



**ITSS**  
International Team  
For the Study of Security  
Verona

## Summer School Track: Iran

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### Module Description

What's the importance of Iran's role in today's world? How are Iranian domestic and foreign politics shaping the Middle East's internal dynamics? What is happening within Iranian society? How is Iran's foreign policy shaping the regional order? What is being done to solve the water crisis? All these questions will inform the Iran track.

### Aims

This module will help the participants to achieve a clear understanding of the importance of Iran's role in today's world in four stages. The first stage will provide an updated general introduction to Iranian studies. The second and third stages will analyse and examine representations of both internal and external effects of Iranian politics, whilst the fourth stage will discuss current crises that the country is facing. All four stages of this track will be taught in a hybrid model of lectures and interviews to involve the participants in dialogue with some of the most prominent scholars in the field. By the end of this module, participants will achieve a clear understanding of Iran's role in today's world.

### Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, participants will be able to demonstrate the following:

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Main trends in "Iranian Studies"
- Iran's political system
- Iranian dynamics of foreign affairs and negotiations
- Water resources crisis, its importance, cases, and the Iranian situation

Skills (specific to the module):

- Identification and application of water crisis management
- Identification and application of measures regarding Iran's foreign politics
- Identification and differentiation of parameters related to Iranian politics

Transferable/employability skills (through the seminars):

- Critical thinking
- Open dialogue with scholars and other students
- Formation of a dynamic network of "Iranian Studies" for those who are interested
- Measurement of foreign policy application through open source methods

### **Teaching arrangements**

The module is divided into **eight lessons** spread across **four weekends** on Saturday morning and afternoon, equalling **12 hours total**. Teaching sessions will be delivered remotely. Lessons feature **frontal lectures** (1 hour) and **short seminars** (30 minutes). Images, videos, online material, as well as live interviews with world-leading experts, will facilitate interactive and practical lectures. Seminars gravitate around one or two pivotal questions that naturally arise from the underlying themes. **Participants are encouraged to engage**, contribute to scholarly debate, defend their arguments and, ultimately, share potential solutions to concrete problems.

Hence, this is how the module is specifically divided:

### **Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

#### **Lesson #1: “Intro to Iranian Studies”**

Why do Iranian studies matter and what do they focus on? We will provide an introduction to Iran (history, anthropology, geography) and explore the main streams of Iranian Studies, their focus, and ongoing projects. We will connect these themes to Iran’s current situation and explore a variety of core events in the country, including Iranian social movements, the constitutional revolution, the 1979 revolution, and post-revolutionary Iran. In this session, Shahin Modarres (Director of Iran Desk - ITSS Verona) will discuss the importance of “Iranian Studies” and current trends and major projects that are focused on different aspects of contemporary Iranian Studies.

#### **Lesson #2: “Iranian Studies”**

In this session, Prof. Lior Sternfeld (Pennsylvania State University) will offer an overview of the main trends that are being examined in Iranian Studies. In this line, he will discuss the importance of historic analysis of the country and how it can explain current trends.

### **Saturday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

#### **Lesson #3: “The Iranian political system”**

Where lies the true core of power in the state? How did the Islamic political culture affirm itself in the moments just prior to the Revolution? Who rules Iran? What are the ideological factors among Iran’s leadership elite? What place does the Supreme leader of the Revolution hold? In other words, in what ways did the political situation and turmoil before 1979 lead to the end of monarchical rule, with the end of almost 57 years of the Pahlavi dynasty? In this session, Shahin Modarres and Yasmina Dionisi (Iran Desk - ITSS Verona) will discuss the phenomenology of Iran’s

political system after the 1979 revolution and focus on how the dynamics have been forming today's Iran.

**Lesson #4: "Iranian Internal Politics"**

In this session, Prof. Sadegh Zibakalam, professor of Political Theory (Tehran University), will offer an overview of Iran's internal politics since 1979 and will discuss the formation of Iran's reformist front and its current position.

**Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**Lesson #5: "Iran's foreign relations"**

In a complex regional framework, Iran remains a peculiar actor. This peculiarity is due to a series of factors, which vary from its richness in energetic resources to its geographical position at the crossroads between three continents. Beyond this, the orographic conformation of the State is also important – protected but at the same time limited by the Zagros and Alborz Mountains. These geopolitical factors have always brought Iran to develop its influence towards the West, as we can now see thanks to the influence that it exercises in different countries in the region. In this session, Shahin Modarres and Filippo Cimento (Iran Desk - ITSS Verona) will discuss Iran's foreign policy in brief, mainly focusing on the formation of Iran's foreign policy through elements of international cooperation and through particular internal politics.

**Lesson #6: "Iran and U.S. Relations"**

In this session, Prof. Abbas Milani (Stanford University) will offer an overview of the history of Iran-US bilateral relations pre and post the 1979 revolution to present a collective comprehension of the bilateral relations between the two states.

**Saturday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022**

**Lesson #7: "Water resources management and drought in Iran"**

What are the main trends of water resource management in Iran? Which sectors are facing the consequences of the imminent threat of drought? We conduct an analysis of the imminent risk of drought in Iran and its probable consequences. Touching on issues like agriculture, hydroelectricity, internal migration, and the manner in which water affects foreign relations, we explore the security-related aspects of the drought. In this session, ITSS's "Iran Desk" will offer an overview of the water crisis in Iran and how it has been affecting the country's internal and foreign politics.

**Lesson #8: “Water Crisis in Iran”**

In this session, Prof. Kaveh Madani (Yale University) will offer an overview of the meaning of drought and water crisis and analyzes the crisis caused in Iran due to this issue and where it is heading.

**Module requirements**

There are no formal requirements for this module. Everyone with an interest in the aforementioned topics is welcome.

**Referenced sources/Supplemental materials**

A full list of reading/viewing materials will be provided in due course.