

Arabic & Middle Eastern Studies Newsletter

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April 2022



Welcome to the third edition of the Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies monthly newsletter! We hope all students, staff, and faculty, are having a great semester and are looking forward to another month of great events and activities sponsored by the Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies Program! Recently, we have seen students competing in the National University Model Arab League conference in Washington, D.C., events by the MENA Cultural Club, and approval for exciting grants! Check out the contents of this newsletter for upcoming events, opportunities, and highlights on faculty and student achievements!

Upcoming Events

April 21st-22nd, Various

UW Middle Eastern Studies: Toward Humanistic Ideals - Visiting Islamic Scholars will conduct classroom visits, roundtable discussions, and a panel on Islam and democracy.

April 21st, College of Business Auditorium, 6:00pm

Islam and Democracy in the Middle East - Panel discussion with Islamic Scholars on democracy and Islam. Free and open to the public.

April 21st, College of Business Atrium, 7:30pm

Ramadan Iftar dinner following panel discussion. Ticket information on page 2.

Fridays throughout Ramadan

The Islamic Center of Laramie is hosting potluck-style Iftar dinners at the local mosque on Fridays throughout Ramadan.



Fall 2022 SPPAIS Course Offerings!

Registration is upon us, and we know students are thinking about their Fall 2022 schedules. Consider these great courses for next semester!

- RELI/HIST 2320 - History of Islam*
- RELI/HIST/WMST 4335 - Women and Islam*
- INST 4990 - ME Security Studies: Iran Expansionism* - taught by visiting scholar Admiral Farkad Aboodi (Ret.) of the Iraqi Navy
- ART 3720 - Art & Architecture of Medieval and Contemporary Islam - contact Tracey Eckersley, teckersl@uwyo.edu, for permission
- INST 4990 - US Foreign Policy in the Middle East*
- INST 4990 - Topics: Refugees and Forced Migration
- ENG 3200 - Topics in: Medieval Literature

*Fulfills requirement for the Africa and Middle East Regional Track

Welcome: Dr. Ali H. Raddaoui!

Dr. Ali H. Raddaoui is the designer and lead Arabic instructor for Project GO at the University of Wyoming. He is also a former associate professor and Arabic Program director at UW. He will be rejoining the university this fall to continue teaching Arabic courses, and we are so excited to welcome him back!

Dr. Raddaoui is a trained applied linguist, and has an active research agenda and extensive experience teaching English, Arabic, and French to Speakers of Other Languages. His research interests include best practices in language learning and teaching, the interface of learning and technology, and program design. He also led two immersive Arabic STARTALK institutes at UW and contributed to designing an immersion experience for EFL students overseas. He holds a Ph.D. from Indiana University. Welcome back Dr. Raddaoui!



UW Middle Eastern Studies: Toward Humanistic Ideals

We are pleased to announce that the Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies Program was awarded the Wyoming Humanities Council SPARK Grant! The SPARK Grant is intended to fund programs that explore Wyoming stories, histories, and communities. To that end, we will be hosting three Islamic scholars from April 21st-22nd for events titled "UW Middle Eastern Studies: Toward Humanistic Ideals." Dr. Justin Curtis from Chadron State College, Dr. Kadir Yildirim of Rice University, and Dr. Khaled Ksaibati from the University of Wyoming will engage in two days worth of events including roundtable discussions with the Muslim Student Association and MENA Cultural Club, classroom visits for courses such as Government and Politics of the Middle East and Modern Middle East, and working lunches with students in the Religious Studies Department and School of Politics, Public Affairs, and International Studies (SPPAIS). The primary event will be a panel discussion with the scholars titled "Islam and Democracy in the Middle East" on April 21st at 6:00pm which will be open to all UW community members and the general public free of charge. The discussion will be followed by an Iftar dinner. Due to limited space, the dinner will be ticketed. Contact us at arabic@uwyo.edu for more information. Many thanks to our sponsors below!



National University Model Arab League



Model Arab Students visiting MSI Tetra Tech in Crystal City, VA

Model Arab League students had another incredibly successful weekend representing the Syrian National Coalition at the National University Model Arab League conference in Washington, D.C. where students engaged in approximately twenty hours of parliamentary debate to resolve real-life issues in the Middle East and North Africa that affect Arab League member states. UW took fourth place as determined by the number of awards. Other schools in attendance included the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Northeastern University, Converse University, Brigham Young University, and Mercer University.

A part of the trip to Washington, DC was the opportunity to meet with various diplomats and career professionals working in the Middle East. We met with several government employees and NGOs in the D.C. area including MSI Tetra Tech Vice President Andy Griminger – MSI is an implementer of international development programs around the world and in the Middle East. We also met with USAID Senior Development Advisor to the Pentagon and UW alumnus Dale Skoric. Skoric meets regularly with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and is heavily involved in the effort to coordinate civilian and military aid to the Ukraine. Finally, we also met with the Deputy Director of the Office of Levant Affairs, Amanda Zafian, from the Department of State who spoke frankly about the challenges of working in Syria and representing the interests of the US Government as pertains to Syria.

Individual results from the conference are listed, as well as pictures of delegates in action and around D.C. (see pg. 4). Congratulations to all of our students, and thank you to Dr. Stephanie Anderson, the Milward L. Simpson Fund, and all of SPPAIS for the support that has made these accomplishments for our students possible!

University Awards

Distinguished Delegation - Syrian National Coalition

Individual Awards

Council of the Arab Heads of State

Distinguished Delegation - Sam Bunn & Maeve Knepper

Joint Defense Council

Distinguished Delegation - Allison Brown & Michael Newman

Special Council on Poverty and Unemployment

Distinguished Delegation - Ayoub Nachat & Ethan Maglione

Council on Economic Affairs

Distinguished Delegation - Paden Knull & Kyle Sorrell

Arab Court of Justice

Distinguished Delegation - Danny Deming (Oman)

Distinguished Delegation - Kaitlyn Polley (Oman)



Student Spotlight: Taelor Nielsen

Taelor Nielsen is a graduating senior at the University of Wyoming studying International Studies with concentrations in the Middle East and Northern Africa, as well as Conflict Resolution and Governance. During her time with the department, Taelor has participated in the Stevens Initiative Program, which worked with Iraqi universities to discuss STEM related issues in the region, the department's 2019 STARTALK Initiative, where students from all around Wyoming came to UW to learn Arabic for a month, and the Model Arab League team. Taelor is now working with the Middle East and Arabic studies department to host a cohort of Iraqi Engineers for professional development courses this summer.



During her time at UW, Taelor enjoyed the wide selection of courses that were offered to specifically address issues she was concerned about. Some of her favorite classes included Transitional Justice, US Foreign Policy in the Middle East, and Arabic.

Taelor says that thanks to the unique opportunities that UW has offered her through the Middle Eastern studies department, she has been able to travel to Morocco where her Arabic skills came into play and will be traveling with the department to Jordan, Israel and Palestine this summer. Taelor hopes to use the skills and knowledge she attained during her time in the Middle East and Arabic Studies department to pursue a career working in Foreign Intelligence and Humanitarian Aid.

Contact Us!

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