

**Diablo Valley College – International Relations (8609)
Mid-Term Research Paper – Fall 2009**

Question: It appears that U.S. Middle East foreign policy is going to take yet another tactical turn in the “war on terror” with the recent administration change in Washington. The Obama team is at least rhetorically signaling that they will scale down Iraq, in favor of redeploying thousands of U.S. troops to Afghanistan, which by all measures is still smoldering (and possibly re-igniting) from the 2001 U.S. invasion and removal of the Taliban in Kabul. To the extent the campaign promises become a reality, use the 9 theories we have discussed in the first part of the semester to explain the continuing conflict in Afghanistan.

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. Soviet invasion – 1979
- b. American response or provocation? – supporting the Mujahadeen
- c. Soviet withdrawal – 1989
- d. Rise of the Taliban – (1994 – 2001)

2. September 11, 2001 and the American invasion

3. Theoretical construct

- a. Levels of analysis
- b. (A) useful theory(ies) to explain the conflict

III. Conclusion – based on the evidence you have gathered, your opinion about Obama’s “surge” plan and which of the 9 theories you feel is probably the most accurate for describing *why* this war continues.

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*
- b. a *minimum* of 8 – 10 pages in length
- c. research *beyond* authors provided
- d. turned in *on time* (10-14-09)