



**SENATE BILL #2845**

**TITLE:** Authorizing Expenditures from the ASUW Student Services Endowment for the Creation of an Arabic & Middle East Studies Center

**DATE INTRODUCED:** December 6, 2022

**AUTHOR:** Director of Finance Hamilton

**SPONSORS:** President Brown, Senator Stadler, Senator Engel-Cartie, Senator Ewalt

1. WHEREAS, the purpose of the Associated Students of the University of Wyoming
2. (ASUW) is to serve our fellow students in the best manner possible; and,
3. WHEREAS, the ASUW Budget and Planning Committee annually opens applications for
4. special projects and this year has received multiple requests totaling in excess of
5. \$100,000 that has been allocated to fund such special projects; and,
6. WHEREAS, multiple proposed projects could either not be funded or could be only
7. partially funded with the funds allocated for special projects; and,
8. WHEREAS, despite this, the ASUW Budget and Planning Committee believes that these
9. projects are well-written proposals that would benefit the students at the University of
10. Wyoming; and,
11. WHEREAS, the ASUW maintains multiple endowments at the University of Wyoming
12. Foundation, among these the Facilities Endowment, created by Senate
13. Bill #2042; and,
14. WHEREAS, this endowment currently has a corpus in excess of \$2.2 million, and
15. allocatable funds of \$353,217.93; and,
16. WHEREAS, the purpose of this endowment is to, “finance the enhancement of student

*PASSED: 14-0-0*

17. service buildings, venues, or other projects at the University of Wyoming as designated  
18. by the ASUW Student Government;” and,  
19. WHEREAS, by using this endowment, ASUW could fund some of the remaining special  
20. projects that could not be fully funded; and,  
21. WHEREAS, after significant discussion, the ASUW Budget and Planning Committee  
22. decided that funding the proposed Arabic & Middle East Studies Center, as shown in  
23. Addendum A, would enhance the student experience on campus; and,  
24. WHEREAS, the Arabic & Middle East Studies Center is a proposal by the UW  
25. Arabic & Middle East Studies Program, who requested \$40,000 to build an Arabic &  
26. Middle East Studies Center, with the proposal requesting \$4,700 to go towards  
27. demolition and removal of existing cabinets and other room accessories, \$3,800 going  
28. towards the patching and painting of the room, \$3,400 going towards installing new  
29. carpet, \$4,000 going towards installing new lighting and outlets, \$12,345 going towards  
30. the renovation of room 331, \$350 going toward MENA-appropriate light fixtures,  
31. \$5,000 going towards culture kits, \$1,994 going towards televisions, \$1,750 going  
32. towards a smart board, \$1,500 going towards language resource books, \$200 going  
33. towards prayer rugs, \$265 going towards cultural artifacts, \$4,493 going  
34. towards furniture, \$138 going towards a white board, \$3,650 going towards office  
35. furnishings, and \$315 going towards tea and coffee makers; and,  
36. WHEREAS, the study center would be placed within the Arts & Sciences Building, and  
37. any student could come to use the center; and,  
38. WHEREAS, the special projects proposed legislation that was authored after extensive  
39. discussion within the Budget and Planning Committee commits \$27,655 to this project,

*PASSED: 14-0-0*

40. with all requested line items being fully funded with the exception of the \$6,900 cost for  
41. renovation of room 331 and the \$5,445 cost for sound booth panels and ceiling

42. maintenance for room 331; and,

43. WHEREAS, this still leaves \$12,345 in unmet need from their request, in addition to the

44. fact that, even if their request was funded in full by ASUW funds, there would still not

45. be enough to fund the entirety of the Arabic & Middle East Studies Center and,

46. WHEREAS, there were no remaining funds from special projects to fund this request,

47. but it could be easily funded using the Facilities Endowment; and,

48. WHEREAS, by funding this request through the Facilities Endowment, ASUW

49. could show our commitment to creating a robust and educational environment for Arabic

50. and Middle East studies.

51. THEREFORE, be it enacted by the Associated Students of the University of Wyoming

52. (ASUW) Student Government authorizes the expenditure of \$6,900 from the ASUW

53. Facilities Endowment, to be spent as outlined in Addendums A & C, and that, in

54. exchange for this funding support, the stipulations outlined therein shall be held as

55. binding upon the architects and enactors of these proposals; and,

56. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that these funds shall be revoked and returned to the

57. liquid assets of the endowment if a project that these funds are allocated for is

58. permanently canceled or the funds have not been taken out by the end of Fiscal Year

59. 2023, whichever comes first; and,

60. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that any remaining funds from these allocations that

61. are unnecessary for the completion of these projects shall also be returned to the liquid


62. assets of the endowment; and,

PASSED: 14-0-0

- 63. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that the ASUW Accountant shall be tasked with
- 64. communicating and overseeing the disbursement of these funds; and,
- 65. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that this authorization takes effect immediately upon
- 66. passage and enactment of this bill after the UW General Counsel review of ASUW
- 67. endowment funds.

Referred to: Budget and Planning; Advocacy, Diversity, and Policy

Date of Passage: January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Signed:   
(ASUW Chairperson)

“Being enacted on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022, I do hereby sign my name hereto  
and approve this Senate action.”   
ASUW President

## Addendum A

### **ASUW Special Projects Proposal for a Center for Arabic & Middle East Studies**

The Arabic & Middle East Studies Program, a division of the School of Politics, Public Affairs & International Studies (SPPAIS) and housed in the College of Arts & Sciences, is a rapidly expanding unit. As we continue to grow and support student initiatives on campus, we are looking to establish a proper Center for Arabic & Middle East Studies and requesting funding for upgrading a physical space on main campus to house our program. Below is a list of some of our initiatives from the past year:

- Courses in Arabic and Middle Eastern politics – the program offers several courses in these fields open to all students that also fulfill the Africa & the Middle East regional concentration of the International Studies major.
- Management of \$750,000 worth of grants annually
- Project GO – grant from the Department of Defense sending ROTC students to Jordan to study Arabic on a fully-funded scholarship.
- STARTALK – grant from the National Security Agency that fully funds a three-week summer camp for high school and college students and supports our high school recruitment strategy.
- Iraqi Fulbright Scholars – Fulbright grant from the U.S. State Department that allowed us to host a cohort of engineering scholars from Iraq during Summer 2022.
- Model Arab League – Model Arab League is an experiential learning program similar to Model United Nations. We are hosting this year’s Rocky Mountain Model Arab League conference in February for high schools and colleges around the region, and UW students will be attending the National University Model Arab League conference in Washington, D.C. in March.
- Speaker Series – Sponsored by the Wyoming Humanities Council, SPPAIS, ASUW, the Muslim Student Association, and the Department of Religious Studies, we launched our speaker series last spring with visiting scholars who gave a talk entitled “Myth & Reality: Islam & Democracy in the Middle East.” We are continuing our speaker series this year to bring experts on the Middle East to campus including the host of NPR Morning Edition, Leila Fadel.
- Center for International Experiential Learning: Israel and Palestine – this study abroad program sends UW students to Jordan, the West Bank, and Israel to study the Israel/Palestine conflict through an experiential learning approach focused on narratives from both sides.
- Arabic & Middle East Studies Internship Program – we offer three different internships to students including our podcast, Model Arab League, and programmatic elements.
- “Peeling Back” podcast – hosted by students, with guests focused on dissecting narratives from the Middle East.
- Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Cultural Club – the MENA Cultural Club is the entirely student-run portion of our program that hosts events related to Arabic and MENA culture. Many students who are in disciplines outside of SPPAIS, such as international students from the Middle East, take part in MENA Cultural Club events.
- Arabic minor – a request to establish an Arabic minor was approved by the Dean of Arts & Sciences last year and is currently being reviewed by Faculty Senate.

PASSED: 14-0-0

- Partnerships – our past and current partnerships/collaborations on campus include SPPAIS, ASUW, the Honors College, the Center for Global Studies, the Department of Religious Studies, the College of Engineering, the Communication & Journalism Department, the Muslim Student Association, and Wyoming Public Radio.

Establishing a formal Center for Arabic & Middle East Studies would not only benefit students that are actively part of the Arabic & Middle East Studies Program, but the whole of SPPAIS and the College of Arts & Sciences. With the exception of two windowsills, there is currently no dedicated space in the Arts & Sciences building for students to study or spend time, as all rooms are dedicated to office space for faculty and staff. Our Center would be open for any student on campus to use and enjoy, and we anticipate it particularly benefitting students in SPPAIS and in Arts & Sciences. Moreover, the cultural space would benefit all of the Muslim students on campus as well as international students from the Middle East and North Africa who may not be students in A&S but participate in activities such as Model Arab League or guest lectures.

With consideration of the number of faculty, staff, and students that operate within our office, we are applying to fund the renovation of a physical space on main campus to house our program. This space would be between 500-700 square feet and would include study areas for students, offices and desks for our staff and interns, a conference room for guest lectures, a recording studio for our podcast, and a cultural space with resources for students. We would also require the associated furniture and A/V materials. Moreover, we would like to display a collection of Dick Cheney's non-security-sensitive gifts from the Middle East. We have submitted a request for an estimate with Facilities Engineering, proof of which is attached to this document, which is helping us source this new location. We will provide an exact quote as soon as it is available. We predict that establishing a Center for Arabic & Middle East Studies will cost approximately \$40,000.

Thank you for your consideration of our request to establish a Center for Arabic & Middle East Studies. Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Nigh', written in a cursive style.

Eric Nigh, Director  
The UW Arabic & Middle East Studies Program

Addendum B

Stephanie B. Anderson, Professor and Head  
The School of Politics, Public Affairs & International Studies  
Dept. 3197 • 1000 E. University Avenue  
Laramie, WY 82071  
(307) 766-3121 • Email: redhead@uwyo.edu



---

College of Arts and Sciences  
School of Politics,  
Public Affairs, and  
International Studies

17 October 2022

ASUW Special Projects Evaluation Committee  
University of Wyoming  
Laramie, WY 82071

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

As the Head of the School for Politics, Public Affairs, and International Studies (SPPAIS), I enthusiastically support the proposal from the Arabic and Middle East Studies Program to create a Center for Middle East Studies in our A&S building. As the proposal reads, the center will create spaces for students to gather, reflect, and learn about cultural aspects of a part of the world that has held much importance for our country, especially over the last two decades.

The Center for Middle East Studies will provide ongoing opportunities for students to engage in learning and reflection. In addition, it will provide a platform from which our unit is able to reach out to the broader student community, organizing ongoing cultural activities open to all students on campus, and housing the staff and student administrators who are needed to fund these initiatives.

As a pledge of support, SPPAIS also pledges to expend a share its resources to contribute to the renovation of this space and will of course continue to maintain it after the renovation is complete so that it can be a lasting benefit for the UW student body for years to come. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephanie Anderson", is written over a thin horizontal line.

Stephanie Anderson

### Addendum C

C20						
culturally authentic MENA tea set						
	A	B	C	D	E	F
		Item	Description	Cost Per Item	Qty	Total
1		MENA Studies Cultural, Educational, and Study Center				
2						
3		Item	Description	Cost Per Item	Qty	Total
4		RFE 23-11014	Cost for renovation for room 331	6900	1	0
5		RFE 23-11071	Cost for renovation for room 332	16000	1	16000
6		Lights	MENA-appropriate light fixtures	350	1	350
7		Soundproof Podcast Booth	Wisperroom.com sound booth panels and ceiling for corner placement in rm 331	5445	1	0
8		Culture Kits	See below for details about items included	500	10	5000
9		Smart television/monitors for overseas engagements (2)	SAMSUNG 85" Class TU700D-Series Crystal Ultra HD 4K Smart TV with HDR - UN85TU700DFXZA	997	2	1994
10		Smart Board for educational activities	Smart Board, 43 Inch JYX0IHUB Interactive Whiteboard, Electronic Whiteboard, Screen Mirroring frc	1750	1	1750
11		Language Resource Books	Al-Kitaab and Alif-Baa textbooks	100	15	1500
12		Prayer Rugs	available for prayer if needed	20	10	200
13		Cultural Artifacts for Space	authentic cultural pieces that promote education on MENA culture	265	1	265
14		Furniture	Conference table with ten chairs from SOURCE Office and Tech.	4493.17	1	4493.17
15		White Board	6' x 4' - Amazon.com	138.12	1	138.12
16		Arabic/ME-style cushions for floor space / meetings	Wayfair/target/TJ Maxx	500	1	500
17		Partition study cubicles	study desks for students	500	6	3000
18		Surplus desks and chairs	Lump sum for additional desks and furniture from surplus as needed	150	1	150
19		Tea/coffee maker	for making tea and coffee only	45	1	45
20		MENA tea set	culturally authentic MENA tea set	120	1	120
21		Middle East Coffee servers	culturally authentic MENA coffee server and cup set	150	1	150
22		International Studies Department Contribution	Contribution from SPPAIS for renovation of rooms as sign of commitment to ensure sustainability	-5000	1	-5000
23		Criminal Justice Department Contribution	Partition study cubicles (in-kind contribution)	-3000	1	-3000
24						
25					TOTAL	27655.29