

Politics in Modern and Contemporary Iran

POL 443Y1 (Y)

Tuesday 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will provide students with an opportunity to explore politics in modern and contemporary Iran, as well as to address open questions in the relationship between the state and civil society, causes of regime change during the Pahlavi era and the rise of Islamic theocracy in Iran. The course has three interrelated goals: 1) making students familiar with the basic aspects of modern Iranian history, 2) providing them with analytical tools and knowledge for an in-depth understanding of the contemporary politics in Iran, and 3) generating theoretical insight into the question of how modern politics have been perceived and practiced in Iran from the late nineteenth century to the present. Students will learn about Iran's encounter with modernity, Iranian intellectual trends, the causes and consequences of the 1979 revolution, and the nature of the post-revolutionary political system.

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to attend all class meetings. They will be held responsible for all the material covered in readings and lectures. To ensure class participation and to spread out the work a bit, each student is required to make one oral presentation in class concerning one of the topics listed in the syllabus in which they are interested. **Preparation, attendance and participation:** In addition to the lectures, we will devote time in class to a discussion of the reading materials. Students should therefore plan to keep up with weekly reading assignments. Students are expected to attend class regularly, having done the assigned readings, and to contribute to class discussions.

Research Paper:

Students are required to write one term research paper **due on December 6, 2011**. No late papers will be accepted. The due date is a deadline.

The paper must have a cover page and bibliography, which should consist of scholarly publications.

Each student is expected to write a 15 to 20 page (typed, and double-spaced) research paper on one of the following Iran related topics: Assembly of Religious Experts; Bureaucracy; Cabinet; Class situation (income distribution, inequality); Clerical Establishment; Civil liberties, rights and freedoms; Constitution; Corruption; Cultural life; Economic Performance (employment, inflation, monetary policy, privatization); Educational system; Elections; Electoral system; Environmental issues; Ethnicity; Exile Community; Expediency Council; Foreign Policy; Guardian Council; Intelligence Community and secret police; Interest groups; Legal System and Judiciary; Media; Non-Governmental Organizations; Opposition forces; Legislative Branch; Political Culture; Political elite; Political parties; Political participation (forms/modes/trends); Population and migration policy; Presidency; Social cleavages; Social movements; Social welfare policies (pension, poverty, education); Sources of political legitimacy; Supreme Leader; Theocracy; Youth; Women and Gender issues.

Presentations will be based on topics chosen by students and discussed with the instructor. No presentations on the days of film screenings.

Response Papers: Three films on Iranian politics will be screened in class as preparation for response papers. **Response papers are supposed to be handed in on March 27, 2012**. Everyone must screen films critically and carefully. You are responsible for writing **one response paper (minimum 5 pages**, double-spaced) discussing and analyzing the historical contents in films screened.

Grading Criteria:

Response Papers	10%
Oral Presentation	20%
Research Paper	30%
Final Exam	40%

Required Readings:

Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (Yale University Press, 2006).

Jahanbegloo, Ramin, *Iran: Between Tradition and Modernity*, (Lexington Press, 2004)

Suggested Readings:

- 1) Edmund Bosworth and Carole Hillenbrand (eds.), *Qajar Iran: Political, Social and Cultural Change 1800-1925* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1983)
- 2) Elie Kedourie and Sylvia Haim (eds.) *Towards A Modern Iran: Studies in Thought, Politics and Society*, (London: Frank Cass.1980)
- 3) Stephanie Cronin (ed.), *The Making of Modern Iran: State and Society under Reza Shah, 1921-1941* (London: Routledge, 2003)
- 4) George Lenzowski (ed.), *Iran Under the Pahlevis* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1978)

- 5) John L. Esposito and R. K. Ramazani (eds.), *Iran at the Crossroads* (New York: Palgrave, 2001)
- 6) Said Amir Arjomand, "Shi'ite Jurisprudence and Constitution Making in the Islamic Republic of Iran." , in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (eds.), *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economies and Militancy*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 88-109.
- 7) H.E. Chehabi, "The Impossible Republic: Contradictions of Iran's Islamic State," *Contention: Debates in Society, Culture, and Science*, vol. 5, no. 3 (Spring 1996):

Course expectations and description:

As an instructor, I have a responsibility to come to class prepared, to be accessible when you have questions, to provide you with feedback on your performance, and to help you discover the Iranian politics. This is a two-way street, however. For the course to be successful, you need to come to class having read some materials and with an open mind to consider a diversity of perspectives. Students are expected to read the assigned material in advance. I will start each lecture with a 45-minute discussion of the topic. This will be followed by a general class discussion. All students are strongly encouraged to participate in the discussion based on the reading materials available a week before the lecture. The method of instruction will be directed lecture and discussion, interspersed with occasional films. The title of the documentaries will be announced later.