



Seminars in Israel Information Packet

We organize day, weekend, and week-long seminars. We will build a schedule that best fits your interests, incorporating many of our sessions and seminars. You will be joined by an amazing team of educators & guides, go out for fascinating site visits and hear from expert speakers.

Jerusalem as a Case Study of the Conflict

Is the collective security of one people more important than the collective rights of another? This dilemma, and many others, will be addressed in this seminar, where you will go on a geopolitical tour of the seam line in Jerusalem, hear from Israeli Zionist and Palestinian Arab speakers, and learn with experienced educators to debate, discuss and help students come to their own conclusions.

Security Briefing and Tour of the Gaza Border Region

Tour the local area to get an understanding of the challenges of having Hamas right next door. See the humanitarian border crossing and discuss the hardships of life in Gaza. Gain a deeper perspective of the security challenges posed by Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Jaffa as a Case Study of the Conflict

Gain a deeper understanding of the geopolitics of Israel by exploring the Zionist and Palestinian narratives of Jaffa. Take a look at the history of Jaffa in the context of the Arab-Israeli Conflict and meet with local Palestinian and Israeli residents of the area to gain a greater understanding of the divergent nationalistic narratives and how they co-exist and come into tension.

Israeli Government and Diplomacy

Understand Israel's complex governing system. Learn who the main political players are. Hear expert speakers from government and media. Wrestle with Israel's geostrategic dilemmas. Engage the narratives of the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict. Absorb the myths, facts and analysis to cultivate your own opinion on the most pressing political issues facing Israel today.

Religion & State: The Kotel Controversy



Should the Kotel be a synagogue, holy tourist site or national landmark? Who should administer it? What is the current policy of the Israel government? Tour the site, hear first-hand from a Women of the Wall activist and a local Orthodox Jewish woman advocating to keep the Kotel as an “Orthodox Synagogue”.

The City of David: Competing Narratives in a Shared Space

Many claim the contemporary challenges evident in the City of David & Silwan can help us understand the roots of the territorial dispute between the Zionist and Palestinian nationalist movements in the same homeland. While the City of David is an impressive archaeological site showcasing layers of historical artifacts, some dated to the days of King David, the area is also home to thousands of Palestinians living in the neighborhood of Silwan. This seminar will focus on the competing indigenous narratives in this historically contested area of Jerusalem. It will include a guided tour of the City of David by a Jewish tour guide and an encounter with a local Palestinian activist.

About IMPACT:

[IMPACT](#) educates students to negotiate between Israel and their American and Jewish identities by exploring their meanings, conflicts, and points of integration. Through our educational programs, students explore *why Israel* and *why Jewish* are compelling values to embrace in the buffet of options in pursuing a meaningful life. Students will ultimately develop their own identities as they encounter Israel as an idea and value of the long running saga of the Jewish story.

About Benji Davis, IMPACT Director:



Benji Davis, the founder of [IMPACT Israel Education](#), is a Jerusalem-based educator specializing in Israel education. He manages a team of educators that teach Israel education courses for gap year students, gives geopolitical lectures to 60+ Birthright-Israel groups a year, leads seminars, tours and Shabbatons for many visiting groups to Israel and specializes in online Israel education for learners before and after their

Israel experience. Benji grew up in Los Angeles, California, holds a BA in Middle East Studies & History from the George Washington University, an MA in Jewish Education from the Hebrew University and is a doctoral student at the University of Haifa in the Faculty of Education, focusing his research on teacher knowledge of Israel educators of American Jewish teens. He lives in Jerusalem with his wife Rachel and daughters Maia and Ella.

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