Israel/Palestine: Can it ever be solved?

Lecturer: Peter Larson, Ph.D.

Thursdays, March 8th - April 5th (5 weeks)

10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (2.5 hours)

Room 124, Leeds House Building

To most Canadians the Israel/Palestine issue appears unsolvable. And it is difficult to have a calm discussion about it, as emotions are high on all sides. This seminar will examine the Jewish and Palestinian narratives and compare them to the historical record and current reality. We will also look at whether Canada’s current policies are likely to help bring about a resolution.

1. Thursday, March 8th - Introductions
   - Expectations of participants
   - Understanding the two narratives (Israeli and Palestinian)
   - Basic geography and terminology

2. Thursday, March 15 - Palestinians and Israelis: who are they and what do they want?
   - Palestinian history/demography/current issues
   - Modern Israel: demography and politics
   - Why is there a fight over Jerusalem?

3. Thursday, March 22 - The history of anti-Semitism in Western Europe, Zionism and the creation of the State of Israel
   - How a thousand years of persecution of Jews, particularly by European Christians, culminated in the ideology of Zionism, the Holocaust and led to the creation of Israel.

4. Thursday, Mar 29 - The occupation, the Palestinian refugees and resistance
   - 70 years ago about ¾ million Palestinians fled what became Israel. But today, according to the UN there are now over 5 million Palestinian refugees. How can this be? What can be done about it? What is the “right of return”? Is it feasible?

5. Thursday, April 5 - Conclusion/discussion
   - Will a 2 state solution solve the issue?
   - If so, why can’t they just agree and get on with it?
   - Canada’s role
   - If not, is there any solution? What would it look like? Could it happen?