COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course examines the modern Iran through film and literature. By reading from literature and viewing films we will examine the intellectual life of Iran and become acquainted with changes that were brought to the country by the 1979 Islamic Revolution. You will have an opportunity to move beyond the stereotypical images portrayed by our conventional media and grasp a more realistic picture of contemporary Iran by exploring the art, philosophy, politics, culture, and in short everyday life in Iran.

COURSE GOALS, CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A: GOALS
1. To acquaint you with the art, literature, philosophy, politics, and other aspects of Iranian life that is not usually covered by our conventional media.
2. To encourage you to compare and contrast your own understanding of issues such as gender, family, work, and social responsibility with those of Middle Easterners.
3. To improve your overall understanding of culture and its diversities throughout the world.

B: TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY
Americans' understanding of the Middle Eastern peoples and cultures is often derived from stereotypical images perpetuated by the American popular media. The American media often clusters peoples of the Muslim Middle East as Arabs; and the TV or movie screens are where many Americans meet their Muslim Middle Easterners. Middle Easterners presented by the screen in the word of Laurence Michalek (The Arab in American Cinema: A Century of the Otherness, 1988) is "the quintessential other-fundamentally different from us, both fascinating and repugnant, enacting the taboos of our society. Brought to life on the screen from our collective imagination, the Arab does terrible deeds and receives appropriate terrible punishments". Images such as these coming from Hollywood movies or TV programs (e.g. cartoons, comedy shows, mini-series, and world news) are powerful in shaping our world views and when repeated over time they become an impediment to better communication in interpersonal as well intercultural level. There is no doubt that intercultural understanding and communication is the key to peaceful coexistence on the global level, and our colleges and universities are the most suitable places that can promote this understanding. This course views the Iranian peoples and cultures through the Iranian eyes and serves as an effective instrument to examine the diversity of lives and opinions in Iran and reevaluate our knowledge of Iran and the Middle East.
REQUIRED BOOKS


RECOMMENDED BOOKS


1. ACCESS TO COMPUTER WITH INTERNET CONNECTIONS
   To take this course you will need to have access to a computer with Internet connections, which can allow you to connect to our class D2L site.

2. AVAILABILITY OF READINGS, FILMS, AND DOCUMENTARIES
   Textbooks for the course are available through PSU bookstore. The assigned documentaries and films are available through our class site. Documentaries are available through links to Internet
free sites. Most of the assigned motion pictures are also available through our PSU library for in-library use checkouts.

3. MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS
You are expected to do the assigned readings and view the assigned films and documentaries before their given deadlines. Your comprehension of reading materials and films and documentaries will be tested through five critical thinking essays and a final term paper. Due dates for assignments are given below under Weekly Readings and Learning Activities. Late assignments will not be accepted.

A. BIWEEKLY CRITICAL THINKING ESSAYS: to better understand the issues as discussed by your required texts and assigned films and documentaries you will write five critical-thinking essays throughout the term and respond to other students' essays. Your essays in reality are short papers based on the assigned films/documentaries, required readings, and your own independent research. Your essays will account for 150 points of your total 200 points for the course. Each essay will worth 30 points (20 points for your own posted essay and the remaining 10 points for responding to at least two other essays posted by your fellow students.) Essays should be at least 1000 words long and have to be submitted before the assigned deadlines. Your essays should be written clearly using correct grammar and spelling, and display your comprehension of concepts covered by your required readings and assigned films and documentaries, which are related to your essay. In addition to your required readings and films, you need to use at least two outside academic sources (articles from academic journals, academic Internet sites, academic book chapters, etc.) You need to cite the information for your outside sources (i.e. author, year of publication, article name, journal/book name, Internet site address, etc.) at bottom of your posted essay. Failing to properly cite your sources will result in point deductions from your assignments. You need to post your essays on our Discussion Board under the assigned number. I recommend the APA writing format. Below, you can see the grading criteria for our Critical Thinking Essays.

You need to preview your essays for clarity before posting them for others to see. There should be one space between your consequent paragraphs. For example for posting your Critical Thinking Essay:

1. Click on "Discussions" (at the top of the page);
2. Scroll down and click on "Critical Thinking Essay Question # 1." Read the given questions carefully and select the one you like;
3. Click on "Compose." On the "Subject" box and write your name, the name that you want to pick for your essay or simply type CTE 1 (make sure your name is always included in the subject box);
4. In the "Message" box type your essay or copy and paste it from another program that you might have used to write your essay;
5. Click on "Preview" (the small icon on the lower left of message box) to see if your essay is readable and there is one space between your consequent paragraphs. Also check for possible spelling and grammatical errors. Finally make sure you have cited your references correctly.
according to the rules indicated above;
6. Click on "Post" (on the lower right corner of the page) when you are happy with your essay;
7. After posting your essay go back to the Discussion page and make sure your essay has been posted properly.

Note: Do not post your essay as an attachment; **Attachments are not visible in D2L grading section so I will not accept essays as attachments.** You can type your essay using a Word, Work or another program and copy and paste it to our Discussion Board. This way you can make sure your essay is spell-checked and ready to go. Make sure to post your essay before the deadline. **Late essays will not be accepted.**

Comments/Responses
As I indicated above you also need to read the postings by other students and respond (i.e., make comments) to **at least two** other postings for each essay. Your responses/comments should be substantial and express your understanding of issues in hand (It should go beyond simply complementing the person for the essay.) Each of your comments should be at least 100 words. For posting your comments simply click on "Reply" and type your comments. When replying to other students' posts, please start your comments by addressing their names first; this way we avoid unnecessary confusions and will help me with my grading process.

Criteria for Grading Essays and Responses:
1. A minimum of 1000 word critical thinking essay related to the topic of the week, well written and easy to see and read;
2. supporting your arguments with the information from your required texts and films/documentaries seen for the assignment.
3. utilizing at least two outside articles written by known (revealed) authors, published in peer-reviewed journals. Articles from sources such as Wikepodia with no revealed authors will not be accepted as your two required authentic outside sources;
4. Making references to your sources within the body of your essay. This way your readers will know how you have utilized your sources in writing your essay;
5. citing all your sources (including at least two outside sources) at the bottom of your essay clarifying author’s name, publication dates, articles’ names, and the name of journal, book, or web site along with its Internet address respectively;
6. responding to at least two other students’ postings with substantial arguments of about 100 words each; and
7. always previewing your essay before posting for clarity and readability.

**B. FINAL REVIEW ANALYSIS PAPER**
After carefully reading your required readings and reviewing your notes for the films write a review analysis paper (minimum of 2500 words) analyzing the modern Iranian society as you understand. While writing your review essay, in addition to referring to
ideas and views presented by your books and assigned films and documentaries, make an attempt to incorporate your own analysis and understanding of the issues discussed, utilizing your own cultural experience and background.

Your paper should be documented, analytical, and demonstrate an understanding and synthesis of your required readings, class discussions, and films. You need to post your paper on our discussion board under the assigned space before the midnight of December 10. Your paper will account for 50 points of your total 200 points. While writing your paper consider the following items:

1) Consider your classmates as your target audience.
2) Have a clear focus throughout your paper, and avoid being distracted by non-related arguments.
3) Using the recent scholarly literature on the subject (i.e. your books for the course, etc.) support your statements and arguments.
4) Utilize your class materials (i.e., films, readings, and discussions) plus possible outside sources.
5) Chose a proper reference system for the sources that you use throughout your paper. Your list of references should indicate the author(s), year of publication, and the name of the book or journal being used. Your notes can be located at the bottom of the page (footnotes) or together at the end of the paper (endnotes.) Clearly identify the dates and sources for your statistical data.
6) Avoid making errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Proof read your paper carefully, or have a friend to proof read it for you. (Utilize the spelling-check, if you are using computer software.)

4. EVALUATION: there are a total of 200 possible points with 50 points belonging to final review analysis paper and 150 points belonging to five critical thinking essays and discussions. If you have taken this course as pass/no pass, in order to pass the course you need to make the minimum points required for C grade. Grading is based on the following breakdown:

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<td>200-188</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>187-180</td>
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<td>179-174</td>
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<td>173-166</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>165-160</td>
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5. ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES: Critical Thinking essays are due Sundays before midnight.

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<tr>
<td>CTE 1</td>
<td>Jan 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses to CTE 1</td>
<td>Jan 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTE 2</td>
<td>Jan 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response to CTE 2</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
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<td>CTE 3</td>
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<td>Responses to CTE 3</td>
<td>Feb 15</td>
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<td>CTE 4</td>
<td>Feb 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses to CTE 4</td>
<td>March 1</td>
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<td>CTE 5</td>
<td>March 8</td>
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6. WEEKLY READINGS AND ACTIVITIES

WEEK 1 (Jan 5-11)

a. Read your book Iran (Modern World Nations);
b. watch following documentaries: ‘Iran: Seven Faces of a Civilization,’ ‘Rick Steves’ Iran, ‘Raghe’s Inside Iran,’ and the motion picture ‘Bashu: the Little Stranger’;
c. Post your Critical Thinking Essay 1.

WEEKS 2 and 3 (Jan 12-25)

a. Read your book Iranian Cinema: a Political History;
b. Watch the documentary ‘Iran: a Cinematic Revolution,’ and the following motion pictures: ‘Persepolis,’ ‘The Hidden Half,’ and ‘The Lodgers’;
c. Post your comments on at least two other students’ critical thinking 1 essays;
d. Post your Critical Thinking Essay 2.

WEEKS 4 and 5 (Jan 23-Feb 8)

a. Read the first three chapters of The Politics of Iranian Cinema and the first two chapters of A Social History of Iranian Cinema;
b. Watch the following motion pictures: ‘Marriage of the Blessed,’ ‘Crimson Gold,’ ‘Under the Moonlight,’ and ‘The Lizard’;
c. Post your comments on at least two other students’ critical thinking 2 essays;
d. Post your Critical Thinking Essay 3.

WEEKS 6 and 7 (Feb 9-22)

a. Read chapters 4, 5, and 6 of The Politics of Iranian Cinema and the chapter 3 of A Social History of Iranian Cinema;
b. Watch the documentary ‘Divorce: Iranian Style’ and following motion pictures: ‘Two Women,’ ‘The Fifth Reaction,’ ‘Felicity Land’ and ‘Offside’;
c. Post your comments on at least two other students’ critical thinking 3 essays;

WEEKS 8, 9 and 10 (Feb 23-March 15)
b. Watch following motion pictures: ‘Cease Fire,’ ‘Santouri,’ ‘Mom's Guest,’ and 'Color of Paradise';
c. Post your comments on at least two other students’ critical thinking 4 essays;
d. Post your Critical Thinking Essay 5;
e. Post your comments on at least two other students’ critical thinking 5 essays;
f. Post your Final Review Analysis Paper before the midnight of March 16.

7. EXTRA CREDIT OPTION

1. Article Reviews: You can earn up to 20 extra points by reviewing up to 5 articles from peer-reviewed academic journals about Iran. Each review should be at least 750 words. Your reviews should overview and analyze the content of the reviewed articles and express your own views on issues discussed. Each review when done properly would worth 4 points. You can do as many as 5 article reviews for a total of 20 points. You need to post your reviews under Optional Article/Book Reviews on our Discussion Board. I will encourage you to read the reviews posted by your fellow students and comment on their contents. This way we can generate a healthy class discussion with regard to Iran-related topics.

Note: You need to reveal the exact name of the article, name of the author(s), date of publication, and the source (printed or web). You can have the citations either at the top or bottom of the page wherever you prefer. Article reviews without revealing sources will not be graded.

2. Book Reviews: Instead of article reviews you can choose two of your recommended books (listed above in your syllabus) and write reviews about them. For each book you choose write a 2000 word review discussing the main arguments presented by the author(s) and compare and contrast them with your required book. Each review when done properly would worth 10 points. You can review two books for a total of 20 points. You have also a choice of reviewing a combination of books, movies, and articles for a total of 20 points. Please post your reviews under the assigned place using our class web site. The last day to post your optional reviews is March 16.

3. Additional Film Reviews: You can also select one or more of the recommended movies from our site and review them for four points per film. Your optional reviews is March 16

8. YOUR INSTRUCTOR: I would like to welcome you all to my class. I am an Iranian American by ethnicity, and have lived in the US since 1976, three years in Texas and the rest of it in Eugene and Portland. My background is in both science and social science, and I teach both. I have a M.S. in Agricultural Mechanization from Texas A & I (now merged with Texas A & M) University, and M.A. and Ph.D. in geography from the University of Oregon and have taught for PSU for twenty years. I believe that critical thinking is an essential part of education and I will provide my students with plenty of
chances to do just that. My classes are usually interactive and students have plenty of opportunities to discuss their ideas and reading assignments in a comfortable setting. For a more effective teaching, in addition to written material, I often utilize the audio-visual equipment to enhance my students' understanding of issues covered by the course. Among material that I use are some of the PBS educational documentaries. My regional specialty and research area is the Middle East (Southwest Asia and North Africa). I am mainly interested in issues of development in developing countries. Sustainable development, ecology, and spirituality and religion are among my favorite topics. I have written several books and many articles dealing with issues mentioned above.

9. COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES: our communication is mainly through our class site. I am usually available on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but I check my mail once a day. If you have any questions just send me a mail. Usually you'll get a response from me within 48 hours. For non-class related subjects use the Chat Room or Coffee Shop on our discussion board.

10. CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM: any type of cheating and plagiarism will lead to zero point, and if repeated you may fail the course. Your essays and other writings have to be your own words and ideas. Whenever you use other people's ideas you need to give them the due credit and reveal your sources at the bottom of your essay. Any sentence which is borrowed from another writer should be in quotation marks. Please see the following source for ways to avoid accidental/intentional plagiarism: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html)

11. SAFE CAMPUS TRAINING MODULE (Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act)
If you have not done so already, please complete the Safe Campus Module in d2l. The module should take approximately 30 to 40 minutes to complete and contains important information and resources. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources on PSU’s Enrollment Management & Student Affairs: Sexual Prevention & Response website at [http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/](http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/). PSU’s Student Code of Conduct makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are strictly prohibited and offenses are subject to the full realm of sanctions, up to and including suspension and expulsion. If you feel uncomfortable completing the module please send an email to saveact@pdx.edu to request an exemption.