inr6228 (Dr. Sadri)

International Politics of the Caspian Sea Region

Syllabus Fall 2018

Seminar Description & Objectives

The main goal of this graduate seminar is to examine the international politics of the Caspian Sea states, which recently play a significant role in both regional and global politics. Another objective of this seminar is to promote a comprehensive understanding of international economy, law, politics, and security issues of this vital region in the 21st Century. This geographic region has been significant for American foreign policy since the demise of the USSR in 1990. In the post-9/11 period, the Caspian region is even more important in terms of terrorism growth, global economy, and politics of energy.

Format

Each seminar session is divided into two parts. The first part of the class will be a discussion of the reading material led by a few seminar participants. Everybody in the seminar will receive plenty of opportunities to speak and the instructor will facilitate the discussion and highlight the main points.

During the second part, we will focus on the current issues of the Caspian Sea region associated with political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of their states. These topics will be most likely related to each of the seminar participant's research interests. As necessary, we will utilize audiovisual resources to further our understanding of the material. All seminar participants are expected to participate in these discussions.

Teaching Philosophy

Education is a tool for improving the quality of life. Education is not an end in itself but a process. My teaching philosophy is to encourage critical thinking, innovative problem-solving, practical application of theory, and tolerance of diverse ideas and cultures from an international perspective. To achieve these goals, I employ an interactive teaching style, which empowers students by encouraging them to contribute to the ongoing discussion of both familiar and unfamiliar topics and materials. My teaching goals are both to share my academic knowledge & experience with my students and to inspire and help them to become life-long learners.

General Policies

In accordance with UCF's rules and regulations, the instructor will pursue the following general policies:

1. The instructor reserves all rights to modify the syllabus, course schedule, and/or the course.
2. Respecting students' privacy, the instructor provides student's record only to the student himself/herself on a one-to-one basis either on-line, on phone, or face-to-face. He will not discuss one student's case in front of other students in the public discussion forums. Thus, students must directly e-mail the instructor, if they have such private questions.
3. The instructor encourages and welcomes questions and comments from all students, but he will not allow any particular student to dominate the class discussion or intimidate other students.
4. Since our course materials are on-line, all students MUST check their e-mails and all our course web forums at least once a day for new class announcements, news, and updates.
5. Without any exception, all written (gradable) assignments must be submitted to Webcourses as Microsoft Word in single-spaced format, black color font, New Times Roman font, and 10-point font size. You are responsible for grammar and spell checking your own work.
6. If you do not receive a reply from the instructor 48-hours after you e-mailed him that means that he has not received your message. Please re-send your message, and make sure that you use his correct e-mail address.
7. Students should regularly check our Website mailbox/announcements and avoid submitting assignments to WebCourses at the last minute. The Canvas clock may be different from your own time, and that may lead students to miss a deadline. Late assignments are considered missed.
8. Any grade (or score) dispute or participation discrepancy must be resolved within a week from the day (and time) when scores are posted or the discrepancy occurred. No late appeals will be considered.

Course Requirements & Grading System

Your final grade is based on a point system. I will not put letter grades on your assignments in order to avoid misleading interpretations of your final grade. Thus, the student that is not doing well with a particular seminar requirement can still earn enough points to get a desirable final grade. There will also be an opportunity during the semester to earn up to 5 extra credit points toward the final grade.

Annotated Bibliography (AB)	10 points
Weekly On-Line Discussion	20 points
Attendance & In-Class Discussion	10 points
Leading Seminar Discussion	10 points
Paper Research Proposal	10 points
Country/Issue Research Paper	30 points
Country Research Presentation	10 points
TOTAL	**100 points**
Extra Credit	5 points

Since the grading is based on a point system, at any time during the term you can add your earned points together to recognize your projected grade. Please feel free to contact the instructor if you have any questions.

The instructor will use the plus and minus grading system which allows for a more accurate and fair evaluation of seminar participant performance. The range for each grade is indicated in the table that follows.

Letter Grade	Points
A	93 – 100 points
A-	90 – 92 points
B+	87 – 89 points
B	83 – 86 points
B-	80 – 82 points
C+	77 – 79 points
C	73 – 76 points
C-	70 – 72 points
D+	67 – 69 points
D	63 – 66 points
D-	60 – 62 points
F	59 and below

Annotated Bibliography (AB)

Following the instructor's guidelines, you must prepare an AB, as the first stage of your research paper. AB is worth 10 points.

The Instructor will provide you with sample AB and more specific instructions during the term.

Attendance & In-Class Discussion

Attendance is expected in graduate seminars. You could make a difference only if you attend our sessions and actively participate in our seminar discussion. Recent educational research indicate that students' learning occurs when they activity participate in the classroom environment. Thus, I reserved 10 points for attendance and in-class discussion to show the value of these tasks. Throughout the term, only one absence is acceptable without any penalty point. Any more absence is penalized accordingly.

Weekly ON-Line Discussion

Beyond in-class face-to-face discussion, our seminar participants are also required to reply to instructor's weekly postings about the reading. All weekly postings are due each Tuesday night (11:59) before our seminar (on Thursday) to provide enough time to all participants to read their peers' inputs. This will serve at least 2 major purposes: 1) there will be a record of each participant's contribution; and 2) the quality of our in-class seminar discussion will improve. Each weekly posting is worth 4 point for a total of 20 points. There will be 10 posting opportunities, but you need to do only 5 of them.

Leading Discussion Session

During the term, each seminar participant is required to lead our discussion based on the readings for each session. In this regard, the discussion leader should prepare a **detailed outline** of the main points (by Tuesday night), **post it** at our website, and reproduce it for seminar participants. The presenter must **summarize the main points** of readings, **discuss the strengths and weaknesses** of the work at hand, and stimulate discussion with questions. The participants may earn up to 10 points for leading the discussion.

(Country) Research Proposal

This seminar focuses on all Caspian Sea region states, which include all states that border the Caspian Sea in addition to those which are located nearby in the Caucuses and Central Asia sub-regions. In the first seminar session, participants will sign up for only one country (regional issue, or regional organization) assignment. The expectation is that each participant will master the political, economic, legal, social, and cultural aspects of his/her country assignment and thus, feel as an expert for that particular country (issue, or organization). This type of specialization will provide an opportunity for participants to learn a great deal about their country (issue or organization) of choice, and it enrich seminar discussions, as we can rely on the expertise of participants for their assignment.

All participants must submit a proposal (outlining their country research project) to gain the instructor's approval for their project. **The proposal should directly address the following 5 questions**:

What is your thesis (or main argument)?

- What is the significance of your topic?
- What does the literature say about your topic?
- Which gap in the literature does your work fill?
- What is your research design?

Hint: The Country Research Proposal should be 5 pages (excluding the bibliography) and it is worth 10 points. The proposal should be well-documented with **end-notes** (using the Chicago manual of style) along with an extensive annotated bibliography.

In preparation for the proposal, you **may** consider the following questions: What is the importance of your country? Who are the leaders and what are their policies? What are the main socioeconomic, political-security, and contextual relationship characteristics of this state (issue or organization)? How do you estimate future domestic or foreign developments of this state (issue or organization)? Who are the main experts on this particular state (issue or organization)? What does the current literature say about this state (issue or organization)?

Country Research Paper

All seminar participants are required to write an at least 20-page (single-spaced) country research paper based on the thesis and/or issues they proposed in their Country Research Proposal. This paper has to be the most updated source about the assigned country (issue or organization). It should include not only traditional book, manuscript, and academic articles, but also internet sources and significant web sites. The research paper must be well-documented by a minimum of 100 end-notes (Chicago style) and include a comprehensive bibliography. The above page limits does not include the end-notes, annotated bibliography, and appendices. The Research Paper is worth 30 points and is due without exception on December 6th during the final exam week.

Research Presentation

Participants begin to give brief presentation (in PowerPoint Form) about their progress on their topic assignment based on the schedule.

On the last day of our seminar (Nov 29), seminar participants must upload a complete PowerPoint of their final research presentation to our website. The Research Presentation is worth 10 points.

Extra Credit

The instructor will provide one **optional** 5-point extra credit, which is due based on our seminar deadline schedule. If you are interested in the extra credit points, please ask the instructor about such an opportunity.

Late Policy

All assignments are due as indicated by the seminar schedule. The instructor encourages all participants to submit the assignments before or by the deadline considering our tight schedule and the extensive amount of work that we cover in this seminar. The deadlines are chosen to provide sufficient time for the instructor to give each seminar participant valuable comments and suggestions in order to improve their research and writing skills. Late assignments will be penalized 3 point for each day passed their deadlines.

Text (s)

We have no required textbook for our seminar: We will use only academic and scientific article in our seminar each week. However, the participants are strongly encouraged to read some of the books of the known scholars in the field. You are not expected to buy these books, but to borrow them from the library.

Some of such sources are:

Ali M. Ansari, ***Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy the Next Great Crisis in the Middle East***, Basic Books, NY, 2006. ISBN: 0465003516

Bulent Aras, ***The New Geopolitics of Eurasia and Turkey's Position***, Routledge, 1st ed, 2001; Frank Cass Publishers, 2002. **ISBN**: 0714681229

Gennady Chufrin***, The Security of the Caspian Sea Region,*** A SIPRI Publication (2002). **ISBN:** 0199250200

Kathleen Collins, ***Clan Politics and Regime Transition in Central Asia***, Cambridge University Press, 2006. ISBN: 978-0-521-83950-1

Alexander Cooley, ***Great Games, Local Rules,*** Oxford University Press, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-19-992982-5.

Demetrius Charles de Kavanagh Boulger, ***Central Asian Questions. Essays on Afganistan, China, and Central Asia***, Adamant Media Corporation, 2005. ISBN: 140215268X

Emirates Centers Center for Strategic Studies (2000, www.ecssr.ac.ae, ISBN: 0863722784), ***Caspian Energy Resources: Implications for the Arab Gulf States***, Distributor: I. B. Tauris (NY); New Ed edition (2002) ISBN: 1850433836

Bernard A. Gelb & Terry Rayno-Twyman, ***The Caspian Sea Region and Energy Resources,*** Novinka Books, 2003. **ISBN:** 1590337107

Minton F. Goldman, ***Global Studies: Russia, the Eurasian Republics & Central/Eastern Europe,*** **11th Edition,** McGraw Hill, 2007. **ISBN:** 0-07-337989-1

Nicholas Griffin, ***Caucasus: A Journey to the Land between Christianity and Islam***, University Of Chicago Press, 2004. **ISBN:** 0226308596

Reuel Hanks, ***Global Security Watch: Central Asia***. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Publishers. ISBN: 978-0-313-35422-9

Lutz Kleveman***, The New Great Game: Blood and Oil in Central Asia,*** Grove Press, 2003, **ISBN:** 0802141722

Marlene Laruelle, et al. ***China and India in Central Asia: A New Great Game?*** Palgrave MacMillan, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-230-10356-6

Marcus Menzel, ***Doomed to Cooperate: American Foreign Policy in the Caspian Region***, Peter Lang Publishing, 2002. ISBN: 0820460710

Elkhan Nuriyev, ***The South Caucasus at the Crossroads: Conflicts, Caspian Oil and Great Power Conflicts,*** Lit Verlag, 2007. ISBN: 382586216X

Martha Brill Olcott***, Central Asia's Second Chance,*** Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005; The Brookings Institution Press, Washington (DC). **ISBN:** 0870032178

Ahmed Rashid***, Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central A*****sia,** Yale University Press; Reprint edition (2002) & Penguin Books, 2003**. ISBN:** 0142002607

Boris Z. Rumer***, Central Asia: A Gathering Storm?,*** M.E. Sharpe, NY (2002). **ISBN:** 0765608669

Houman Sadri. ***Global Security Watch: The Caucasus States***. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Publishers. ISBN: 978-0-313-37980-2

Birgit N. Schlyter***, Prospects for Democracy in Central Asia,*** I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd. London, (UK), 2005. **ISBN:** 9186884166

Ray Takeyh, ***Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic***, Henry Holt Paperbacks, NY; Reprint ed., 2006. ISBN: 0805086617

Additional materials may be available at UCF Library e-reserve. You may access them via the UCF WebLUIS.

Rules of Conduct

One of the University of Central Florida's most enduring academic traditions is its Rules of Conduct code. The instructor will carefully follow the code and expects all students to do the same. As The Golden Rule handbook clearly states, failure to comply with university rules may subject violator(s) to appropriate action by university authorities and/or appropriate civil authorities. Serious violations of university rules will be recorded in the record of the student(s).

UCF Disability Statement

The university if Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center, Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Seminar Schedule & Assignments

Fall 2018

Date	Topic	Reading & Assignments
8/20	UCF Semester Begins	UCF Fall Term officially begins
WEEK 1 8/23	***Module Zero:*** ***ORIENTATION & Research Methodology***	**Read:** ·Instructor's Welcome & Orientation Posting ·Syllabus, Seminar Schedule, & All Instructor's Postings on All Forums in Discussion Section **Assignments:** ·Background ·In-Class Lecture & Discussion

WEEK 2 8/30	***Module One:*** ***Introduction***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline -Due Date for **Research Topic Choice** ·In-Class Lecture & Discussion
WEEK 3 9/6	***Module Two:*** ***Caspian Region Geography& Sub-regions***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline -Due Date for **Flowchart** & **Outline** (Post it) ·In-Class Lecture & Discussion
WEEK 4 9/13	***Module Three*** ***Economic Development***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline ·In-Class Lecture & Discussion

WEEK 5 9/20	***Module Four:*** ***Political Development***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline -Due Date for **Annotated Bibliography** -In-Class Lecture & Discussion
WEEK 6 9/28	***Module Five:*** ***Political Islam***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline -In-Class Lecture & Discussion

WEEK 7 10/4	***Module Six:*** ***Security Threats: New & old***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline -Due Date for **Chronology (**post it**)** -In-Class Lecture & Discussion
WEEK 8 10/11	***Module Seven:*** ***Foreign Policy*** ***INITIAL RESEARCH*** ***PROPOSAL***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline -In-Class Lecture & Discussion

WEEK 9 10/18	***Module Eight:*** ***Future Prospects***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline **-Due Date for the Revised Flowchart & Outline** -In-Class Lecture & Discussion
WEEK 10 10/25	***Module Nine:*** ***RESEARCH DESIGN***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline **-Due Date for Proposals** -In-Class Lecture & Discussion

WEEK 11 11/1	***Module Ten:*** ***INITIAL RESEARCH*** ***REPORT-Part 1***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline **-Due Date for Group 1 Research Report** -In-Class Lecture & Discussion

WEEK 12 11/8	***Module Eleven:*** ***INITIAL RESEARCH*** ***REPORT-Part 2***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline **-Due Date for Group 2 Research Report** -In-Class Lecture & Discussion

WEEK 13 11/15	***Module Twelve:*** ***INITIAL RESEARCH*** ***REPORT-Part 3***	**Assignments:** -Complete All Module Readings before Tuesday Night Posting Deadline **-Due Date for Group 3 Research Report** -In-Class Lecture & Discussion
WEEK 14 11/22	**Thanksgiving Holiday**	**No Class during Thanksgiving Holiday**
WEEK 15 11/29	***Module Thirteen*:** **Library Research Day**	**No Class: Library Research Day Research Presentation PowerPoint Due Date**

WEEK 16 12/6	***Module Fourteen:*** ***FINAL Exam Week***	**No Class During Final Exam Week** **Upload you Final Research Paper into our Course Website** (by 11:59pm) **Due Date for OPTIONAL Extra Credit**