

Arabic & Middle Eastern Studies Newsletter

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Letter from the Director

On the occasion of our first newsletter! This year has been a great year so far for the Arabic & ME Studies Program. Prior to the Fall 2021 semester, we received a large grant from the Department of Defense to establish an overseas Arabic program for our and other regional institutions' ROTC programs sending 15 students to study Arabic in Jordan every year, completely funded by the grant.



Simultaneous to this, we collected a team to run a more robust Arabic and ME Studies program from our new office in A&S 152. Shawn Bunning, Samuel Bunn, Samantha Stringer, America Martinez, Maeve Knepper, Michael Newman, Mohamed Echkaou, and Ayoub Nachat are all a part of our greater team, each taking on a significant part of making our program more successful.

With the added effort, we have been able to apply this year for additional grant funding from the Department of Education and the National Security Agency as well as plan new initiatives for later this Spring and next Fall. These include the Program's first Podcast and a state-wide Model Arab League conference. Look for more news about exciting developments in the Program in the month to come!

Regards,

Eric J. Nigh

Director of Arabic &
Middle East Studies Program



Did you Know?

- Arabic is the 6th most spoken language in the world
- There are more than 20 countries where Arabic is the official language
- There are many Muslims in the Middle East, but the country with the greatest number of Muslims is not in the Middle East...it's Indonesia!



Student Spotlight

Michael Newman is a Wyoming native born and raised in Northern Rock Springs. After multiple test runs in different fields, such as archeology, mathematics, medicine, and even a brief stint in Air Force ROTC, Michael finally discovered his passion and future after enrolling in his first Arabic class.

“I enrolled in Arabic on a whim due to the Chinese courses already being full. While I was no stranger to Arabic, having some half Palestinian Arabic-speaking cousins, I never personally had the opportunity to learn anything more than surface-level information. My first semester at the University of Wyoming put me in Eric Nigh’s Arabic class and exposed me to more than just a language. The often misunderstood, yet, beautiful culture and people of the Middle East and North Africa were revealed to me alongside incredible experiences with classmates.”

Michael hopes to take what he’s learned and experienced UW and apply it to a career within the federal government, helping other Americans and our leaders understand the complexity and beauty of the Middle East. He also hopes to see the Middle Easter personally and experience the culture and people the way it’s meant to be.



Michael exploring the downtown streets of Laramie



STUDY ABROAD



Adventure Awaits... in Israel, Jordan & the West Bank!

Earn up to 6 credit hours while studying abroad in Jordan, Israel, and the West Bank this summer with the Center for International Experiential Learning (CIEL). If you are interested in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or Middle Eastern politics and culture, this program is for you! Students will spend three weeks engaging with politicians, community leaders, NGOs, faith leaders, academic experts, and victims/survivors to understand all perspectives of the conflict. Some activities will include a visit to the Amman Citadel, a Bedouin family cultural visit, a family lunch in Jerash Palestinian Refugee Camp, and many more!

Dates: July 28 – August 16, 2022

Contact: For questions and to apply, contact Dr. Nevin Aiken at naiken@uwyo.edu. More information about the program, including a full overview of program activities, can be found on our [website](#).



What are we up to? **MODEL ARAB LEAGUE!**

Model Arab League is coordinated and hosted by the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations. It is similar to Model United Nations in its format and debate style with slight tweaks in order to fulfill actions that occur in the Arab League. [The University of Wyoming MAL Club](#) participates in the Rocky Mountain Conference every year. The conference this year is Feb. 23-25, so we have been busy preparing! It's hosted by Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, giving participants the ability to travel and interact with other individuals from other institutions and states. The MAL Club has been meeting and going to conferences since 2013 winning numerous delegation awards. In the past 2 years, the club has qualified to attend the Model Arab League National Conference in Washington D.C., where we have debated against students from around the country. Nationals is March 21-24, and we cannot wait to represent our university!



UW Model Arab League team with their delegation awards at the 2020 Regional Conference

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