



**EAST TEXAS A&M**  
UNIVERSITY

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**  
**PSCI 438**  
**SPRING 2025**

**Dr. Ozum Yesiltas**  
**Ferguson Social Sciences**  
[Ozum.Yesiltas@tamuc.edu](mailto:Ozum.Yesiltas@tamuc.edu)

**Office Hours: M-W 8 am-9 am**  
**12 pm-1 pm**  
**and by appointment**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is a general survey of foreign relations of Iran across the 20<sup>th</sup> century with a special emphasis placed on US-Iran-Israel relations. It will cover a diverse array of issue areas where the Islamic Republic has taken center stage over the past 45 years. These include, among many others, the rise of Political Islam in Iran in the aftermath of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the impact of Iran's internal political struggles on its foreign policy towards U.S. and Israel, the contentious politics around Iran's nuclear program, and Iran's mastery of asymmetric military strategy through the use of non-state proxies.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Familiarize students with modern Iranian politics, its political cultures and its peoples;
- Provide students with necessary conceptual background to discuss domestic and foreign policy of Iran;
- Encourage students to form their own research agendas on post-revolutionary Iran as well as US-Iran-Israel relations;
- Develop students' critical, analytical, and oral skills in discussing Middle East politics.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

- Trita Parsi. 2008. *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States*. Yale University Press.
- Trita Parsi. 2017. *Losing an Enemy: Obama, Iran, and the Triumph of Diplomacy*. Yale University Press.
- Ray Takeyh. 2009. *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of Ayatollahs*. Oxford University Press.
- Other required readings will be available on D2L.

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## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Attendance & Participation:** Attendance is mandatory. The course is designed as a seminar where all participants share responsibility for the success of each individual session. Therefore, you will not only hurt your participation grade, but also miss a great deal by not coming to class. If you're found absent more than 3 times without an excuse, your final grade will automatically drop by "5 points" (e.g., if you earned 82 out of 100 in the end of the semester, your final grade will drop to 77). An outline of the readings is provided in the syllabus and also available on D2L. Before each class I will post focus questions on D2L for our in-class discussions. You are required to come to class prepared to answer the questions posted and discuss the assigned materials.

**Short Presentations:** Student will rotate giving 15-20-minute presentations on the reading assignments for each class. One or two students will introduce us to the reading material in the beginning of each session. These presentations need to be thoughtful remarks about the material and should highlight critical aspects of the readings and raise informed questions to set the stage for productive discussion for the rest of the session.

**Bi-weekly Reaction Papers:** Throughout the course, you will write a total of 6 bi-weekly reaction papers. These papers are expected to be approximately 1000 words in length. The deadline for submitting each reaction paper can be found on the course schedule. Reaction papers are not a summary of the readings. Every two weeks, I will post a critical question on D2L for this assignment. Your reaction paper is expected to address this question based on the reading material.

**Critical Media Analysis:** *How does Iran think of the United States?*

In order to complete this assignment, you will need to identify an Iranian newspaper that has an online English edition. You are required to keep a track of news items, editorials, or Op-Eds that examine or provide commentary on the United States in this Iranian news outlet. Throughout the semester, you will submit 5 critical media entries and one final media analysis.

Each critical media entry is expected to be approximately 1000 words in length. The final analysis is expected to be approximately 1500 words in length. The deadlines can be found on the course schedule. A detailed guidelines and grading rubric for this assignment will be available on D2L.

**Final Research Project:** Students are required to develop a policy proposal to address an issue regarding US-Iran-Israel relations for their final research papers. This is a semester-long project which should not be left to last few weeks of classes. There will be a preliminary in-class discussion regarding this assignment in Week 8 during which students will briefly discuss their tentative research topics and receive feedback. Final research projects are expected to be 7-10 pages in length. A detailed guidelines and grading rubric for this assignment will be available on D2L. Students will make presentations about their projects during the last week of classes.

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## GRADING

Course Requirements	Weight
Attendance & Participation	15%
Presentations	10%
Bi-weekly Reaction Papers	30% (5% each)
Critical Media Analysis	25% (3% each entry; 10% final analysis)
Final Research Project	20%
Total	100%

## GRADE SCALE

90-100 = A
80-90 = B
70-80 = C
60-70 = D
Below 60 =F

## MAKE-UP POLICY

Make-ups are allowed under special circumstances such as medical or family emergencies. You are required to request your make-up prior to the deadline. Documentary proof for your request might be required based on the circumstances. Post-deadline late extension requests will not be granted. Post-deadline submission of assignments without an excuse will lead to loss of points.

## CIVILITY AND RESPECT

All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. I expect everyone to be respectful of each other's perspectives and opinions during class discussions. Any behavior that disrupts the class or impedes other students' ability to fully engage with the course will not be tolerated.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student is required to be responsible for purposefully pursuing and honestly submitting research and work that is original and is the sole work of the individual. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism occurs when a student purposefully or unintentionally takes information directly from a source without proper citation. If you are unclear about the ethics of an academic action, please consult with me during my office hours.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

East Texas A&M will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

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## DISABILITY STATEMENT

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services East Texas A&M University Gee Library Room 132 Phone [\(903\) 886-5150](tel:9038865150) or [\(903\) 886-5835](tel:9038865835) Fax [\(903\) 468-8148](tel:9034688148) [StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

**Texas Senate Bill-11** (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at [903-886-5868](tel:9038865868) or 9-1-1.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1

**1/13** Introduction to the course/Overview of the syllabus

**1/15** Understanding Iran

Bernard Lewis. 1999. "Iran in History," Tel Aviv University Lecture.

Nikki Keddie. 1983. "Iranian Revolutions in Comparative Perspective," *The American Historical Review*, 88:3.

**1/17** Popular Nationalism, Mossadeq and the Coup of 1953

Ali Gheissari. 2013. "The US Coup of 1953 in Iran, Sixty Years On," *The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Review*, 44:1.

Ray Takeyh. 2014. "What Really Happened in Iran," *Foreign Affairs*.

### Week 2

**1/20** Introduction to US-Iran-Israel Relations

Parsi Introduction, Takeyh Introduction

**1/22** US-Iran-Israel Relations during the Pahlavi Era

Parsi Ch. 2, 3, 4

**1/24** **1<sup>st</sup> Reaction Paper, Due 11.59 pm**

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### Week 3

- 1/27 US-Iran-Israel Relations during the Pahlavi Era (continued)  
Parsi Ch. 5, 6, 7
- 1/29 Enter the Islamic Revolution  
Takeyh Ch. 1  
Parsi Ch 8, 9
- 1/31 **Critical Media Entry 1, Due 11.59 pm**

### Week 4

- 2/3 Islamic Revolution (continued)  
Takeyh Ch. 2, 3
- 2/5 Iran-Iraq War  
Takeyh Ch. 4, Parsi Ch.10
- 2/7 **2<sup>nd</sup> Reaction Paper, Due 11.59 pm**

### Week 5

- 2/10 Iran-Iraq War (continued)  
Parsi Ch. 11, 12
- 2/12 US-Iran Relations in the Post-Khomeini Era  
Takeyh Ch. 5, 6
- 2/14 **Critical Media Entry 2, Due 11.59 pm**

### Week 6

- 2/17 US-Iran Relations in the Post-Khomeini Era (continued)  
Parsi Ch. 13, 14
- 2/19 US-Iran Relations in the Post-Khomeini Era (Continued)  
Takeyh Ch. 7, Parsi Ch. 15, 16
- 2/21 **3<sup>rd</sup> Reaction Paper, Due 11.59 pm**

### Week 7

- 2/24 The Reform Movement  
Takeyh Ch. 8, Parsi Ch. 17
- 2/26 US-Iran Relations After 9/11  
Takeyh Ch. 9, Parsi Ch. 18, 19
- 2/28 **Critical Media Entry 3, Due 11.59 pm**

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## Week 8

- 3/3 The Rise of the New Right and Ahmadinejad Era  
Takeyh Ch. 10, 11
- 3/5 **Preliminary Research Discussions**
- 3/7 **4th Reaction Paper, Due 11.59 pm**

## Week 9

**Spring Break – No Class**

## Week 10

- 3/17 Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 1, 2
- 3/19 Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 3, 4
- 3/21 **Critical Media Entry 4, Due 11.59 pm**

## Week 11

- 3/24 Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 5, 6
- 3/26 Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 7
- 3/28 **5<sup>th</sup> Reaction Paper, Due: 11.55 pm**

## Week 12

- 3/31 Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 8, 9
- 4/2 Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 10
- 4/4 **Critical Media Entry 5, Due 11.59 pm**

## Week 13

- 4/7 Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 11
- 4/9 Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 12
- 4/11 **6<sup>th</sup> Reaction Paper, Due: 11.59 pm**

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#### **Week 14**

- 4/14** Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 13, 14
- 4/16** Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 15
- 4/18** **Final Critical Media Analysis, Due 11.59 pm**

#### **Week 15**

- 4/21** Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy  
Losing an Enemy Ch. 16, Conclusion
- 4/23** The Nuclear Deal: One Year In  
Trita Parsi. 2016. "The Iran Deal Worked," *Foreign Affairs*.  
Raymond Tanter. 2016. "The Iran Deal, One Year In," *Foreign Policy*  
Ray Takeyh. 2016. "Scrap the Iran Nuclear Deal," *National Review*

#### **Week 16**

- 4/28** **Final Presentations**
- 4/30** **Final Presentations**
- 5/2** **Final Presentations**

#### **Week 17**

##### **Finals week**

**Final Research Papers Due May 8, 11.59 pm**

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