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Recognition Opens New Doors

Last fall, the Middle East Studies Center was named among only 20 National Resource Centers for Middle East studies under the US Department of Education’s Title VI program. This prestigious federal grant provides funding to strengthen Middle East language and area studies at Portland State and supports teaching and learning about the Middle East both on- and off-campus.

Within the University, the Center leverages Title VI funding to support academic conferences and lectures, professional development for faculty, library acquisitions, and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships for students.

As a National Resource Center, the Middle East Studies Center’s remains committed to serving as a resource on issues pertaining to the Middle East through activities that reach beyond our walls, to businesses, educators, and the media. Through the grant, the Center will expand the impact of outreach programming throughout the state.

Title VI recognition of the Middle East Studies Center represents an important opportunity and serves as a testament to the strength of Portland State’s Middle East studies program and affiliated faculty, the success of our alumni, the ambitions of our students, and the support of the community.
Director’s Message

This is an exciting time for Middle East studies at Portland State.

Recognition as a National Resource Center for Middle East studies under the US Department of Education’s Title VI program is a milestone for the University. The Middle East Studies Center owes a great debt to our previous Directors – Grant Farr, Peter Bechtold, John Damis, Jon Mandaville and Fred Cox – and I would also like to recognize my faculty and staff colleagues, and the Center’s University and community partners and constituents who have helped to build such a strong tradition of Middle East studies at Portland State.

As you may know, federal support for international education was cut dramatically in the most recent legislative budget. These decisions have had direct impact on both the Title VI program and the Middle East Studies Center, and have necessitated careful consideration of the our work and priorities.

Recent events across the Middle East have emphasized the real need for understanding the region. In spite of budget cuts, the Center continues to pursue its core mission and I remain grateful for opportunities to expand Middle East studies at Portland State, and for the continued support of the University and the community.

In its role as a National Resource Center, the Middle East Studies Center serves the academic community for Middle East studies in Oregon. I am pleased to count among the Center’s newest affiliates, twenty-six faculty members appointed at other colleges and universities throughout the state. This growing network of scholars provides an increasingly diverse and integrated knowledge base on which the Center has already drawn.

Support for Portland State scholars, students and alumni from the Middle East remains an important priority for the Center. I’m enthusiastic about recent and ongoing collaborations with the University’s new Middle East Student Advisor and with the proliferation of Middle East student organizations on campus. Our students benefit immeasurably from the myriad unique opportunities for cultural exchange and international experience at Portland State and I’m proud of the active role our faculty and students play in fostering a respectful and inclusive dialogue.

Thank you for your interest in the Middle East Studies Center.

James P Grehan, Director

PHOTO BY ADAM WICKHAM

Middle East Studies Center

Contact the Middle East Studies Center to subscribe to the Oregon Middle East Studies Consortium listserv and receive details on upcoming events relating to the Middle East:

Portland State University - MESC
Post Office Box 751
Portland, OR 97207-0751
504 725 4047 tel
503-725-5320 fax
middleeaststudiescenter@pdx.edu
www.mesc.pdx.edu

PHOTO BY TAM RANKIN
Student Fellows & Scholars

With Title VI funding, the Middle East Studies Center awarded the following Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships. Fellowships provide support for tuition and a stipend for living expenses.

2010-11 Academic Year FLAS:
Megan Dyer (Hebrew), Michelia Kramer (Turkish), Jena Mathews (Arabic), Meghan Ohmart (Arabic), Laurie Schindler (Arabic), Renata Stauder (Arabic), and Aileen Wyse (Arabic)

2011 Summer FLAS:
Ethan Gross (Hebrew), Touraj Housmand-Shafii (Persian), Katelin Putnam (Turkish), David Duke (Arabic), and James Moran (Turkish)

2011-12 Academic Year FLAS:
Kathryn Krueger (Turkish), Jena Mathews (Arabic), Katelin Putnam (Turkish), Renata Stauder (Persian), David Duke (Arabic), and Aileen Wyse (Arabic)

FLAS fellowships are available to students in any department who are pursuing a course of study which requires advanced foreign language and area studies training and who plan to use the training and language skills for graduate study or a career in an international field. Fellows must be enrolled full-time or accepted for full-time enrollment at Portland State University as degree-seeking undergraduate or graduate students; undergraduates must be at the intermediate level of proficiency or higher as determined by a language instructor in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian or Turkish. Priority is given to students who have strong academic records in their major and their language area of study.

Touraj Housmand-Shafii also received the John Damis Scholarship for Middle East Studies, the Patricia & Gary Leiser Scholarship for Middle East Languages, and the Elizabeth Ducey Scholarship for Middle East Languages.

Jonae Cope received an Elizabeth Ducey Scholarship for Middle East Languages.

The Patricia & Gary Leiser Scholarship for Middle East Languages supports the study of Middle Eastern languages. Applicants must demonstrate a serious interest in the Middle East by taking courses related to the region, although not necessarily a Middle East Studies degree program.

Elizabeth Ducey Scholarship for Middle East Languages is open to students intending to pursue a Middle East Studies degree program. Students must be enrolled in and making satisfactory progress in a Middle Eastern language.

The John Damis Scholarship for Middle East Studies supports undergraduate or graduate International Studies and Political Science majors with Middle East focus.

Congratulations to all of our fellowship and scholarship recipients!

What I enjoyed most at PSU is that joy of discovery extends to further serve the city, the state, the country.

- Ahmed Bohliqa
2011 Commencement Speaker

A citizen of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bohliqa was the first international student to deliver the commencement address at Portland State.
Faculty Spotlight

The Middle East Studies Center’s associated and affiliated faculty maintain active scholarly and research agendas in a variety of disciplines. The Center leverages faculty expertise through its speakers bureau and by referring specialists to media outlets for commentary on current events. In response to the momentous ongoing activity in the Arab world, Center faculty shared insights and observations through a variety of public and media fora, including panel discussions and public lectures in Portland, and on local radio and TV programs.

Center faculty presented their own research at conferences and workshops in Bethlehem, West Bank; Doha, Qatar; Istanbul, Turkey; Jerusalem, Israel; Vancouver, British Columbia; Warsaw, Poland; and throughout the United States.

Select recent faculty publications:

- **Birds of Paradise**, Diana Abu-Jaber, Associate Professor of English, w.w. Norton & Company (2011)
- ‘Voice and Memory as Counter-Narratives in Films Depicting the 1980 Coup’, K. Pelin Başçi, Associate Professor of Turkish Language and Literature, Mülkiye (2010)
- **Organizational Behavior**, Talya Bauer and Berrin Erdogan, Associate Professor of Management and Express Employment Professionals Endowed Professor, Flat World Knowledge, (2009)
- ‘Fighting Our Own Battles: Iraqi Chaldeans and the War on Terror’, Yasmeen Hanoosh, Assistant Professor of Arabic language and Literature, Detroit 9/11: Life in the Terror Decade, Wayne State University Press (2011)
- ‘Teaching Persian to Heritage Speakers’, Anousha Sedighi, Associate Professor of Persian, Journal of Iranian Studies (2011)
- ‘Playing Roman in Jerusalem: Jewish Attitudes towards Sport and Spectacle during the Second Temple Period’, Loren Spielman, Assistant Professor of Classical Judaism & Schusterman Teaching Fellow, Jews and Judaism, Sports and Athletics, L. Greenspoon, ed., Purdue University Press (forthcoming)
- ‘The Economic Implications of Patterns of Ceramic vessel Similarity in Ancient Egypt’, Sarah Sterling, adjunct Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Proceedings of the 2009 Plain Pottery Workshop, University College London, Claudia Glatz, ed., Left Coast Press (forthcoming)

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**Colonialism and Christianity in Mandate Palestine**

Laura Robson
Assistant Professor of History
University of Texas Press (2011)

Drawing on a rich base of British archival materials, Arabic periodicals, and secondary sources, Colonialism and Christianity in Mandate Palestine brings to light the ways in which the British colonial state in Palestine exacerbated sectarianism. By transforming Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religious identities into legal categories, Laura Robson argues, the British ultimately marginalized Christian communities in Palestine. Robson explores the turning points that developed as a result of such policies, many of which led to permanent changes in the region’s political landscapes. Cases include the British refusal to support Arab Christian leadership within Greek-controlled Orthodox churches, attempts to avert involvement from French or Vatican-related groups by sidelining Latin and Eastern Rite Catholics, and interfering with Arab Christians’ efforts to cooperate with Muslims in objecting to Zionist expansion. Challenging the widespread but mistaken notion that violent sectarianism was endemic to Palestine, Colonialism and Christianity in Mandate Palestine shows that it was intentionally stoked in the wake of British rule beginning in 1917, with catastrophic effects well into the twenty-first century.
Collections Update

The Bogue Collection:  
In 1962, Mr. Robert Bogue donated a fine and extensive collection of nearly 200 oil lamps to the Middle East Studies Center. Mr. Bogue acquired the lamps over several years while he was working in Egypt for the World Health Organization. The lamps in the Bogue Collection range in date from approximately 3000 B.C.E. through the Medieval/Arab periods and represent several diverse ancient cultures; the lamps also represent a wide variety of materials. Although some are simple and undecorated, many are museum-quality pieces with fascinating decorations and inscriptions, including mythological subjects and potter’s marks. The majority are in an excellent state of preservation, completely or mostly intact.

This year, the Middle East Studies Center reached agreements with two local art museums to display items from the collection. Following a 2009 exhibit of the collection, entitled From Hestia’s Sacred Fire to Christ’s Eternal Light, the Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon will exhibit nine lamps from the collection in the Mark and Janeth Sponenburgh Gallery. The remainder of the collection will be held on long-term loan at the Portland Art Museum. Select items will be displayed for the public and the remainder of the collection will be available for study by Portland State students and scholars.

University Library Acquisitions:  
The Library has been able to acquire a rich array of resources benefiting faculty and student scholarship with generous funding from the Title VI grant. Among the highlights are the online version of Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics and Brockelman Online that will soon be accessible from the Library’s web page. Videos in Middle East languages have been purchased for language and film classes as well as monographs in English and vernacular languages addressing the wide range of subjects related to Middle East studies.

University Library Special Collections:  
This spring the Portland State University Millar Library acquired for its Special Collections holdings several items of interest. Two Quran pages, from the 10th and 14th centuries, as well as an Ethiopian Magic Scroll, an Armenian Prayer Roll, and an excerpt from a Coptic manuscript all entered our collection and were immediately put to use for teaching students. Students of the Summer 2011 Medieval Portland Capstone researched and produced these videos about the works: http://www.youtube.com/user/MedievalPortland and another group of students in a seminar this fall will do further research and plan an exhibition of these new acquisitions, which will be on display in the library in Spring 2012.

The Resource Library:  
The Middle East Studies Center has an extensive lending library of curricular materials, teaching resources, books for K-12 students, maps, posters, current and back issues of Saudi Aramco World, and DVDs on many aspects of the Middle East. Resources may be borrowed at no cost. The Resource Library catalog is now searchable online, giving borrowers access to browse nearly 1,000 volumes from the collection.

SELECT TEXT CONTRIBUTED BY  
Kris Kern & Anne McClanan  
PHOTOS BY Mathew Grubb
The outreach program of the Middle East Studies Center plays a critical role in furthering the Center’s mission beyond the walls of Portland State University. By organizing a range of public programs, running workshops for educators, providing speakers for media outlets, community groups, and classrooms, and hosting an expansive collection of print and electronic resources, the Middle East Studies Center promotes a greater understanding of the Middle East throughout Oregon.

**Teaching About the Middle East**

Given the change that has swept over the Middle East in this past year, the Center has decided to focus its educational outreach on the theme of People, Power, & Protest. Through this lens, the Center’s workshops for educators explore traditional and alternative forms of protest used in the Middle East to challenge political authority and social norms. By highlighting the role of art, music, and social media in political, social, and cultural protest, the material becomes more accessible to teachers and students here in Oregon.

Our first workshop of this theme was held in August and dealt with protest in Iran. Over 25 educators from around Oregon came together to learn about the 2009 Green Revolution, the challenges of political protest in Iran, and the role of popular culture in informing the thoughts and actions of youth. The workshop culminated in the production of six curricular units for varying grades and subjects including high school art and social studies, middle school reading, and high school current events. These units are available on the Middle East Studies Center website.

On October 14, the state-wide teacher Inservice day, the Center hosted 27 educators in a workshop about the Palestinian territories. Through this workshop, teachers learned about the use of hip hop music as a means of protest and explored pedagogical methods to utilize hip hop and pop culture in the classroom. This workshop took place amidst a range of public programs that explore other forms of Palestinian power and protest including a lecture about the United Nations resolution for Palestinian statehood, performance by a Palestinian stand-up comic, screening of the film *Slingshot Hip Hop*, and a concert by DAM, a Palestinian hip hop group.
Support for Persian Studies

Grant Farr, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences associate dean, and Anousha Sedighi, World Languages and Literature faculty, received a $150,000 grant from the Parsa Community Foundation to strengthen the Persian/Iranian Studies program. The grant will help hire an Iranian scholar in residence to advise the University on how to develop a stronger Iranian Studies program. Complementing this are other grant-funded initiatives to create more engagement with the community, promote the arts and culture of Iran, organize a Parsa lecture series, provide funds for faculty research, hire an events coordinator, and bring an Iranian artist to campus.

The Parsa Community Foundation is the first Persian community foundation in the U.S. and the leading Persian philanthropic institution practicing strategic philanthropy and promoting social entrepreneurship around the globe. The Foundation helps Persians foster goodwill in their communities locally, nationally, and worldwide.

SELECT TEXT CONTRIBUTED BY ANOUSHA SEDIGHI

New Faces

The Middle East Studies Center and, the Department of World Languages & Literatures welcome Instructor of Hebrew, Or Rogovin and Visiting Assistant Professor of Arabic, Kevin Burnham for the 2011-12 academic year. These appointments, and search next year for a third tenure-line professor of Arabic at Portland State, confirm the University’s commitment to meeting the high demand for Middle East language study among our students.

The Middle East Studies Center’s staff has also faced a number of transitions. After thirteen years of service to the University, Associate Director, Jean Campbell, retired in January, 2011. She is succeeded by the Center’s new Program Manager, Tam Rankin. Prior to moving to Portland, Tam served in a similar role at the Council on Middle East Studies at Yale University.

In June, the Center hired its first full-time Outreach Coordinator. Elisheva Cohen has a Masters degree in International Educational Development with a focus on the Middle East and North Africa from the Teachers College at Columbia University.

This summer also marked the resignation of Lydia Beyoud, who received a prestigious fellowship to a graduate degree program in journalism. Karen Lickteig is the Center’s new Office Coordinator. Karen is a former Clinton Scholar at the American University in Dubai and has served as an intern at the U.S.-Qatar Business Council and the Sultan Qaboos Cultural Center at the Middle East Institute.

We are grateful for the strong foundation built by our former staff and wish them success in their future endeavors.

PHOTO BY KAREN LICKTEIG
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Save the Date!

WESTERN CONSORTIUM OF MIDDLE EAST STUDIES NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTERS

Content-Based Language Instruction WORKSHOP

MARCH 17-18, 2012
SMITH MEMORIAL STUDENT UNION
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

For more information, contact the Middle East Studies Center:
www.mesc.pdx.edu | middleeaststudiescenter@pdx.edu | 503-725-4074