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The Persian Gulf in Turmoil: The U.S. and Iraq

This course employs a pro-seminar format to introduce students to a range of issues and arguments pertaining to US-Iraqi relations. Topics of emphasis include an introduction to the region, the rise and fall of Saddam Hussein, American interests in the Persian Gulf, and the Persian Gulf wars since 1980.

Readings: Iraq Study Group (partial, online)  
Ernest May, ed., The 9/11 Commission (partial)  
Vali Nasr, The Shia Revolution (partial)  
Thabit A. J. Abdullah, A Short History of Iraq: From 636 to the Present  
John Sabini, Islam Primer, or Malise Ruthven, Islam: A Very Short Introduction.  
Lloyd C. Gardner and Marilyn B. Young, eds., Iraq and the Lessons of Vietnam Or, How Not to Learn from the Past (partial)  
Thomas Ricks, Fiasco: American Adventure in Iraq (partial)  
Melani McAlister, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2005 (last chapter)  
John Keegan, The Iraq War (first five chapters)  
GI Blogs from Iraq (online)  
Peter Hahn, Crisis and Crossfire: The United States and the Middle East since 1945  
Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, The Gulf Conflict: 1990-1991

Background-Long term history of Iraq

The Pre-Ottoman Era and the Rise and Fall of the Ottoman Empire

Islam and the make up of Iraq

Primer on Islam

Iraq's place in the Islamic World

British Mandate

Challenges of Ethnic Make-up of Iraq

Saddam's Rise and Rule-Iraqi experience in the Middle East

Rise of the Ba'athist Party

Saddam

Saddam's Rise and the Iraqi-Israeli Experience and the Iran-Iraq War

American experience in the Middle East

Cold War determinants

Centrality of Oil

Search for a Post Cold War Paradigm

First Gulf War

Legacy of the Vietnam War

Desert Shield/Desert Storm

Immediate Aftermath of Victory—Baghdad too Far, Saddam's survival, Bush's downfall

Inter-War years

The Neocons—"The Containment of Discontent"

Clinton's Foreign Policy—Off-Shore Balancing versus Nation-Building

Rise of Terrorism, State and Non-State

Search for a Post Cold War Paradigm

Second Gulf War

Impact of 9/11 the Afghanistan War

The Search for a Coalition of the Willing (US, UN, and WMD)

Planning for War

Execution of Operation Iraqi Freedom through "Mission Accomplished"

Rise of the Insurgency and the Counter-Insurgency

Challenges to Human Rights and Civil Liberties—Abu Graib, Gitmo, Torture, FISA, and the Patriot Act

Causes and Explanations for the Second Gulf War

9/11, WMDs, and the Doctrine of Preemption

Neocons Vision for a Democratic Middle East  
Oil

Consequences and Lessons of the Second Gulf War

Economic, Social and Political

Reconstructing American Credibility

Resurgence of the Imperial Presidency and the New Credibility Gap

State of the Evidence

Memoirs

Journalistic Accounts

Scholarly—History, Political Science and other disciplines