing up?

- Yes
- No



If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”.

When you were in high school did you participating in a Jewish youth group (e.g., USY, NFTY, BBYO, Young Judeaea, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

Do you have family and/or friends living in...

	Yes	No
Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Middle East other than Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If respondent was not born in Israel.

Have you ever been to Israel?

- Yes
- No

If respondent was born in Israel.

Have you ever been back to Israel since coming to the United States...?

	Yes	No
To visit family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To visit friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On an organized tour with your family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On an organized tour with your peers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To study at a university or other long-term educational program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On some other type of trip	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If respondent has ever been to Israel and was not born in Israel.

Have you ever been to Israel...?

	Yes	No
To visit family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To visit friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On an organized tour with your family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On an organized tour with your peers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To study at a university or other long-term educational program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On some other type of trip	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If traveled to Israel “on some other type of trip” to “have you been back to Israel since coming to the United States” or “have you been to Israel”.

What type of trip was that?

---

If respondent had ever been to Israel or responded they were born in Israel.

How many times have you been to Israel since age 18?

- Never
- Once
- Twice
- Three times or more
- I live in Israel

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...” and answered “yes” they had ever been to Israel.

If respondent was born in Israel and had been to Israel since age 18 once or more.

Did you ever go on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip?

- Yes
- No

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, was not born in Israel, and answered they had been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, never went on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip, and answered they had been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, was not born in Israel, and they had never been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, was born in Israel, and they had never been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they never went on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip, they were born in Israel, and they had been to Israel once or more since age 18.

Did you ever apply to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program?

- Yes
- No

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, and they had never been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, they had never gone on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip, and they had been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, they were born in Israel, and had been to Israel once or more since age 18.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, they were born in Israel, and had never been to Israel since age 18.

If you plan to travel to Israel, do you intend to reapply for a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip?

- Yes
- No

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had never applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, and they had never been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had never applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, they had never gone on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip, and they never had been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had never applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, they had never gone on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip, they were born in Israel, and had been to Israel once or more since age 18.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had never applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, they were born in Israel, and had never been to Israel since age 18.

If you plan to travel to Israel, do you intend to apply for a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip?

- Yes
- No

### **The Future**

In the next year, do you plan to...?

	Yes	No
Take courses about Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel to Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take courses about the Middle East (in addition to or other than Israel)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel to the Middle East (in addition to or other than Israel)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If respondent plans to travel to Israel in the next year.

If you travel to Israel in the next year, what do you plan to do there?

	Yes	No
Take a vacation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study in an Israeli university	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Go on a volunteer program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work for pay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work in an unpaid internship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Something else	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you respondent plans to travel to the Middle East (in addition to or other than Israel) in the next year.

If you travel to the Middle East other than to Israel in the next year, what country or countries do you plan to visit?

\_\_\_\_\_

If respondent plans to travel to the Middle East (in addition to or other than Israel) in the next year.

If you visit any country in the Middle East other than Israel in the next year, what do you plan to do there?

	Yes	No
Take a vacation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study in an Israeli university	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Go on a volunteer program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work for pay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work in an unpaid internship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Something else	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Year 2 Survey

### A Little About You

Are you currently...

- A second-year student (sophomore)
- A third-year student (junior)
- A fourth-year student (senior)
- A graduate student
- No longer a student

#### If responded still a student.

Are you still a student at {university in Year 1}?

- Yes
- No

#### If not attending the school from Year 1.

What school are you currently attending?

\_\_\_\_\_

#### If responded they gave their major or majors in Year 1.

Is your major still {major or majors in Year 1}?

- Yes
- No

#### If responded a student and in Year 1 had not decided on a major or majors.

Have you decided on a major?

- Yes
- No

#### If decided on a major or majors.

What is your major?

\_\_\_\_\_

#### If they gave their minor in Year 1.

What is your minor still {Year 1 minor}?

- Yes
- No

#### If no minor in Year 1.

Have you chosen a minor?

- Yes
- No

#### If currently a graduate student:

In what department/s are you enrolled as a graduate student?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is your current employment status?

	Yes	No
Working full-time as a paid employee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working part-time as a paid employee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Full-time unpaid internship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Part-time unpaid internship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If current employment status is other.

Please specify:

\_\_\_\_\_

### **More About You**

If answered “No religion” to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1.

Were you raised...?

- Christian
- Jewish
- Muslim
- No Religion
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

If answered “No religion” to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1 and were raised “other”.

Please specify.

\_\_\_\_\_

If answered “No religion” to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1.

Were any of your parents Jewish?

- Yes
- No

If answered “No religion” to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1.

Do you consider yourself Jewish for any reason?

- Yes
- No

### **Your Courses**

In spring 2011, did you take {course in Year 1} with Professor {Name}?

- Yes
- No

If answered they did not take the course in Year 1 with the visiting Israeli professor.

Did you enroll, but decide not to take the course?

- Yes
- No

If enrolled, but decided not to take the course.

What were the primary reasons why you dropped the course?

\_\_\_\_\_

If took the course in Year 1 with the visiting Israeli professor.

Thinking about the course, to what extent did it...

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very much
Present a balanced perspective on Israel?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expand your knowledge about Israel?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Challenge you academically	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Introduce you to new news sources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Introduce you to new perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If took the course in Year 1 with the visiting Israeli professor.

To what extent did the course increase your interest in...

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very much
Taking courses about Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking courses about the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Studying Hebrew	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Studying Arabic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting countries in the Middle East other than Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Following news about the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Following news about Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Following news about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If took the course in Year 1 with the visiting Israeli professor.

How, if at all, did this course affect your views on Israel and the Middle East?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Your Courses this Semester**

This semester, are you enrolled in any courses focused on Israel or the Middle East?

- Yes
- No

If currently enrolled in any courses focused on Israel or the Middle East.

How many courses are you currently taking that focus on Israel or the Middle East? (You will have the opportunity to tell us about up to three courses.)

- One
- Two
- Three or more

If taking one or more courses focused on Israel or the Middle East:

Please fill out the following information about the first course you are currently taking that is focused on Israel or the Middle East that you are taking this semester:

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

If taking two or more courses focused on Israel or the Middle East:

Please fill out the following information about the second course you are currently taking that is focused on Israel or the Middle East that you are taking this semester:

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

If taking three or more courses focused on Israel or the Middle East:

Please fill out the following information about the third course you are currently taking that is focused on Israel or the Middle East that you are taking this semester:

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Courses in Summer or Fall 2011**

Did you complete a class focused on Israel or the Middle East in summer or fall 2011?

- Yes
- No

If they completed a course focused on Israel or the Middle East in summer or fall 2011?

How many courses focused specifically on Israel or the Middle East did you take in summer or fall 2011? (You will have the opportunity to tell us about up to three courses.)

- 1
- 2
- 3 or more

If they had taken one or more courses focused on Israel or the Middle East in summer or fall 2011?

Please fill out the following information about the first course you took on Israel of the Middle East in summer or fall 2011?

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

If they had taken two or more courses focused on Israel or the Middle East in summer or fall 2011?

Please fill out the following information about the second course you took on Israel of the Middle East in summer or fall 2011?

Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

If they had taken three or more courses focused on Israel or the Middle East in summer or fall 2011?

Please fill out the following information about the third course you took on Israel of the Middle East in summer or fall 2011?



Name of course: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Professor's last name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Your Current Activities**

#### If still a student.

To what extent are you engaged in any political activities on your campus?

Not at all

A little

Somewhat

Very much

#### If still a student and a little or more engaged in political activities on their campus.

Are any of these activities related to Israel or the Middle East?

- Yes
- No

#### If still a student, a little or more engaged in political activities on their campus, and responded their activities are related to Israel or the Middle East.

With what organization/s on campus do you participate in political activities related to Israel or the Middle East?

\_\_\_\_\_

#### If no longer a student.

To what extent are you engaged in any political activities?

- Not at all
- A little
- Somewhat
- Very much

#### If no longer a student and a little or more engaged in political activities.

Are any of these activities related to Israel or the Middle East?

- Yes
- No

#### If no longer a student, a little or more engaged in political activities, and responded their activities are related to Israel or the Middle East.

With what organization/s on campus do you participate in political activities related to Israel or the Middle East?

\_\_\_\_\_

### **In the News**

In the past month, how frequently did you seek news about Israel?

- Never
- Once or twice
- Once a week
- Every few days
- Once a day

- Several times a day

If sought out news about Israel at least once in the past month.

When you sought news about Israel, did you use any of the following sources?

	Yes	No
American news media (e.g., CNN, Wall Street Journal, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Israeli news media (e.g., Ha'aretz, Ynet, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arabic news media (e.g., Al-Jazeera, Asharq al-Awsat, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
European news media (e.g., BBC, Sky Network, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If never sought out news about Israel in the past month.

Please specify your top 3 sources for news about Israel and the Middle East.

\_\_\_\_\_

How reliable do you consider each of the following possible sources of information about Israel?

	Not at all reliable	A little reliable	Somewhat reliable	Very reliable
CNN	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Al Jazeera	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wall Street Journal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fox News	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The New York Times	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Haaretz	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Daily Show with Jon Stewart	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Other Activities

In the past month, how often did you engage in any of the following activities?

	Never	Once or twice	Once a week	Every few days	Several times a day
Listening to Israeli music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading Israeli literature and/or fiction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Viewing Israeli films and/or TV shows	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting Israeli websites and/or blogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the past month, how often did you engage in any of the following activities?

	Never	Once or twice	Once a week	Every few days	Several times a day
Actively seeking news about the Middle East other than Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listening to music from Middle Eastern countries other than Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading literature and/or non-fiction from Middle Eastern countries other than Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Viewing films and/or TV shows from Middle Eastern countries other than Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Viewing websites and/or blogs pertaining to from Middle Eastern countries other than Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the past month, how often have you discussed Israel with family and/or friends?

- Never
- Once or twice
- Once a week
- Every few days
- Once a day
- Several times a day

If responded they had discussed Israel at least once in the past month with family and/or friends.

What topics about Israel did you discuss?

---

## Your Views

How important are each of the following to you personally?

	Not important	A little important	Somewhat important	Very important
Learning more about the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Studying the societies of other countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning the history of Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Studying Israel in a comparative context	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning about non-Western societies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How important are each of the following to you personally?

	Not important	A little important	Somewhat important	Very important
Advocating for Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocating for Palestinian rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding the place of Israel in the Jewish religion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being aware of important issues in Israeli society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helping work for peace in the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staying informed about the situation in the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If someone were to ask you about the following topics, how confident do you feel in your ability to discuss them?

	Not at all confident	A little confident	Somewhat confident	Very confident
Internal Israeli politics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religion in Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minority populations in Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Israeli-Palestinian conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arts and culture in Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## More About Your Views

To what extent do you feel knowledgeable about...?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very much
The history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The challenges facing Israel today	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The position of Palestinians living in areas controlled by Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relations between Israel and other countries in the Middle East	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If respondent answered they consider themselves Jewish in Year 1.

If respondent answered they were raised Jewish, they had Jewish parents, or consider themselves Jewish for any reason in Year 2.

To what extent do you....

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very much
Feel that Israel is an important part of your Jewish identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enjoy Israeli food, music, or customs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel a connection to Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If answered "Jewish" to "do you consider yourself to be..." in Year 1 and answered "not at all" to "feel that Israel is an important part of your Jewish identity" in Year 2.

If answered "Jewish" to "do you consider yourself to be..." in Year 1 and answered "not at all" to "feel a connection to Israel" in Year 2.

If answered "No religion" to "do you consider yourself to be..." in Year 1, answered "Jewish" to "were you raised...", answered "not at all" to "feel that Israel is an important part of your Jewish identity" in Year 2.

If answered "No religion" to "do you consider yourself to be..." in Year 1, answered "Jewish" to "were you raised...", answered "not at all" to "feel a connection to Israel" in Year 2.

If answered "No religion" to "do you consider yourself to be..." in Year 1, answered "Yes" to "were any of your parents Jewish", answered "not at all" to "feel that Israel is an important part of your Jewish identity" in Year 2.

If answered "No religion" to "do you consider yourself to be..." in Year 1, answered "Yes" to "were any of your parents Jewish", answered "not at all" to "feel a connection to Israel" in Year 2.

If answered "No religion" to "do you consider yourself to be..." in Year 1, answered "Yes" to "do you consider yourself Jewish for any reason" and answered "not at all" to "feel that Israel is an important part of your Jewish identity" in Year 2.

If answered "No religion" to "do you consider yourself to be..." in Year 1, answered "Yes" to "do you consider yourself Jewish for any reason" and answered "not at all" to "feel a connection to Israel" in Year 2.

Briefly describe any change in your feelings or sense of connection to Israel over the past year.

---

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

When I think of Israel, I think of Israel as...

	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
A refuge for persecuted Jews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A country divided by internal strife	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A high-tech powerhouse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A diverse multicultural society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A religious fundamentalist society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A militaristic society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Current Events

As part of a permanent settlement with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to...?

- Dismantle all of the Jewish settlements in the West Banks
- Dismantle some of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank
- Dismantle none of the settlements in the West Bank
- Don't know

In the framework of a permanent peace with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to compromise on the status of Jerusalem as a united city under Israeli jurisdiction?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

In general, how would you characterize your political views?

- Very conservative
- Conservative
- Moderate
- Liberal
- Very Liberal

### Your Travels

Have you ever been to Israel since February 2011?

- Yes
- No

If respondent has been to Israel since February 2011, was raised “Jewish”, had any Jewish parents, and considers themselves Jewish for any reason in Year 2.

If respondent answered they consider themselves to be Christian or Muslim in Year 1 and they have not been to Israel since February 2011.

On your visit to Israel did you?

	Yes	No
Travel on an organized trip with your family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel on an organized trip with your peers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study at a university or long-term educational program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study in a seminary or religious institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visit family/friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in a volunteer program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in another trip or program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If on their visit to Israel they participated in another trip or program.

Please provide the name of the trip or program.

\_\_\_\_\_

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1 and has been to Israel since February 2011.

If respondent answered No religion to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, was raised Jewish, and has been to Israel since February 2011.

If respondent answered No religion to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, has any Jewish parents, and has been to Israel since February 2011.

If respondent answered No religion to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, considers themselves Jewish for any reason in Year 2, and has been to Israel since February 2011.

On your visit to Israel did you?

	Yes	No
Travel on an organized trip with your family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel on an organized trip with your peers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend a university study abroad program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study for a degree at an Israeli university or college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study in a seminary, yeshiva, or other religious institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make aliyah	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in a volunteer program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work for pay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Serve in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visit family/friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in another trip or program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, has been to Israel since February 2011, and on their visit to Israel they participated in another trip or program.

If respondent answered No religion to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, was raised Jewish, has been to Israel since February 2011, and on their visit to Israel they participated in another trip or program.

If respondent answered No religion to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, has any Jewish parents, has been to Israel since February 2011, and on their visit to Israel they participated in another trip or program.

If respondent answered No religion to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, considers themselves Jewish for any reason in Year 2, has been to Israel since February 2011, and on their visit to Israel they participated in another trip or program.

Please provide the name of the trip or program.

---

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1 and has been to Israel since February 2011.

If respondent answered No religion to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, was raised Jewish, and has been to Israel since February 2011.

If respondent answered No religion to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, has any Jewish parents, and has been to Israel since February 2011.

If respondent answered No religion to “do you consider yourself to be...” in Year 1, considers themselves Jewish for any reason in Year 2, and has been to Israel since February 2011.

Since February 2011, did you apply to the Taglit-Birthright program?

- Yes
- No

If respondent did not apply to the Taglit-Birthright program since February 2011.

What is the main reason you have not applied for Taglit-Birthright Israel?

- Not interested
- Security concerns regarding travel to Israel
- Not enough time
- Not eligible for the program (e.g., participated in another peer trip)
- Other

If respondent chose “other” to “what is the main reason you have not applied for Taglit-Birthright Israel”.

What is that reason?

---

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...” and answered “yes” they had ever been to Israel.

If respondent was born in Israel and had been to Israel since age 18 once or more.

Did you ever go on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip?

- Yes
- No

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, was not born in Israel, and answered they had been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, never went on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip, and answered they had been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, was not born in Israel, and they had never been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, was born in Israel, and they had never been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they never went on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip, they were born in Israel, and they had been to Israel once or more since age 18.

Did you ever apply to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program?

- Yes
- No



If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, and they had never been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, they had never gone on a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip, and they had been to Israel.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, they were born in Israel, and had been to Israel once or more since age 18.

If respondent answered Jewish to “do you consider yourself to be...”, they had applied to the Taglit-Birthright Israel program, they were born in Israel, and had never been to Israel since age 18.

If you plan to travel to Israel, do you intend to reapply for a Taglit-Birthright Israel trip?

- Yes
- No

### Other Travel

Since February 2011, did you travel to the Middle East other than to Israel?

- Yes
- No

If respondent answered they traveled to the Middle East other than to Israel since February 2011.

What countries did you visit?

---

### Future Plans

In the next year, do you plan to...?

	Yes	No
Take courses about Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel to Israel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take courses about the Middle East (in addition to or other than Israel)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel to the Middle East (in addition to or other than Israel)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If respondent plans to travel to Israel in the next year.

If you travel to Israel in the next year, what do you plan to do there?

	Yes	No
Take a vacation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study in an Israeli university	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Go on a volunteer program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work for pay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work in an unpaid internship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Something else	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you respondent plans to travel to Israel in the next year and plans to do “something else” there.

If something else, please specify your plans:

---

If respondent plans to travel to the Middle East (in addition to or other than Israel) in the next year.

If you visit any country in the Middle East other than Israel in the next year, what do you plan to do there?

	Yes	No
Take a vacation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study in an Israeli university	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Go on a volunteer program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work for pay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work in an unpaid internship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Something else	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you respondent plans to travel to the Middle East (in addition to or other than Israel) in the next year and plans to do “something else” there.

If something else, please specify your plans:

\_\_\_\_\_

If respondent plans to travel to the Middle East (in addition to or other than Israel) in the next year.

If you travel to the Middle East other than to Israel in the next year, what country or countries do you plan to visit?

**Comments**

Please share anything else you would like us to know about your views on Israel and the Middle East.

\_\_\_\_\_

## Fall 2011 Student Interview Protocol

**University:**

**Course:**

**Interviewee (first name, last initial):**

**Year:**

**Date:**

**Interviewer:**

### Introduction

Hi, my name is [first and last name] and I'm calling from Brandeis University. How are you?

We scheduled an interview for [time]. Is this still a good time to talk?

Great. Thanks so much for taking the time to speak with me today. As I mentioned in the email, this interview will take approximately 45 minutes and our conversation is completely confidential.

First piece of business: I need to record this conversation so that we can have it transcribed. Your name will never be associated with the transcript nor will your name ever be used in any publication of our research. Do I have your permission to record the interview?

After the interview, I'll send you an Amazon® gift code for \$25 – it's our way of saying “thank you” for your time.

### Warm-up questions

Tell me a little about yourself.

- What made you choose [university name] as a place to study.
- What is your major? [*If student has declared a major:*] Has it changed from last year? If so, what influenced your choice? [*If student is undeclared:*] What are you thinking about possibly majoring in?
- How do you spend your time when you're not in class? [*Probe for extracurricular involvement – campus activities, jobs, internships, etc.*]

### About [course title]

Let's talk about your [course name] last year.

- Tell me a bit about the course. [*Probe for number of students in the course, lecture vs. seminar style, etc.*]
- Why did you decide to take [course name]?
- How, if at all, was it different from other courses dealing with the same topics that you may have previously taken at [university name]?
- It's been several months since the Spring semester, but what stands out in your memory about the course?
- Tell me a bit about the assignments you did for the class. What topic or topics did you cover in any research papers or other work? What were your conclusions?
- What did you learn about [course topic] that surprised you or changed the way you think about [course topic]? What did you learn last semester about Israel that surprised you or changed the way you think about Israel and the Middle East?

- Describe the in-class conversation. Would you say it was...? (*examples: one-sided--dominated by particular individuals or points of view, open and forthright, polite, somewhat out of hand, productive*) Can you give me an example?
- In what ways, if any, has having an Israeli teach the course made a difference to you? [in terms of experience of the course, what you got out of it]
- Anything else I should know about the class?

### **On campus outside the classroom**

I'm curious about what's happening on campus at [university] outside the classroom.

- What are the hot topics or issues on campus this fall?
- [*If interviewee does not mention Israel or the Middle East--*] Are issues related to Israel and the Middle East part of the discourse/conversation outside the classroom at [university]? [*Probe for activist groups, op-eds in the campus paper, etc.*]
- How would you characterize the conversation about Israel or the Middle East on campus? (*For example, some might characterize the debate on campus about the economy as highly partisan, nervous, or extreme or tepid...*)
- What, if any, extra-curricular activities or events related to Israel are going on at [university] this semester? Have you participated in any of these, and, if so, tell me about them.

### **In the News**

I have a couple of questions about media and current events.

- Have you been following news from the Middle East lately? [*If yes,*]What stories or issues are you interested in, and why? [*If no,*] What are the other topics in the news that interest you?
- What sources do you turn to for information on current events in Israel and the Middle East? [*Probe for specific websites, news media, Facebook/twitter pages or personalities, etc.*]
- How often do current events come up in conversation between you and your friends? What sorts of issues do you talk about? [*Probe for news related to Israel and the Middle East.*]

### **Now and in the Future**

Just a few more questions about your plans for the future.

- What are you taking this semester? Are you taking any courses about Israel?
- What plans do you have, if any, to continue learning about [course topic] or Israel and the Middle East? [*Probe for additional courses, study abroad, travel, etc.*]
- [*For seniors only, optional*] What are your plans for after graduation? (Graduate school., career, travel....)

### **Closer**

Is there anything I didn't ask but that I should know to better understand your experience in the course or your thoughts on Israel and the Middle East?

Thanks again for your time.

In January, we'll send you a follow-up survey. It will be short, and will ask questions different from those we just covered in this interview. We really hope you'll participate and we'll again provide a \$25 Amazon® gift card for your time.

## Appendix B: Israel and Palestine Related Activities on AICE Campuses

University	Activist Groups		Apartheid Wall*		Israel Week**		BDS		In the News
	Israel	Palestinian	2010-11	2011-12	2010-11	2011-12	2010-11	2011-12	2010-12
<b>A</b>	4	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>B</b>	3	2			X	X			
<b>C</b>	5	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>D</b>	1	3		X	X	X			
<b>E</b>	3	2		X					X
<b>F</b>	5	2	X	X			X	X	X
<b>G</b>	3	2	X	X	X	X			
<b>H</b>	4	1			X	X			
<b>I</b>	3	2			X	X			X
<b>J</b>	5	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>K</b>	4	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>L</b>	5	2	X	X	X	X			X
<b>M</b>	6	4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>N</b>	4	2	X	X			X	X	X
<b>O</b>	6	2			X	X	X	X	

The Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University is a multi-disciplinary research institute dedicated to the study of American Jewry and religious and cultural identity.

The Steinhardt Social Research Institute, hosted at CMJS, is committed to the development and application of innovative approaches to socio-demographic research for the study of Jewish, religious, and cultural identity.

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