

Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies



Summer in Jerusalem

2019



ABOUT US

The Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies is a multi-disciplinary research centre that brings together students, faculty and researchers who are dedicated to the study of Israel in all its facets.

We offer:

- Summer Course in Israel
- Undergraduate Minor in Israel Studies
- Research Funding, Graduate and Post-Doctoral Fellowship
- Sarna-Weigensberg in-course Scholarship
- Sarah Morris in-course Scholarship
- J.I.Segal Award for Best Book in Israel Studies
- Regular lectures, conferences and events by recognized scholars and world renowned experts

Learn more: concordia.ca/azrieli



SUMMER IN JERUSALEM 2019

The Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies was pleased to offer the 2019 Azrieli Institute Summer in Jerusalem program to undergraduate students in collaboration with Concordia International and the Religions and Cultures Department. This exciting one-month program provided students with the opportunity to earn credit while attending Hebrew University's Rothberg International School with students from around the world. Dr. Csaba Nikolenyi, Director of the Azrieli Institute and Professor of Political Science, led the group.

All students admitted to the program took the Concordia undergraduate course:

RELI 398: Religion, Culture and Politics in Contemporary Israel (3 credits)

Summer Studies in Israel provides a fascinating window on culture, religion and diversity!

Thank you to the Azrieli Foundation for making this Summer Program possible for our students!





Students from the Azrieli Institute and Western Galilee College explored the deeper meanings of multiculturalism and intersectionality

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



In July 2019 we conducted the third Azrieli Institute Summer in Jerusalem in collaboration with the Rothberg International School of the Hebrew University and Concordia's Department of Religions and Cultures. Thanks to the generous support provided by the Azrieli Foundation, this year's summer program included a number of new special site visits which created more enhanced learning opportunities for our students in Israel. For example, our group was able to spend a whole day at the Yad Vashem campus in Jerusalem to learn about the significance of the memory of the Holocaust for the national identity of Israel, visited Mt. Herzl, and also travelled to the Galilee to learn about the history of the relationship between the Jewish and Druze populations. One of my personal highlights in the 2019 summer program was the joint class that we held together with a group of Arab and Jewish students in the Western Galilee College in Akko; what a fascinating context it was to learn about each other's perceptions and understandings of multiculturalism in Canada and Israel!

Csaba Nikolenyi

*Director, Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies
Professor, Department of Political Science*

2019 PARTICIPANTS

MATILDA CERONE

BA Philosophy, Minor French Language

LAURENT COHEN

BComm Finance

EMMA ROSE DI IORIO

BA Art History

LISA KOMLOS

BA Women Studies, Minor Israel Studies

ÉLISABETH LAVOIE

BA Spanish, Minor Modern Chinese

ALICIA MAXWELL

BA Specialization Sociology and Anthropology

CLARISA MENDOZA

BA Specialization Communication Studies

COREY NEWMAN

BA Judaic Studies, Minor Israel Studies

NATHALIE OUM

PhD, Engineering

SIMONE PAGEAU-TIMAR

BA Sociology

MARGARET WEBB

*BA Human Environment, Minor
Environmental Sustainability*



SIGHTS



The National Library of Israel
 The Israel Museum
 Yad Vashem
 The Knesset
 Har-Herzl
 Qumran
 Masada
 The Dead Sea
 The Western Wall (The Kotel)

Church of the Holy Sepulchre
 City of David
 Bahá'í Gardens
 City of Acre
 Peki'in
 Sde Boker Kibbutz
 Bedouin Village
 & more...



The Summer in Israel program was truly an experience of a lifetime. It provided students with the ability to learn on site about history, different cultures and religions in Israel, and to visit sites that had been studied in the classroom. This program transformed the traditional classroom setting into a field study research where students immersed themselves into the surrounding culture. This provided an exceptional understanding of the diversity and multiculturalism of Israeli culture that may not have been fully realized in a traditional setting. Some of the places that we visited included The National Library of Israel, The Museum of Israel, Yad Vashem Museum, The Knesset, Har-Hertzl, Qumran, Masada, The Dead Sea, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Ba'hai Gardens, Sde Boker Kibbutz, and even drank tea with Salima, a Bedouin woman, in her community tent! Although the course focused on the religions, cultures and politics in contemporary Israel, our students left with much more knowledge and insights than they expected. It is always fascinating to see how each student reflects on what they've read, seen, and experienced living in Jerusalem for a month and how they relate it to their own lives. Students come back from this program feeling enlightened and educated with new perspectives.

— Lisa Komlos

Marketing and Social Media Director at the Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies

TESTIMONIALS




"Living for a whole month in Israel, a land that is so important for me but that felt so foreign at the same time, was a life changing experience. It gave me the opportunity to meet people from all kinds of religious and ethnic backgrounds and to really explore the country. We went to the desert, and visited a kibbutz; we saw the fortress of Masada and the Dead Sea; we visited all kinds of religious temples and landmarks... it was simply amazing. To be at the place where the events that we were studying actually happened was both surreal and exciting. All that, added to the fact that professor Nikolenyi is one of the best professors that I've had, made this class very special. If you are interested in history, religion, politics or cultural studies, then this class is a must! Regardless of your religious or political views, it is completely worth it to go and soak in as much knowledge as you can!"

— **Clarisa Mendoza**, BA Specialization Communication Studies

"I'm writing this from plane on my way back to Montreal. I can't believe this course is over - it went by so fast! Looking back, I can only say that the summer program in Israel offered by the Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies exceeded all my expectations. I am beyond grateful that this program exists and how it gave me the opportunity to experience Israel in such a deeply historical context. It was fascinating to understand how biblical accounts and historical events created the beginnings of a historical consciousness, which after millennia, paved the way to the formation of a unique Jewish identity tied to the Land of Israel. I was surprised to feel the indescribable energy of Jerusalem and to experience the ways in which it enhanced my own spirituality. I am delighted at how much I learned over the course of a month and at how intellectually stimulating and satisfying it was. A huge thank you to Dr. Csaba Nikolenyi, the director of the Azrieli Institute and our professor during the program in Israel. It is rare to find a teacher who can challenge you to analyze information critically, while encouraging you to reach above and beyond simultaneously. All in all, I highly recommend this special course to any wanderlust student who wants to experience an innovative and multicultural country, learn about ancient and modern histories, hear the Hebrew language that has been revived, and visit the center of the world's largest monotheistic religions. As I sit here and write this, I am left with a feeling of longing for the next time I'll be able to visit again."

— **Lisa Komlos**, BA Women Studies, Minor Israel Studies



"Visiting Israel for the first time, I was surprised of how open and diverse the society was and really more complicated and tangled than what I expected. I am very grateful of how the professor invested a lot of his energy and care into our group. I really enjoyed visiting the Bedouin village and the Kibbutz, they were my two favorites because they seemed to me as completely new universes with their own social structures. In one word, I would describe the summer course in Jerusalem as truly enriching. I've learned so much and I am now a bit more familiar with that part of the world that was completely unknown to me. I really appreciated being in Jerusalem because you can feel the politics everywhere. Also, the field school class format worked perfectly, it is easier for me to assimilate information when I am out of the classroom. After this trip, I personally feel more informed and I was very intellectually stimulated because the professor lead us to ask ourselves questions and we were encouraged to look for the answers relating it to our classes. Israel is a very interesting small piece of land that has a lot to offer and that is overly concentrated with politics, which I loved. I would recommend this trip, it is 100% worth it but be prepared to work. This was a complete overview of Israel with its different issues, communities and society. Thanks to Professor Nikolenyi, we really had diverse point of views on what is Israel and the Professor was very inviting at answering all our questions. Thank you very much Professor Nikolenyi for this experience, it was by far the most enriching one in terms of content out of the 3 countries that I've studied this year."

—Élisabeth B. Lavoie, BA Spanish, Minor Modern Chinese

"The Azrieli Institute's field study in Israel gave me a rich experience of what life is like in the Jewish state. Moreover, being able to learn about the people who have lived in this land throughout the epochs, in and out of the classroom, has left me with deep impressions that have changed my relationships to history as well as my own heritage. The museums and archeological sites brought me as close as I could ever get to some of humanity's earliest beginnings and those are memories that continue to evoke a powerful sense of wonder and awe at how far we've come. Truly, there is no other place in the world like Israel, and there is no better way to explore it than through the experiential learning approach."

—Simone Pageau-Timar, BA Sociology





"I have been to Israel 4 times in my life. Each one being a unique experience. The Azrieli Institute Summer program was one of those special experiences. Unless you experience it for yourself, you can't understand how inspiring and educative this program truly is. Living in Jerusalem for a month allowed me to immerse myself into Israeli society while improving my skills in the Hebrew language with practical learning. Having grandparents who are Israeli, especially a Sabarit Safta, I hold a special connection to the Land of Israel. Having been able to wake up and travel to the Kotel for morning prayers, visiting multicultural centres as well as ancient Jewish sites was uplifting and gave me a rare opportunity that I otherwise would not have on a regular basis. The opportunity to visit the northern city of Peki'in where my great great grandfather planted a tree and built a synagogue that is now 150 years old was life altering and strengthened my connection with the Land and my family heritage. With immense gratitude, this trip, under the fantastic leadership and guidance of Dr. Nikolenyi coupled with his immense knowledge and passion, allowed me to fully appreciate not only my personal connection with the Land but also with the Lands roots in antiquity."

— **Corey Newman**, BA Judaic Studies, Minor Israel Studies

"The summer field school in Israel was an outstanding experience to get to know the Israeli society in depth, from the birth of the State of Israel to the modern most developed country in the Middle East. The course with Professor Nikolenyi helped me to understand Israel beyond what one can see. Israel is to me a sample in itself of mankind in terms of people, religion, culture and politics. We experienced multiculturalism in the land. We travelled to discover different places where modernity and archeology mix to create a unique environment, rich in context and site's views. Israeli people are very creative and push boundaries in all domains. The City of Jerusalem, how can I forget her!! She is the center of all Israel... She stands on her own... a city of wonders, rich in history, beautiful to live in, and full of activities. Shalom Yerushalayim! In a nutshell, one summer class is not enough! But it is a good appetizer to taste the beauty of the land of Israel!"

— **Nathalie Rachael Oum**, PhD, Engineering

"Being able to see Israel in an academic setting allowed me to learn a lot of the subtleties of this country that weren't apparent to me. Instead of rehearsing the same stories I've heard my whole life, I was able to take a new critical angle on a place I already felt familiar with. Highlights for me were the ruins of Qumran, the historic Jewish community of Peki'in, and the quiet community of Sde Boker. These were places I hadn't heard of or thought about, but were full of life and history that came as a pleasant surprise to me. I recommend this trip because it allowed me to see Israel at a new, exciting angle and experience both a fun trip and a deeply stimulating academic environment. In one word, this trip was eye-opening."

— **Laurent Cohen**, BComm Finance

"The opportunity to travel to Israel and partake in this course has changed my life. As an undergraduate student of anthropology and sociology, I have had few chances to conduct field work, especially abroad. I now have lived in Israel and experienced its beauty. I was given a chance not only to learn theoretically, but immerse myself in Israeli culture, through food, music, theatre, personal narratives, museums, scenic views, participation and observation. I would recommend this life changing course to everyone. What an amazing opportunity it was to implement participation observation and live amongst Israelis. This course has taught me how rich in culture Israel is, and the diversity of its people, from religions to ethnicities. Such as, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Bahai to the Jewish diaspora, Bedouin, Armenians and Druze. I also found that many Israelis at least speak three languages or more. My highlight was drinking tea in a Bedouin tent and learning from a personal narrative as to the reality of the Bedouin change in lifestyle and concerns. I also appreciated the opportunity to spin wool for the first time. I was welcomed and embraced by the locals, I made friends and fell in love with Israel. I did not want to leave, and I will certainly return."

— **Alicia Maxwell**, BA Specialization Anthropology and Sociology

"My favourite memories of the trip are of conversations with members of the Knesset, women from the Bedouin community, and residents of Kibbutz Hatzerim. Being able to apply experiences from the field trips to discussions in class was truly invaluable. The summer in Israel program is one that I will never forget!"

- **Margaret Webb**, BA Human Environment, Minor Environmental Sustainability





**FACULTY OF
ARTS AND SCIENCE**

Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies

For more information about this program,
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