To be adopted:

Proposed New Major Middle East and Islamic Studies

Present:

Proposed:

The major requirements for the B.A. in Middle East and Islamic Studies are as follows: – (60 units of required courses):

1. Language requirement: 6 courses (24 units)
   Students are required to fulfill the language requirement by taking 6 classes in a language in MEIS (Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew, Urdu) or pass the proficiency requirement by taking a test administered by the department. Currently UCR offers only Arabic but students can take language classes either abroad (i.e. AUC in Cairo, Boğaziçi University in Istanbul) or in other UC campuses (UCLA, Irvine) upon the approval of MEIS director.

2. MEIS Senior Seminar, One (4 units) taught by MEIS faculty preceded by a gateway or upper division course on the same topic.

3. Required courses: 3 courses (12 units) (at least one should be taken from area I and one from area II)

   I. Survey courses
   ARLC 001, RLST 111, RLST 113, HIST 121, HIST 124

   II. Specialized courses
   POSC 156, WMST 168, GBST/ANTH 169

4. Select five from the elective courses – (20 units of elective courses)

   Arabic Literatures and Cultures
   ARLC 120, ARLC 151/CPLT 151/MEIS 151, ARLC 152/CPLT 152, ARLC 154/CPLT 154/PHIL 128, ARLC 156/CPLT 156/MEIS 156/RLST 156, ARLC 158/CPLT 158/MEIS 158/RLST 158

   Anthropology
   ANTH 136, ANTH 140I
Asian Studies
AST 167/CPLT 167

Comparative Ancient Civilizations
CPAC 121/CLA 121/POSC 121

Creative Writing
CWPA 256

Economics
ECON 170E

Global Studies
GBST 191

History
HIST 030, HIST 111, HIST 125, HIST 126

Middle East and Islamic Studies
MEIS 199

Media and Cultural Studies
MCS 172

Political Science
POSC 107, POSC 120, POSC 133, POSC 152

Religious Studies
RLST 116, RLST 121, RLST 130

Women’s Studies
WMST 151, WMST 109/ANTH 109, WMST /RLST 162

JUSTIFICATION:
The growing importance of events in the Middle East and N. Africa as well as the central role played by the U.S. in the Islamic world makes the study of the region even more pertinent and relevant today than ever. The state of California is home to a large number of people from the Middle East. The largest Iranian diaspora community in the world resides in southern California. UC-Riverside has been in the forefront of academic institutions in California in hiring more than eight faculty members across disciplines in the humanities and social sciences who offer a broad range of courses from Middle Eastern literatures and languages to history, religion, politics, gender studies, anthropology, media studies, and theatre across the Islamic world and the Middle East.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of programs, departments, and research centers that have been developed to disseminate knowledge, provide educational and informational resources, and facilitate academic partnerships in the Middle East and Islamic world. Various courses in our Anthropology, Comparative Literature, Creative Writing, Hispanic Studies, History, Religious Studies, Theatre, Political Science, and Women’s Studies departments deliberate and address historical, political and cultural themes of the Middle East and countries influenced by Islamic culture. It is important and appropriate that faculty present students with an opportunity to select a major in Middle East and Islamic studies.

In a random survey conducted among 150 students, 50 students (33%) responded positively to a major in MEIS and 89 (60%) stated the need for more programming in MEIS.
One student stated: “I have an extreme interest in Middle Eastern Studies here at UCR. There are a lot of students who want to learn about this largely uncovered topic and simply (there are) not enough to satisfy our demand for knowledge.”

Another stated: “The Middle East and North Africa are areas of growing interest and additional focus should be paid to these regions, past & present.”

The Middle East and Islamic Studies major is designed to provide undergraduate students with a broad understanding of the history, politics and culture of the Middle East and Islamic traditions. We offer an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the Middle East and Islamic traditions with focuses on gender, history, literature, popular discourses and politics, which canvass from North Africa to Southeast Asia. The multidisciplinary nature of the program prepares students for a critical understanding of current issues and further study in a number of academic fields at the graduate level. The major is useful to students planning careers in politics and government, business, education, international organizations, journalism, and the art, as well as for those who simply desire a better understanding of the Middle East, Islam and Islamic cultures.

Further, the major in Middle East and Islamic Studies brings together diverse faculty at UCR to foster collective interests and activities in research and teaching. It aims to open an academic space, which facilitates active engagement with the Middle East and Islam in diverse, multilingual, and global contexts, while bringing that engagement into conversation with existing areas of research and teaching at UCR and other programs in Middle East and Islamic studies in California and elsewhere.

All courses have been verified active. Those not active have been proposed for removal by Victoria D. Cross, Multidisciplinary Unit. 01/03/2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deleted Courses</th>
<th>Last Effective Qtr.</th>
<th>Action Taken:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARLC 001</td>
<td>Summer 2010</td>
<td>removed</td>
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</table>

**APPROVALS:**

Effective: Winter 2013
Approved by the faculty Committee of Middle East and Islamic Studies: 8 January 2012
Approved by the Executive Committee of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences: 7 March 2012
Approved by the Faculty, College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences: 7 March 2012
Approved by the Committee on Educational Policy: April 30, 2012
Middle East and Islamic Studies Major
Response to Guidelines for Establishing a New Undergraduate Academic Program

1. Name and Administering Unit:

Major in Middle East and Islamic Studies, to be administered through the Interdisciplinary Studies Office.

2. Justification:

The growing importance of events in the Middle East and N. Africa as well as the central role played by the U.S. in the Islamic world makes the study of the region even more pertinent and relevant today than ever. The state of California is home to a large number of people from the Middle East. The largest Iranian diaspora community in the world resides in southern California. UC-Riverside has been in the forefront of academic institutions in California in hiring more than eight faculty members across disciplines in the humanities and social sciences who offer a broad range of courses from Middle Eastern literatures and languages to history, religion, politics, gender studies, anthropology, media studies, and theatre across the Islamic world and the Middle East.

In a random survey conducted among 150 students, 50 students (33%) responded positively to a major in MEIS and 89 (60%) stated the need for more programming in MEIS.

One student stated: “I have an extreme interest in Middle Eastern Studies here at UCR. There are a lot of students who want to learn about this largely uncovered topic and simply (there are) not enough to satisfy our demand for knowledge.”

Another stated: “The Middle East and North Africa are areas of growing interest and additional focus should be paid to these regions, past & present.”

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of programs, departments, and research centers that have been developed to disseminate knowledge, provide educational and informational resources, and facilitate academic partnerships in the Middle East and Islamic world. Various courses in our Anthropology, Comparative Literature, Creative Writing, Hispanic Studies, History, Religious Studies, Theatre, Political Science, and Women’s Studies departments deliberate and address historical, political and cultural themes of the Middle East and countries influenced by Islamic culture.

It is important and appropriate that faculty present students with an opportunity to select a major in Middle East and Islamic studies since it will help them seek good careers and become competitive for graduate school. We offer a variety of these courses some of which are under-utilized.

In addition, the major in Middle East and Islamic Studies will elevate the status of UCR and will attract good students since few UC campuses offer such a major.

The Middle East and Islamic Studies major is designed to provide undergraduate students with a broad understanding of the history, politics and culture of the Middle East and Islamic traditions. We offer an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the Middle East and Islamic traditions with focuses on gender, history, literature, popular discourses and politics, which canvass from North Africa to Southeast Asia.

The multidisciplinary nature of the program prepares students for a critical understanding of current issues and further study in a number of academic fields at the graduate level. The major is useful to students planning careers in politics and government, business, education, international organizations, journalism, and the art, as well as for those who simply desire a better understanding of the Middle East, Islam and Islamic cultures.

Further, the major in Middle East and Islamic Studies brings together diverse faculty at UCR to foster collective interests and activities in research and teaching. It aims to open an academic space, which facilitates active engagement with the Middle East and Islam in diverse, multilingual, and global contexts, while bringing that engagement into conversation with existing areas of research and teaching at UCR and other programs in Middle East and Islamic studies in California and elsewhere.

Some of the faculty in MEIS have important research and academic connection in the region that stretches from Tunisia to Iran, Egypt, Turkey and Indonesia.

3. Relationship of the minor to existing programs:
The minor is interdisciplinary and brings courses and faculty together from history, comparative literature and languages, political science, women’s studies and religion and creative writing together with a focus on Islamic and Middle Eastern studies.

4. **Proposed Curriculum:**

Please see Attachment A

5. **Faculty Involvement:**

*Faculty Committee Members:*
- Fariba Zarinebaf (Chair)
- Muhammad Ali, Religious Studies
- Reza Aslan, Creative Writing
- Ebru Erdem-Akcay, Political Science
- Sherine Hafez, Women’s Studies
- Erith Jaffe-Berg, Theater
- Ruhi Khan, Media and Cultural Studies
- Laila Lalami, Creative Writing
- Benjamin Liu, Hispanic Studies
- Susan Ossman, Anthropology
- Jeff Sacks, Comparative Literature

*Teaching Faculty:*
- Muhammad Ali
- Fariba Zarinebaf
- Jeff Sacks
- Sherine Hafez
- Ebru. Erdem
- Susan Ossman
- Benjamin Liu
- Reza Aslan
- Ruhi Khan
- Erith Jaffe-Berg
- Laila Lalami

6. **Degree of Participation and Roles of Participating Departments**

The departments of History, Comparative literature and languages as well as Religion and Global studies have expressed strong support. The bulk of courses are offered in these departments.

7. **Projected Enrollments**

Our courses vary in size from several hundred to seventy and thirty five. So, we offer big surveys, medium size general courses and smaller seminar type courses.

8. **Name of Degree:**

Middle Eastern and Islamic studies

9. **Potential Impact on Existing Program**

It will enhance the existing program since we only offer a minor.

10. **Required Resources**

The MEIS is already located in Interdisciplinary programs. We will not need additional staff until the financial situation at UCR improves.
UCR offers students access to faculty, language training, and library collections in other UC campuses. We will collaborate with Middle East Centers in southern California and in UC campuses (UCLA). Our library holds a rich collection in English titles on the Middle East.

We hope in the future as our financial situation improves, we can expand our library collection, offer more language training in additional languages. But currently, students can receive additional language training abroad (summer programs), in intensive summer language programs all over the country and in other UC campuses.

Our study abroad program in more than five countries (Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Israel, etc.) will provide students with cultural immersion, language training, additional coursework and exposure to the diverse and rich cultures of this vast region. In addition, students can take courses from other UC campuses and gain credit. This summer, we have sent one undergraduate to Turkey’s best University (Boğazici University) for language training and coursework.

11. Supporting Letters

See attached five letters.

12. Approvals:

See attached letters. We have a strong endorsement from Professor Fred Donner, the director of Middle Eastern studies program at the University of Chicago, one of the top five programs in the nation.

13. Timing

We send this proposal forward, hoping that approvals will be swift and smooth and placed on the agenda of the May Senate Division Meeting. We thank all who participate in this process.

Proposed Curriculum for a Major in Middle East and Islamic Studies

Requirement: 15 courses (60 units)

1. Language requirement: 6 courses (24 units)
   Students are required to fulfill the language requirement by taking 6 classes in a language in MEIS (Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew, Urdu) or pass the proficiency requirement by taking a test administered by the department. Currently UCR offers only Arabic but students can take language classes either abroad (i.e. AUC in Cairo, Boğaziçi University in Istanbul) or in other UC campuses (UCLA, Irvine) upon the approval of MEIS director.

2. One MEIS senior seminar (4 units) taught by MEIS faculty preceded by a gateway or upper division course on the same topic

3. Required courses: 3 courses (12 units) (at least one should be taken from area I and one from area II)
   I. Survey courses
      ARLC 001 Introduction to Arabic Literature and Cultures
      RLST 111 Islam
      RLST 113 Topics in Modern Islam
      HIST 121 Survey of Middle Eastern History, 1200-1800
      HIST 124 Islam and Gender in Middle Eastern History
   II. Specialized courses
      POSC 156 Political systems Across Muslim Societies
      WMST 168 Gender and Power in Muslim Societies
      GBST/ANTH 169 From the Maghreb to the Middle East

4. Elective courses: 5 courses (20 units)
   a. Arabic Literature and Cultures
      ARLC 120 Classical Arabic Literary prose
      ARLC/CPLT 151 Palestine/Algeria
      ARLC/CPLT 152 Modern Arabic Poetry in Multilingual Frame
ARLC /CPLT 154 Phil 128 Introduction to Arabic Philosophy  
ARLC /CPLT 156 Jews and Arabs  
ARLC /CPLT/MEIS 158 Islam and Psychoanalysis

b. Anthropology  
ANTH 136 Anthropological perspectives of Gender in Southeast Asia  
ANTH 140 Ethnographic Interpretations in Southeast Asia and South Asia

c. Asian Studies  
AST/CPLT 167 Postcolonial Literature and Criticism in Southeast Asia and South Asia

d. Comparative Ancient Civilizations  
CPAC 121 Monarchy

e. Creative Writing  
CWPA 256: Contemporary Literature from the Modern Middle East

f. Economics  
ECON 170 Economic Development in India

g. Global Studies  
GBST 191 Seminar in Global Studies

h. History  
HIST 30 History and African Biography (KEA)  
HIST 111 Public History and Community Voices  
HIST 125 Islam and revolution in Iran  
HIST 126 Istanbul in History and Fiction

i. Middle East and Islamic Studies  
199 Independent Study

j. Media and Cultural Studies  
MCS 172 Topics in Film and Media Genres

k. Political Science  
POSC 107 Non-Western Thought  
POSC 120 The Politics of India and Pakistan  
POSC 133 Politics of Central Asia in Comparative Perspective  
POSC 152 Politics of the Middle East

l. Religious Studies  
RLST 116 Religion and Violence  
RLST 121 Hebrew Bible/Old Testament  
RLST 130 BIBLE/New Testament

m. Women’s Studies  
WMST 151 Women, Islam, and the State  
WMST 109 Women, Politics and Social Movements
January 19, 2012

FARIBA ZARINEBAF  
Director of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Program

RE: Proposal for a New Major in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

I support the proposed new major in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies. This has been an important area of strategic investment in the College over the last five years, a priority reflected in new faculty positions across a range of departments, including Political Science, Religious Studies, Comparative Literature, Creative Writing, Women’s Studies, and Media and Cultural Studies. An MEIS major will make this important area of knowledge and scholarship fully available to undergraduates. The advising and administrative structure to support the major is already in place; a Minor in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies is currently administrated through the office of Interdisciplinary Programs and a strong faculty committee has been established with an appointed director. The major draws on currently active courses taught by ladder faculty. Chairs of the relevant departments have pledged their strong support for the major. With the curriculum and administrative structure already in place, there should not be any budget impact in the foreseeable future. The proposal offers study abroad as a logical supplement to Arabic as the only Middle Eastern language taught on campus. Increasing library resources in this field is desirable beyond the needs of the proposed major.

Offering a major in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies is an important, forward looking curricular innovation that will benefit both students and the intellectual mission of CHASS.

Stephen Cullenberg, Dean  
College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences
August 4, 2011

Professor Fariba Zarinebaf  
Director, Middle East and Islamic Studies  
University of California at Riverside  
900 University Avenue  
1212 HMMNS Building  
Riverside, CA 92521  
Via e-mail: faribaz@ucr.edu

Dear Professor Zarinebaf:

I have examined your proposal for a Middle East and Islamic Studies major at UC-Riverside. It seems to me to be very well thought-out, and I hope you have success in persuading the University administration to approve this new program.

It seems to me that the key components for a successful program—for which, as your proposal makes clear, there is ample student demand—are already in place at UCR. Most important is a large and diverse group of faculty, situated in a variety of departments and representing different disciplines, who have a strong professional interest in the academic study of the Middle East and Islamic world. Between them, you have quite ample coverage of the history, literature, politics, societies, and cultures of the Middle East, or at least of large parts of it.

It is also very important that UCR already has staff to teach Arabic language. I believe that a strong language component is a vital part of any quality program in Middle Eastern and Islamic studies—as is the case at Chicago, as you know. Arabic, above all, is the linguistic core of Islamic and, by extension, most Middle Eastern cultures. Of course, a full-fledged program needs to offer instruction also in Persian, Turkish, and modern Hebrew, but as your students can avail themselves of instruction in these languages at other universities in your area, or through summer programs in the U.S. or abroad, the absence of these languages in your present curriculum is not a fatal weakness and should not be seen as an obstacle to establishing your program. It does, however, provide a clear objective for future growth!

In any case, it is exciting to see a group of you who are sufficiently dedicated to advancing the study of the Middle East and Islam that you are willing to put in the effort to establish a new major in these subjects. As I have said, you seem to have all the pieces
in place to create a strong and vibrant program, and I with you success in realizing this proposal.

With all good wishes,

[Signature]

Director, CMES
Professor of Near Eastern History
Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations and The Oriental Institute
The University of Chicago
June 29, 2011

Prof. Fariba Zarinebaf
Director, Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Program
University of California, Riverside
CAMPUS

Dear Fariba,

I am pleased to hear that a proposal for an undergraduate major in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies is moving forward. The creation of an interdisciplinary studies major in this field will bring together the pedagogical efforts of a distinguished group of faculty, and enrich the campus as a whole and the related majors.

History will be an important dimension of the MEIS major, and we look forward to serving majors in the program and double majors. Given the importance of the Middle East and the greater Islamic tradition to the current world, and the rich historical, literary and cultural resources of the region’s culture, a comprehensive and broadly-based major will help UCR stand out for the richness and breadth of its offerings to majors.

with best regards,

[Signature]

Randolph C Head
Professor and Chair
Dear Fariba,

My department is supportive of your proposal of a MEIS major. The proposal is well written and addresses a real need on our campus.

We are must happy that the proposal includes a 24 unit language requirement, which would be effectively 2 years of basic and intermediate language in one of the ME languages, Arabic being the one currently offered at UCR.

Best wishes,

Tom Scanlon
Dear Steve,

I am writing to indicate my support for the new proposed major in Middle East and Islamic Studies. As you know, I have followed the development of this proposal closely as an instructor, as a participant in the MEIS faculty group, as the director of interdisciplinary programs and as the chair of the global studies program. In my view the proposal developed by the MEIS faculty is coherent. It draws on existing courses in a wide range of departments and can thus be put into effect immediately at no added cost. In addition to enabling undergraduates to specialize in MEIS it will further consolidate the identity of the MEIS program on our campus.

Students are clearly interested in courses in MEIS; classes in this area are always rapidly filled. Public lectures and conferences organized by MEIS over the last few years in collaboration with academic departments, Global Studies and the Center for ideas and Society have attracted large, enthusiastic student audiences. Although the number of majors will be initially small, having a major will insure that MEIS courses are proposed regularly and that new courses are conceived in collaboration with instructors home departments. Having a dedicated major will add to the momentum of the program which gained impetus a few years ago thanks to your successful efforts to hire a cluster of high profile faculty. At this point we need to assure increase visibility for our teaching, research and outreach and a major is the next logical step in a process that will include developing a more concerted approach to seeking funding, attracting top graduate students, and developing MA programs. The development of the MEIS major is important to our students: it is also a key element in promoting awareness of the strength of our MEIS faculty and graduate student’s research both internally, to other UC campuses and more broadly.
Looking around at the top programs in MEIS both at the University of California and nationally it is apparent that many of the most vibrant programs will soon see a changing of the guard. With its young faculty engaged in cutting edge research in a number of domains, Riverside is well positioned to take a leading role in developing what MEIS will be for the future. The development of a major is crucial to this longer term plan.

Sincerely Yours, Susan

Ossman
Professor of Anthropology
Chair of Global Studies
Director of Interdisciplinary Programs

CC: Gabrielle Brewer