

IAS 3003 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR SPRING 2026:

IAS 3003 Sec. 001 Elite Politics in Iran, MWF 2-2:50pm, Dr. Abedini

This course examines the domestic and foreign policy of post-revolutionary Iran through the lens of elite politics and conflict. Unlike many modern revolutions, the Iranian Revolution succeeded without a centralized revolutionary organization or party. In its aftermath, elite networks—formed through revolutionary credentials, religious institutions, familial ties, and educational backgrounds—emerged as the core drivers of political power in the Islamic Republic.

The course explores how these elite dynamics have shaped state-building, political competition, and foreign policy in Iran. Particular attention is given to how elite networks extend beyond national borders and play a central role in shaping Iran's relations with non-state actors across the Middle East. Key topics include elite education, factionalism, political socialization, informal institutions, and the role of international constraints—such as war and sanctions—in influencing elite strategies. Students will gain a deeper understanding of contemporary Iranian politics and its integration into regional and global power structures, while engaging broader debates in comparative authoritarianism, post-revolutionary politics, and political development.

IAS 3003 Sec. 002 Great Power Politics, TR 10:30-11:45am, Dr. Graefrath

Are great powers—the most powerful states in the world—doomed to relentlessly compete for security? If so, what causes this grim, dog-eat-dog world? If not, what allows them to foster cooperative relations with one another? This class examines the most important theories addressing these questions and employs them to make sense of current policy issues such as Russian revisionism in Eastern Europe and the rise of China.

IAS 3003 Sec. 003 Persian Literature & Culture, MWF 10:00-10:50am, Mina Rabinsabet

This course offers a comprehensive exploration of Persian culture, examining common beliefs, festivals, religious rituals, cultural norms, and various art forms including music, architecture, and theatre. Students will engage with Persian literature as a rich source for understanding and analyzing these cultural concepts. The course traces the roots and evolution of Persian cultural elements from ancient times to the present day, providing insight into the continuity and transformation of Persian cultural identity. Additionally, we will explore how Iranian identity has transformed across centuries, from the pre-Islamic era to modern-day Iran. The course will also examine the role of women in Iran's literary and cultural history, and how their contributions have both reflected and driven societal change.

IAS 3003 Sec. 004 European Politics, MWF 1:00-1:50pm, Dr. Loren Gatch

This course is an analysis of political developments in Europe, emphasizing state structures, intergovernmental relations, and regional political dynamics. Student will learn about institutions and processes of European politics from a comparative perspective; the significance of the European Union as a regional integration project that impacts the domestic politics of its member countries; analysis of selected policy areas of concern to European countries; the roles individual European countries, and the European Union itself, play in international politics.

IAS 3003 Sec. 005 Technology & Global Politics, MWF 11:00-11:50am, Dr. Abedini

This course explores the political implications of emerging technologies, from social media to artificial intelligence. It examines how digital tools transform political communication, state surveillance, activism, and democratic participation. Students will analyze both the empowering and authoritarian potentials of

technology in diverse global contexts, with special attention to the Middle East. Case studies include protest movements, online censorship, cyber warfare, and the use of AI in governance. The course equips students with theoretical frameworks and empirical tools to critically assess the intersection of technology and political life in the 21st century.