

**Diablo Valley College – International Relations (POLSC 250-9064)
Research Project – Summer 2026**

The War with Iran

Question: The current conflict with Iran has long history. Depending on who you ask, the roots of the conflict began in 1953 (the overthrow of Mossadegh); 1979 (the Islamic Revolution); the result of problems in the Middle East associated with the 9/11 attacks on the United States; or Israel's influence on the U.S. government's foreign policy decisions. But behind all these discussions and debates about the historic elements of the war lie the *theories* which attempt to explain *why* the conflict exists in the first place. Examine some of the available data from various sides of the debate to answer: *why* are the US and Iran engaged in this current conflict?

Sample Outline

(But feel free to design your outline any way you wish)

I. Introduction / Thesis Statement – a brief statement outlining your position or something relevant about this issue.

II. Body – the bulk of the paper is here, in data taken from the readings and other evidence you have found in support of your position.

1. Historical background to the conflict
 - a. The overthrow of Mossadegh (Operation Ajax) – 1953
 - b. American response or provocation? – supporting the Shah (1954 – 1979)
 - c. The Islamic Revolution – 1979
 - d. Rise of the Mullahs – (1980 – present)
 - e. Israel's connection to the conflict
 - e. Contemporary Iran under Ayatollah Khamenei and beyond
2. Theoretical construct
 - a. Levels of analysis
 - b. (A) useful theory(ies) to explain the possible conflict
3. Data from films.

III. Conclusion – based on the evidence you have gathered, your opinion on whether war with Iran is inevitable, and if so, WHY? And how will the outcome of this conflict affect US hegemony in the Middle East and globally?

Extras:

1. Again, make sure to include a citation *every time you use a statement or an idea from the readings that I have provided, or that you found in your own independent research.*
2. "A" papers will be:
 - a. *fully* documented and cited in APA citation format (please include 2-3 books)
 - b. a *minimum* of 15 pages (including title, abstract, and reference page, meaning **12 full pages of text analysis**)
 - c. research *beyond* authors provided
 - d. turned in *on time* (**July 15, 2026**).