# Global Immersion Israel: Culture, Politics, and Leading Edge Innovation

**B8729 ---Uris Hall ---February- April, 2020**  
*Oct 20, 2020 (Bidding Draft)*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, Jan 29</td>
<td><strong>Class 1</strong></td>
<td>Course Overview; Expectations: Why We Are Here</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 – 6pm</td>
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<td>Israel: Setting the Foundation – History, Geography, Society, Culture...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, Feb 5</td>
<td><strong>Class 2</strong></td>
<td>Israeli Economy, Media and Politics</td>
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<td>4 – 6pm</td>
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<td>Guest: Shaul Amsterdamski, Economics Editor, Israel’s Public Broadcasting Corp, and Nieman Fellow, Harvard</td>
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<td>Wednesday, Feb 12</td>
<td><strong>Class 3</strong></td>
<td>Israel: Start Up Nation</td>
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<td>Guest: Dan Senor, Author, <em>Start Up Nation</em></td>
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<td>Wednesday, Feb 19</td>
<td><strong>Class 4</strong></td>
<td>Geopolitical Background; Israeli Innovation: The Case of Water in a World of Drought</td>
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<td>Wednesday, Feb 26</td>
<td><strong>Class 5</strong></td>
<td>Branding a Country: The Case of Israel</td>
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<td>4 – 6pm</td>
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<td>Guest: Ido Aharoni, Former Israeli Consul to New York and Principal, Emerson Rigby Ltd.</td>
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<td>AND Predeparture Overview: Israel Trip March 14-21</td>
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<td>Wednesday, Apr 1</td>
<td><strong>Class 6</strong></td>
<td>Final Session: Team Presentations, Course Summary and Reflections</td>
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<td>4 – 7pm</td>
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COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

This Global Immersion course provides students with knowledge, insights, and experiences with respect to Israel. The course's in-class meetings and its one week visit to Israel will cover such topics as Israel's leadership, politics, economics, business innovation, geography, and culture. Students will gain an understanding of Israel's unique circumstances and achievements, ethnic and religious diversity, challenges, and opportunities. Students will learn through the combination of academic learnings, class presenters, visits with government and business leaders, and on-the-ground experiences with Israeli businesses, cultural and historical sites. Students will present their related analyses after returning from the course's Israel trip.

This Global Immersion course is taught in five two-hour sessions, followed by a one-week trip to Israel, and concludes with an in-class three-hour session wrap up. The course's pedagogy combines current examples, presentations, guest visits by leaders from business, government, and the media.

Global Immersion Program classes bridge classroom lessons and business practices in another country. These three credit classes meet for half a term in New York prior to a one week visit to the country of focus where students will meet with business executives and government officials while working on team projects. The course spans BOTH the A and B terms (with final class session on April 1).

The GIP fee provides students with double occupancy lodging, ground transportation and some meals; unless an increased fee is otherwise specified in the course description. It does not cover roundtrip international airfare.

Attendance both in New York and in-country and regular participation are a crucial part of the learning experience and as such attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences are highly frowned upon and will have negative consequences on class grade, and students who have expected conflicts should not apply for this course. Students who miss the first class meeting may be removed from the course.

No program fee refunds will be given after the add/drop period has closed. Please visit the Chazen Institute website to learn more about the Global Immersion Program, and visit the Global Immersion Policies page to review policies affecting these courses.
2. CLASS SCHEDULE

Session 1: Course Overview and Foundations of Israel (Jan 29)
4:00-6:00 PM

This session will be used to introduce the course goals and expectations. We will begin discussing Israel, its history, geography, culture, economy and political issues.

- Why should we study Israel?
- What is the business and economic significance?
- We will also review the course setup, syllabus, and travel component.

Readings:

4. “70 Years On--Thoughts on Israel’s Imperfect Capitalism” Sami Peretz, Haaretz, April 18, 2018. [https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/business/70-years-on-thoughts-on-israel-s-imperfect-capitalism-1.6011475]
5. YouTube Video: “Tkuma: The Economic Revolution—From Oranges to the Chip” 1948-98 (:52)…Good visual history of Israel’s economic journey from farming to tech….

Prep Questions
a) Based on the readings and video, what themes emerge which intrigue you about Israel?
b) What questions emerge for you based on the readings which you would like to discuss in our course?
c) What are the primary reasons for Israel’s becoming such a hotbed for innovation, particularly pertaining to the formation of startups?
Session 2: Israeli Economy and Industries (Feb. 5)
4:00-6:00 PM

This session will be used to examine the nature of the Israeli economy, trends and challenges. Our guest speaker covers the Israeli economy for the Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation.

Readings:

4. “The Cheese and the Oligarchs: The Politics, the Media, and Israel's Dream of a Start-Up Nation” HBS case study, Dec 2017, 9-716-060, Rafael Di Tella and Christine Snively (read more closely pp. 1-6, and skim the rest)

Guest: Shaul Amsterdamski, Economics Editor, Israel’s Public Broadcasting Corp, and Nieman Fellow, Harvard

Session 3: Israel-Start Up Nation (Feb 12)
4:00-6:00 PM

In this session, we will define and analyze Israel’s pronounced track record for start up companies and for creating a country brand accordingly.

Readings:

Guest: Dan Senor, Author, *Start-Up Nation*

**Session 4: Geo-Political Issues and/or Solving Water Issues in Israel and the Region (Feb 19)** 4:00-6:00 PM

**Guest: TBD**

**Readings:**

3. Youtube Video: “Tkuma—Birth of Israel and the Palestinian Conflict” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cQ1hTBFlUM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cQ1hTBFlUM)

**Session 5 (Feb 26): Israel as a Brand; Predeparture Session: Overview of Trip**

4:00-6:00 PM

Our focus will be on the development of Country Brands using Israel as a case in point. We will also Review the trip's agenda and the political and business leaders that we will meet. Discussion of logistics, safety, and any other pre-departure information.

**Guest: Ido Aharoni, Former Israeli Consul General to New York and Principal, Emerson Rigby, Ltd.**

**Readings:**

1. “Israel at 70—Is it Possible to (Re-)Brand a Country” Ellie Ofek and Sarah Gulick, HBS Case, Feb 2019.
2. Others TBD...

**ISRAEL TRIP: MARCH 14-21**
Session 6: Course Wrap Up (April 1)
4:00-7:00 PM

We will use this class to tie together the key themes of the course. Student teams will be presenting their observations about key pre-assigned topics.

1. GRADING

Class Participation (50%)
Team Project (50%)

2. TEAM PROJECT

The class will be divided into project teams (approximately 6 teams X 5 students per team). These teams will be formed after Class 5, thus right before we leave for Israel. The teams will prepare a presentation for the final Class (Class 6, April 1st) and hand in their paper end of week, Friday April 3rd by 6pm.

The project topics will be outlined at a later date but will be well aligned with the class topics. It will be built around what you learned in the classroom, in Israel, and additional research. The presentations in class will each be approximately 20 minutes in duration.

More specifics on the projects will be discussed early in the course.