Iran and Regional Politics
Spring Semester 2020
Time/Day TBD
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Overview
This course will evaluate the current relations between Iran and the region, while exploring questions of identity, resources, interests and strategy. The Islamic Republic's geo-strategic aims as they developed over the past thirty five years reflect the complexity of the Iranian identity that incorporates nationalism, Shi'i sectarianism and universal Islamic aspirations. Accordingly, the importance of the Iranian nuclear project is linked to the country's revolutionary agenda but also its desire for regional hegemony. The nuclear negotiations with the five world powers demonstrate the dynamism of this regime and the centrality of Iran in an unstable region. The aim of this course is to understand the unique elements of the Iranian model, but also the potential for flexibility and change, in order to assess Iran's regional policy. Iran will also serve as case-study to discuss regime stability under authoritarian countries and the place of rationalism and irrationalism in decision-making in these regimes, in both the national and geo-strategic levels.

Topics and Reading material:

1. Iranian nationalism and the Islamic Revolution
Samih Farsoun and Mehrdad Mashayekhi (eds.), Iran: Political Culture in the Islamic Republic (Routledge, 2005), 1-29.

2. Political Authority:
3. **Foreign policy and Rohani’s presidency:**


4. **Regime Stability:**


5. **Iran and the Arab Spring:**

Elisheva Machlis, “Iran’s Spin on the Arab Spring”, *Iran Pulse* 46 (Nov 13, 2011).


6. **The Nuclear Issue:**


7. **Competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia:**

Shahram Chubin and Charles Trip, “Iran-Saudi Arabia Relations and Regional Order”, *Adelphi Series*, (June 8, 2005).


8. **The Pragmatism of the Gulf Countries:**


9. **Iran and Turkey:**

10. Revolutionary Guards-Hizbullah-Syria Axis:


11. The Question of Resources:
Suzanne Maloney, "The Revolutionary Economy", *The Iran Primer*

12. The Threat of the Jihad Movement:


**Evaluation:**

Attendance and participation – 10%

Midterm exam – 20% (20 Nov.)

Final exam – 70% (five days after the end of term)

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**TAU International Course Guidelines**

**Rules and Respectful Behavior**
- No cell phones or laptops permitted in class unless approved by instructor for use
- Tardiness to class is not permitted
- As our courses bring together students from many different styles of learning and from a wide variety of home institutions, we ask that students remain respectful to and patient with fellow classmates at all time as some students may be more familiar with certain course material or procedures than others.

**Learning Accommodations**
In accordance to University guidelines, students with learning disabilities or accommodation requests must submit official documentation from their home country / university (translated into English by notary if not already in English) to TAU International (tauiacademic@tauex.tau.ac.il) in advance of arrival describing in detail any specific needs they have. Students must also bring a copy of this documentation with them on-site and give it to their faculty on the first day of class while introducing themselves so that the faculty know who they are and what sorts of needs they may have. TAU International and its faculty cannot guarantee that all accommodations received at the home school can be similarly met at TAU but certainly does the best it can to make any suitable accommodations possible that are needed.

**In-class Exams**
TAU does not permit, under any circumstances, taking any in-class (including mid or final) exams early or later than the scheduled exam day. When selecting courses, it is thus very important to note below if there is an in-class midterm or final exam as this date/exam cannot be changed. Early departures from the program are not approved, nor are early or exception in-class exams.

**TAU International Absence Policy**
Attendance is **mandatory** in all of the courses. Missing classes will be reflected in the final grade of the course. Up to three justified absences from classes will be accepted (for example: emergency matter or illness, both of which will require an official doctor's note sent to the faculty on the day of the absence). Such cases of absence should be reported to your lecturer immediately and again, a doctor’s note is required. Students are required to arrive on time for classes. Teachers are entitled to treat any single case of lateness and/or repeated lateness as an unjustified absence. Please note that according to TAU Academic Policy, if a student's behavior or attendance during the semester is disagreeable his/her course participation may be cancelled at the discretion of TAU.

**Students are responsible for reading and adhering to the policies and procedures in the TAU International Academic Handbook posted here at all times.**