Iran

I. Critical Historical Junctures
II. Governance and Policy-Making
III. Representation and Participation
IV. Political Economy
V. Iranian Politics in Transition
The Islamic Republic of Iran
I. Critical Historical Junctures

- Safavids and Qajars
- Pahlavi Coup – Reza Khan (1921)
  - Shah Reza Pahlavi (1925-41)
- Shah Mohamed Reza Pahlavi (1941-79)
- Mossadeq and CIA-backed coup
- 1979 Iranian Revolution
- US Embassy Hostage Crisis
- Iran-Iraq War (1980-88)
- Post-9/11

US-Iranian relations circa 1979
II. Governance and Policy-Making

- Theocracy and *Sharia*
- Religious Authorities
  - The Supreme Leader
  - The Council of Guardians
  - Assembly of Experts
  - The Expediency Council
- Secular Authorities
  - The President
  - The Cabinet
Cat’s cradle
Iran’s formal constitutional power structure

Electorate

President
Muhammad Khatami
(elected for four years; max. two terms of office)

Assembly of Experts*
86 clerical members
(elected for eight years)

Parliament
(majlis-e shura-e eslami
290 representatives
(elected for four years)

Council of Ministers
22 ministers
(confirmed by parliament)

Supreme leader*
Ali Khamenei
(lifetime appointment)

Council of Guardians*
12 members

Head of the judiciary*
Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashimi Shahroudi

Six clerical members of the Council of Guardians*

Expediency Council (31 members)*

Voice and Vision (radio and television)*

Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps*

Commander of the regular armed forces*

Chief of the general staff of the armed forces*

Commander of the law-enforcement forces*

Head of the Supreme Court*
(five-year term)

Chief public prosecutor*
(five-year term)

Six lay jurists in the Council of Guardians*
(appointed on advice of parliament)

*Dominated by the right
III. Representation and Participation

- The Majles (legislature)
- Guardian Council approval of legislation
- Guardian Council approval of candidates
- Suppression of Political Dissent

The Majles in action...or not
IV. Political Economy

- An Oil-Dependent Economy
- State-Owned or Controlled Industry
- The Demographic Problem

*Remember the 1970s?
Iran’s GDP per person, real terms, 1974=100

Source: World Bank
V. Iranian Politics in Transition

- Iran and Iraq
- Iran and Terrorism
- The Nuclear Question
- The Stability of the Regime

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad