MIDDLE EAST STUDIES CENTER STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-14
Ratified by the Middle East Studies Center’s Faculty on January 24, 2011

FIVE-YEAR GOALS

A. Establish Portland State University as a recognized Western regional leader in Middle East Studies

B. Expand faculty and course offerings in Middle East studies, cultivating and meeting undergraduate student demand with appropriate opportunities and resources for degrees and training in the field

C. Strengthen relations between the Middle East Studies Center and the Portland community with regard to publicity, cooperation, and financial support

D. Maximize effective management of budgetary resources, administrative support, and personnel connected with the Middle East Studies Center

STRATEGIES

A. Establish Portland State University as a recognized Western regional leader in Middle East Studies

1. The Middle East Studies Center will devote more resources to its core academic mission, including hosting more conferences, workshops and speakers, and supporting research and publishing by the Center’s faculty.

2. The Middle East Studies Center will host at least one major conference or workshop per academic year. Lectures by visiting academics will take place frequently, with the active sponsorship of the Center and other interested academic units.

3. The Middle East Studies Center will advocate for increased internal funding for faculty research.

4. The Middle East Studies Center will identify and pursue new sources of financial support, which will be targeted directly at affiliated programs, including Arab, Judaic, Persian and Turkish studies. The Center will apply a decentralized administrative model, allowing programs to pursue their own independent plans and possible sources of funding.

5. The Middle East Studies Center will explore the possibility of establishing a new program in Islamic studies.

B. Expand faculty and course offerings in Middle East Studies, cultivating and meeting undergraduate student demand with appropriate opportunities and resources for degrees and training in the field

1. The Middle East Studies Center will advocate for further growth in Middle East studies at Portland State through the addition of two or more tenure-track positions.

2. The Director of the Middle East Studies Center will identify and partner with departmental chairs who are eager to create openings related to Middle East studies.
A tenure-track position in Hebrew in the department of World Languages and Literatures will be a first priority in order to round out and protect the language program, which is the foundation for any successful area studies center.

- A second priority should be the hiring of a social scientist with a specialty in Iran.
- Other fields in which Middle East studies hires would provide direct benefit include economics, Islamic art history, urban studies, anthropology, ethnomusicology, Arabic, and Islamic studies.

3. Middle East Studies at Portland State will attract and enroll larger numbers of students. Some will pursue careers directly in Middle East studies, whether in government, business, non-governmental organizations, or academia. Others will take courses as part of their general education in liberal arts and sciences. Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships will enable more Portland State students to undertake advanced study and research on the Middle East in their coursework.

4. The Middle East Studies Center will support library acquisitions. Portland State’s holdings in Middle Eastern materials are essential to the academic mission of promoting research and training students in Middle East studies.

5. The Center will promote coordination of the Middle East curriculum.

6. The Center will advocate for sufficient support for language programs; the emphasis will remain on undergraduate studies.

C. Strengthen relations between the Middle East Studies Center and the Portland community with regard to publicity, cooperation, and financial support

1. The Middle East Studies Center will strive for greater recognition within the Portland community. As a means of generating greater publicity and interest, as well as supporting our academic mission, the Center will host a series of distinguished speakers who will come to campus and address the general public on a broad array of topics in Middle Eastern culture, history, and politics. The Center will seek endowment funding for this purpose.

2. The Middle East Studies Center will identify potential donors from the local and regional community. Improved relations between Center’s faculty and Community Advisory Boards will constitute a positive first step. Beyond this immediate circle of community representatives, the Center will more actively search out other potential sources of support. In every case, the Center will carefully match potential donors with different affiliate programs. By appealing to the specific interests of donors, the Center will be more likely to earn financial contributions and community engagement. Faculty in each program would be responsible for raising and managing their own funds.

D. Maximize effective management of budgetary resources, administrative support, and personnel connected with the Middle East Studies Center

1. The new by-laws approved by the faculty at the Middle East Studies Center need to be fully and immediately implemented.

2. The staff at the Middle East Studies Center will be reorganized.

3. The next Director of the Middle East Studies Center should immediately execute an external review of the Center.