



Department of Middle East Studies

THE POWER

The Department of Middle East Studies at the University of Michigan is a major center for the production and dissemination of knowledge concerning the languages, cultures, and history of one of the most contested regions of today's world. Professors in the department study ancient Western Asia from the origins of civilization to the advent of Islam, as well as the entire Islamic world up to the present day. We include specialists in cuneiform studies, Egyptology, the Hebrew Bible, Rabbinics, Early Christianity, ancient and medieval Iran, Arabic language and literature, Ottoman, early Islamic, and Central Asian history, Islamic religion, Armenian studies, and modern Hebrew and Judaic studies. We collaborate with faculty from across the university in fields as diverse as law, anthropology, linguistics, and economics through our partnership with the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies (CMENAS). Few other programs in the world can offer the undergraduate or graduate student such a wide range of courses.

THE OPPORTUNITIES

In conjunction with colleagues from across the university and beyond, our faculty members are continually extending the frontiers of knowledge in their specializations and have been duly recognized by their peers with awards, grants, and editorships.

Our undergraduate majors have the opportunity to study with these premier teachers and scholars to hone their linguistic, analytical, research, and writing skills through a concentration in Ancient Civilizations and Biblical Studies (ACABS), Arabic, Armenian, Persian, and Turkish Studies (AAPTIS), or Hebrew and Jewish Cultural Studies (HJCS). Graduate students pursue research in areas as diverse as methods for teaching Arabic as a second language, mortuary practice in early Egypt, Mesopotamian love magic, Sufi spirituality, and Israeli cinema. Study-abroad programs, language circles, lectures by visiting scholars, and conferences organized by departmental colleagues offer a variety of ways to engage in an interdisciplinary educational program rivaled by few others. When they leave the university, our students are well prepared for successful careers in business, law, diplomacy, and medicine, as well as in teaching and scholarship.

THE IMPACT

Fellowship support for our graduate students will further enhance the department's excellent reputation and ensure that we attract the best and brightest scholars. These talented students will be the future leaders in the field and as such need support to focus on their studies. Additionally, in building the strongest Middle East Studies department in the nation, we need to expand our already impressive Arabic language and literature curriculum with a variety of global education opportunities for our students.

Endowed Professorship in Islamic Law and Intellectual History

\$2.5M endowed

Islamic law is an area of compelling interest to students. The holder of this endowed professorship would significantly enrich current curriculum by promoting the appreciation of Islamic law as one of the world's major legal systems. Since contemporary Islamic law draws continually on fourteenth-century Islamic juristic writings and legal practice, Islamic intellectual history plays an essential role in understanding Islamic civilization in all its aspects. Islamic law also crucially shaped the religious, ethical, political, and social beliefs and practices of Muslim societies through the centuries. A gift to establish a named endowed professorship would enable the department to attract a world-acclaimed scholar for this important field of study.

Graduate Fellowship

\$1M endowed / \$50,000 annually

Original scholarship in any of the fields covered by the department requires mastery of several languages, instruction in many of which is not available at most colleges. As part of their programs in the department, therefore, our graduate students must usually allot a great deal of time and effort to language acquisition, and they typically require six or seven years of intense work before completion of their dissertations. Fellowship support is essential if the department is to continue its record of attracting the most promising applicants. An endowed gift of \$1 million will provide one graduate fellowship.

Lectureship in Turkish Language

\$1M endowed / \$50,000 annually

The University of Michigan is among the very few institutions in the country which provide instruction in Turkish at the elementary, intermediate, and advanced level on a regular basis. Due to Congress' deep cuts to international education funding, including support for the less commonly taught languages such as Turkish, outside support is crucial to securing Michigan's role as a preeminent institution for the study of Turkey. An endowed lectureship will ensure continuity for instruction in Turkish language in perpetuity.

Undergraduate Arabic Language Support

\$1M endowed

The department has major initiatives for Arabic language teaching underway, which enable undergraduates to study abroad during the academic year and summer semesters. We need to strengthen these initiatives and make them permanent.

Undergraduate Study Abroad Experience Fund

\$10,000 to \$50,000 annually

The very best way a student can gain a thorough knowledge of a language and a culture is to spend time studying abroad to experience full linguistic and cultural immersion. Middle East Studies faculty members lead academic programs for students in countries in the Middle East such as Israel, Morocco, and others. Gifts will enable students who have studied the region on the Ann Arbor campus to continue their learning through travel to the area in order to engage in a deep exploration of regional history, society and culture through first-hand on-site experiences.

Iranian Studies Initiative

In the last 25 years, two generations of distinguished Iranists were trained in the department in the fields of history, literature, linguistics and religion. Because our current faculty benefits from a large and distinguished concentration of scholars working on Iran—with specializations that cross the boundaries of archaeology, art history, history, and linguistics and language—we are uniquely positioned to design a comprehensive, competitive, multi-disciplinary program that would be unparalleled in the U.S.

Endowed Professorship in Persian Literature and Cultural Studies

\$2.5M endowed

The department is home to one of the most comprehensive Middle East Studies programs in North America, and serves as a model for all other such programs. A gift to fully endow a named Professorship in Persian Literature, Film Studies, or a related area, is the best means of attracting and retaining top faculty. The holder of this position would offer classes that will allow students to delve deeper into Persian writing, film, art or other works and explore how these works have been interpreted and incorporated into Iranian culture and thought.

Lectureship in Persian Language

\$1M endowed / \$50,000 annually

Michigan is among the very few institutions in the country that regularly provides instruction in Persian at the elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels. Language provides our students unparalleled opportunities to explore the culture broadly and deeply. Gifts are critical to ensure that these levels of language course offerings will continue. Due to Congress' deep cuts to international education funding, including support for the less commonly taught languages, private support is crucial to securing Michigan's role as a preeminent institution for Iranian Studies, which includes the study of Persian language. An endowed named lectureship will ensure that Persian language will be taught in perpetuity.

Visiting Professorship of Iranian Studies

\$1M endowed / \$50,000 annually

Funding is needed to host a visiting distinguished scholar for one semester each year to expand and bring fresh perspectives to the program. We envision a highly prestigious fellowship awarded to a distinguished scholar across a wide range of Iranian studies—from the Iranian Revolution to Sufism, Shi'ism, Iranian cinema, ancient Iranian history, art and archeology. The Visiting Professor would spend a semester on campus, teach a course in the area of her/his specialization, meet with students and faculty, and possibly present a public lecture. Bringing renowned scholars to campus is a critical priority to maintain Michigan as a thought leader in the field, and would be of great interest to the U-M academic community, the Iranian community in Michigan, and the general public.

Graduate Student Fellowship

\$1M endowed / \$50,000 annually

Graduate fellowships provide much needed support for students working on Iran-related topics. Students in MES graduate programs face substantial financial burdens in completing their coursework and gaining research experience in the region. This endowment will ensure our ability to recruit exceptional graduate students who plan to study and carry out research in the region. Fellowships provide funding for tuition, stipends, and research-related expenses.

Annual Lecture in Iranian Studies

\$200,000 endowed / \$10,000 annually

Lectures presented by scholars from outside U-M introduce students to leading figures in the field and provide an opportunity to discuss new work and research. Resources are needed for the department to host an annual lecture by a prominent guest speaker on a topic related to Iran or Iranian Studies. This is an opportunity to promote the culture, history, language, politics and society of Iranians.

WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities change lives. Wills, estate, and planned gifts allow you to create a lasting legacy that will enable the best and brightest minds to experience a liberal arts education, solve problems in a changing world, and yield ideas and innovations that will make a difference in Michigan and around the globe.

[GIVE ONLINE NOW](#)

Your one-time gift of any amount supports our programs and student experiences. We are working together to reimagine the world and create positive, purposeful change.

CONTACT INFO

LSA Advancement

College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

101 N. Main Street, Suite 850

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

P.734.615.6333 // F.734.647.3061

lsa.umich.edu

lsa.umich.edu/middleeast