

Syllabus: The US and the Persian Gulf, HIST 450

Spring 2010

Professor: Dr. Kerry E. Irish
Office: Center Street House
Phone: 2672
Office Hours: Hours: T U, 8:00 – 9:00; MW: 9:30-10:00, **and by appointment.**

This course is a reading seminar featuring some of the more important books on US/Iraq and US/ Iran relations. It is intended for above average history majors in their junior or senior years. It is a difficult course. Students will read six works by authorities on these subjects. Once every two weeks we will meet in small groups to discuss the assigned book. **The discussions are graded; no reference to books or notes is allowed.** Students will also turn in a 2 ½-3 page book review at the beginning of the discussion. You are allowed to skip one book review but not the first one. Since what is said in discussion relates directly to what might or should be written in a good review, late reviews are accepted, but can only receive a “C.” **If I believe you have not read the required book, or if you miss class, I will ask you to drop the class. Reading is absolutely mandatory.**

Books in the order of reading:

Stephen Kinzer. *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2003. (228)
ISBN: 978-0-470-18549-0.

Kenneth Pollack. *The Persian Puzzle*. New York: Random House, 2005. (424)
ISBN: 0-8129-7336-4.

Sandra Mackey, *The Reckoning: Iraq and the Legacy of Saddam Hussein*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002. (408)
ISBN:0-393-32428-1.

Bing West, *The Strongest Tribe: War Politics and the Endgame in Iraq*. New York: Random House, 2009. (379)
ISBN: 978-0-8129-7866-7.

Dale Herspring, *Rumsfeld's Wars: The Arrogance of Power*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008. (209)
ISBN: 978-0-7006-1587-2.

David Finkel, *The Good Soldiers*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009. (273)
ISBN: 978-0-374-16573-4.

Course Objectives:

1. Enhance critical thinking and comparative skills in regard to American diplomatic history in both an oral and written medium.
2. Develop skills in writing scholarly book reviews including using the proper technical form.
3. Enhance ability to understand causality and consequences concerning American foreign policy.
4. Learn to find book reviews and use them to aid one's analysis of a book.
5. **Most Importantly: Come to your own conclusion as to what American foreign policy in the Gulf should have been, and should be.**

The proper technical form for a book review cited in a scholarly journal is:

James T. Kirk. Review of *My Heroism on Board the USS Enterprise*, by Theophilus Spock. In *Journal of Federation Studies* 76 (July 2411): 375-377.

Your book reviews should also have an unnumbered title page, 2 1/2-3 pages of text, and a works cited page. The first page of text is page one but it is unnumbered, the second page of text has a page number (2) in the upper right hand corner and so on. The title page has your title, name and box number. Page one begins with the review. Do not repeat title page info on page one.

Grading:

Each discussion participant may earn up to 30 points. Each book review is also worth up to 30 points.

Discussions (6): 180 total possible points

Book Reviews (5): 150

Total 330

92% and above	A
90% to 91.99%	A-
88% to 89.9%	B+
82% to 87.99%	B
80% to 81.99%	B-
78% to 79.99%	C+
72% to 77.99%	C
and so on	

Book order for: **The US and the Persian Gulf**
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17 students, all books required.

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