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**PREFACE.** Established in 1958, the UCLA Center for Near Eastern Studies (CNES) is one of

the oldest area studies centers in the United States (U.S.). From its inception, the center’s affiliated faculty have been among the most internationally renowned scholars working on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), making important contributions to multidisciplinary research, teaching, and community engagement. Our faculty were among the founding members of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and remain active leaders in this prominent scholarly association dedicated to supporting the study of the region. The center continues to play a critical role in shaping the field in one of America’s most diverse cities at the nation’s top- ranked public university. Several foci differentiate CNES’ research and teaching (see Table A-1).

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| **Table A-1. CNES Unique Scholarly Contributions** | |
| Global | Situated within UCLA's International Institute (Intl Inst), our faculty incorporate a comparative and global approach to teaching about the MENA region. |
| Minority Populations | Committed to the study of MENA’s minority populations, our faculty and students research the histories and current realities of Armenians, Kurds, Baha’is, Sephardic Jews, and Judeo-Persian  speakers, among other communities. |
| North Africa | Our community represents the largest constellation of faculty and graduate students focused on North Africa, addressing critical issues in the Maghreb today, such as immigration, energy security, and cultural production. |
| Human Rights | We are dedicated to human rights in the MENA with passionately engaged faculty from the Promise Institute for Human Rights (PIHR), the center of human rights education, research, and advocacy at UCLA’s School of Law. |
| Visual Studies | Our faculty demonstrate cross-disciplinary strengths in visual studies, with MENA specialists in art history, photography, cartoons, films, comic books, and visual methods in anthropology, who collaborate with the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Hammer Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Fowler Museum at UCLA, and the UCLA Film and Television Archive. |
| Library | We access and grow the West Coast’s largest and most varied library of MENA research materials, encompassing print and digital resources, ancient manuscripts, ephemera, and items of material culture. |

Our research, teaching, and outreach move beyond general perceptions of the MENA as ethnically (Arab) and religiously (Muslim) homogeneous by uplifting vibrant narratives of pluralism, the arts, and dynamic socio-political movements. Our goal is to enhance education about MENA’s people and cultures and foster more accurate understandings of the region.

Through newly proposed projects, the center will expand academic and public discourse about the MENA to highlight the rich diversity of human experience.

**Impact:** In doing so, we are creating a blueprint for the study of the MENA at UCLA and providing a model for other educational institutions to revitalize their own pedagogical approaches. Our aim is not merely curricular reform: we are academics engaged in public conversations that resist exceptionalizing or pathologizing a region whose cultures and peoples have been historically misrepresented and misunderstood. Continued support will allow us to inspire and train the next generation of scholars, teachers, journalists, public servants– among others– to explore MENA’s past, present, and future.

# COMMITMENT TO THE SUBJECT AREA

* 1. UCLA’s international reputation as a center of learning and its location in one of America’s most diverse cities fuel CNES’ success in scholarship, teaching, and outreach on the MENA. The university’s yearly commitment to MENA studies is currently valued at over 24.7 million dollars. These monies support the administration of MENA studies across campus, faculty research and teaching, library resources, outreach, programmatic collaborations with institutions and individuals both domestically and abroad, and graduate student training.
     1. *Operation of the Center*. As UCLA’s intellectual and administrative hub for MENA studies,

CNES has experienced increased demand for support, management, and coordination of

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| **Table A-2. Yearly Institutional Support for MENA Operations** | |
| **$419,329** | Center personnel:  Staff salary & benefits – program manager, program & outreach coordinator Visiting researchers  Director’s administrative compensation and course release Graduate student researchers  Scholarly conferences and other programs  Student awards |
| **$8,000** | Levi Della Vida Award for Excellence in Islamic Studies |
| **$182,114** | Intl Inst administrative services to CNES **–** budget & finance, human resources & payroll, development, public relations, computing & information technology (IT) services |
| **$180,790** | Intl Inst MENA academic programs **–** faculty chairs, student affairs officers (SAOs) inform students about degree requirements, education abroad, scholarships, and campus resources for tutoring, childcare, academically rich summer programs and services to students with disabilities |
| **$150,242** | Humanities business and personnel administrative group, SAO advises students and assists Near Eastern Languages and Cultures department chair and faculty committees |
| **$57,800** | Administrative expenses for visiting Fulbright Scholar Enrichment Program, education abroad prorated for MENA Studies, library and faculty exchanges and joint research with institutions in the MENA |

affiliated faculty and students. As a result, the university’s financial support for MENA operations is now approximately $1,000,000 annually (see Table A-2).

* + 1. *Teaching staff.* UCLA has made sixteen new faculty hires for classroom instruction related to

the MENA in UCLA’s departments (Depts) of Anthropology, Asian American Studies, Education, Ethnomusicology, History, Political Science, Sociology, and Near Eastern Languages and Cultures (NELC). Within NELC, language programs are fortified through recent hires of an applied linguist for Arabic and a new Hebrew language instructor. In academic year (AY) 2020- 21, the total cost was **$16,200,000**.

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| **Table A-3. MENA Faculty-held Endowed Chairs** |
| Ancient Eastern Mediterranean Studies |
| African cultural archaeology |
| Armenian language & medieval history |
| Armenian early-modern history |
| Comparative literature |
| Baha’i history and religion in Iran |
| Art history |
| French and Francophone studies |
| Holocaust studies |
| Iranian studies |
| Jewish history |
| Jewish music |
| Judeo-Persian history & language |
| Islamic law |
| Mediterranean Jewish studies |
| Sephardic studies |
| Women's studies |
| World history |

CNES’ affiliated faculty receive highly competitive extramural funding for research that contributes to high priority scholarship in areas of national need, advances course development, increases graduate student opportunities, and enhances our training of experts on the MENA region. These sums are not included in the university’s annual budget figure. Last AY, affiliated faculty in the humanities and social sciences were awarded over 1.6 million in external research funding

from private grants, fellowships, and U.S. and international government agencies. Affiliated faculty in STEM fields received over 6 million in federal funds for collaborative projects with colleagues in Israel, Armenia, and Turkey.

Several endowments finance faculty and student research and publications, as well as MENA programming. Each endowed chair held by a CNES distinguished faculty member generates an average of $40,000 annually, after salaries. These monies finance MENA programming and

student and faculty research (see Table A-3).

* + 1. *Library Resources*. Another endowment supports Armenian materials acquisitions. Annually

almost $250,000 is spent on the Young Research Library’s (YRL) priority MENA acquisitions, special collections, and travel. Further UCLA annually contributes nearly $1,000,000 for salaries and benefits of MENA library staff who advance expertise and competence in MENA languages and regional studies (see Sections E & F).

* + 1. *Linkages with Institutions Abroad.* UCLA maintains a wide range of linkages with institutions

and scholars in the MENA. We host visiting academics from across the globe who conduct research in UCLA’s vast MENA library collections and collaborate with UCLA specialists. Pre- pandemic, in AY of 2018-19, we hosted 139 individuals representing government, civic, and educational institutions from MENA countries.

There are 16 international exchange agreements between institutions in 7 MENA countries (Armenia, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Morocco, Palestine, and Turkey) and UCLA’s NELC Dept, library, *School of Theater, Film and Television* (TFT), Promise Armenian Institute (PAI), *School of Nursing, School of Engineering & Applied Science*, UC’s Education Abroad Program (EAP), and computational science program. EAP allows students to earn credit while studying in Cyprus, Jordan, Israel and Morocco (see Section D-4). The pandemic temporarily halted most programs but many are scheduled to begin again this summer.

There are also international linkages for students enrolled in UCLA’s professional schools.

UCLA Executive MBA students are eligible for financial need-based Global Immersion Fellowships to participate in global business and management programs in Israel, Jordan, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia. **(Foreign Language & Area Studies** (**FLAS) Competitive Preference Priority (CPP) #1)** The weeklong programs were held virtually since

2020, but travel has commenced and 40 MBA students recently visited the UAE for the course “Dubai and its evolving role in the UAE, Middle East and the World.” Partnerships with Haifa University, Hebrew University, and Tel Aviv University allow qualified Israeli students to attend a semester at UCLA School of Law.

UCLA is ranked tenth in the nation for number of foreign students enrolled. Last year, over 110 undergraduate and 180 graduate students registered from MENA countries. Additionally, there were over 95 non-degree MENA students enrolled in other international exchange programs, including visiting Fulbright scholars. Currently figures are lower than normal given the pandemic. In AY18-19 the number of students was 40% higher.

* + 1. *Support for Outreach Activities*. UCLA contributes **$38,429** to support K-14 programs and the

outreach & special projects coordinator’s salary (see Sections E-2 & H-NRC).

* + 1. *Funding for Undergraduate Students*. Approximately 51% of all UCLA undergraduates

receive some form of financial aid, with an average award of $24,808; 45% of all undergraduates receive financial aid that covers full tuition and fees (see Section G-4: Equal Access). Additional support for undergraduates includes a newly endowed CNES summer Arabic language scholarship created through matching funds by the Chancellor; last AY undergraduate MENA studies FLAS awards provided $15,000. UCLA’s Undergraduate Student Association funds MENA related student groups and cultural activities.

* + 1. *Funding for Graduate Students.* Almost all PhD students receive 5 years of guaranteed

funding. Counting fellowships, full-year/summer graduate student research (GSR) mentorships, and teaching assistantships (TA) and other fellowships, the stipend per PhD student in MENA studies is $31,500 per year, plus tuition and fee (T&F) remissions and health insurance (California (CA) residents T&F is currently $17,756 annually; non-resident tuition (NRT) is

$32,858). Last year 18 PhD students were funded more than $344,000 from FLAS, and the Graduate Division provided $47,725 to supplement fellows’ stipend awards. The CNES Minorities in the MENA Mellon grant program provided $131,916 for 7 students. Additionally, CNES students receive fellowships from the offices of the chancellor, deans and regents, Fulbright Scholar Program, Social Sciences Research Council (SSRC), National Science Foundation, Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA), American Research Center in Turkey (ARIT), American Institute for Maghrib Studies (AIMS), American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE), Palestinian American Research Center (PARC), dissertation year, and law fellowships. A recent million-dollar gift established a postdoctoral fellowship in Iranian linguistics. The Chancellor matched 50% for two recent endowments: one covers yearly NRT and summer stipend for a foreign student from the MENA ($21,102 in AY20-21), and the other provides travel grants for students’ international field research. Small gifts support summer awards for article publications, and dissertation research and writing on the MENA region ($25,000 in AY20-21). NRC funds also support student travel for professional development (PD). A very recent gift will support 4 AY predoctoral fellowships for Iranian diaspora research. In sum, last AY, combined support for PhD students to benefit from PD opportunities and conduct research was over $5,500,000.

* + 1. *Other forms of student support.* Centers for Jewish studies, Israel studies, and PAI are all

directed by affiliated faculty and support student and faculty research. Student interns are hired for CNES related communications including creating, editing, and subtitling podcasts, so that digital materials are compliant with the American Disabilities Act. Section G-4: Equal Access delineates the wealth of academic and accessibility support UCLA offers its students. See Section D-2 for a discussion of academic and career advising services.

1. **QUALITY OF THE CENTER’S LANGUAGE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

**1-3 Language Courses, Levels, Instructors, and Enrollments.** Robust language instruction is

provided through NELC. UCLA is one of the few campuses offering performance-based courses in all five of the priority MENA less commonly taught languages (LCTLs): Arabic, Eastern and Western Armenian, Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish. NELC also offers classes in such less-spoken languages as Azeri and Aramaic, as well as ancient, classical, and early modern languages, including Sumerian, Akkadian, ancient Egyptian, biblical Hebrew, Avestan, Old Iranian, and Ottoman Turkish. Next year, Dari Persian literature courses will be taught by a visiting professor. Course enrollments are shown in Table B-1.

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| **Table B-1. Language Courses Offered** | | |
| **REGULARLY SCHEDULED COURSES - TOTAL AY20-21 ENROLLMENTS: 1,341** | | |
| LANGUAGE | LEVEL | NON-TA  INSTRUCTORS |
| Arabic (Modern Standard) | Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, Intensive | 4 |
| Armenian (Eastern & Western) | Beginning, Intermediate | 4 |
| Hebrew | Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced | 4 |
| Persian | Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced | 6 |
| Turkish | Beginning, Intermediate | 1 |
|  | | |
| **SPECIALLY OFFERED COURSES - TOTAL AY20-21 ENROLLMENTS:** 35 | | |
| LANGUAGE | | LEVEL |
| Arabic dialects (e.g., Iraqi, Egyptian, Maghrebi); Ancient Egyptian; Biblical Hebrew | | Beginning |
| Ottoman Turkish | | Intermediate |
| Akkadian; Aramaic; Sumerian | | Beginning, Intermediate |

**4. Pedagogical Resources**. NELC has strong modern language programs due to the breadth and

depth of faculty expertise. Language courses are staffed by nineteen lecturers and faculty members, plus TAs. A significant number of undergraduates enrolled in Arabic, Persian, and Armenian language courses are heritage speakers. NELC works with the NHLRC for performance-based placement and heritage-language pedagogy. Supporting heritage learners to advance their language skill accelerates the development of a national pool of highly proficient MENA language speakers prepared for a globally competent workforce that contributes to U.S. economies, politics, and national security. **(NRC Absolute Priority #1 (AP1))**

**ARABIC:** Michael Cooperson, head of the Arabic program, is a noted translator and pedagogue. At UCLA he teaches performance-based language pedagogy to both graduates and undergraduates. Dr. al Rifae, an applied linguist, conducts the twice-yearly training sessions for our Arabic language TAs.

**ARMENIAN:** Students select UCLA over other universities because of the unique opportunities to study Armenian languages and culture and to attend the nation’s largest program in Armenian history. Courses are provided for both Eastern and Western Armenian, including upper division content courses. PAI funding supports upper-level options for independent studies, directed research, and service learning in the local Armenian community. A significant number of our Armenian language students are heritage learners.

**HEBREW:** The Hebrew language program includes three levels of language instruction, plus the summer intensive course “Modern Hebrew Poetry and Prose” taught in Hebrew. At any given time, about 50 students are studying Hebrew. We have a new Hebrew lecturer and enrollment is rising. Upper division instruction rotates among non-Hebrew languages that have acquired Hebrew script and linguistic elements, such as Judeo-Arabic, Judeo-Persian, Ladino, Yiddish, Aramaic, and Syriac.

**PERSIAN:** Lower-level Persian language classes are divided into sections according to whether students are heritage learners or beginners. NELC also offers courses that are unavailable elsewhere in the United States, including Elamite, Avestan, and Old Iranian. Judeo- Persian courses introduce students to Persian literature composed by Iranian Jews with the use of Hebrew characters.

**TURKISH:** In addition to performance-based courses in modern Turkish, the curriculum rotates courses in Ottoman Turkish, Turkish literature, and Turkish pedagogy. Supported by a

grant from the Mellon Foundation, a nationwide survey was conducted to evaluate the needs of Turkish learners and teachers, with the goal of advancing Turkish pedagogy across America. The results, which were presented at the American Association of Teachers of Turkic Languages (AATT), informed new Turkish curriculum approaches and materials integrated into her teaching.

**Summer Programs for Middle Eastern Languages.** NELC hosts intensive summer language programs for beginning Arabic and Hebrew.

## Performance-Based Instruction and Assessment Resources

* 1. *Performance Exams.* NELC offers language performance exams for all levels of standard

languages at the beginning of each academic quarter (3 times per year) and exit exams at the end of each year. Exams support the proper placement of students, while measuring whether students have fulfilled the performance requirements for their respective language programs, assessing the skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. They determine students’ competence level according to American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards and the language learning frameworks of the relevant American teachers’ associations, such as AATT. Exams are open to UCLA students, other UC students, and the community.

* 1. *Pedagogy Training for Performance-Based Teaching.* Before they TA a language course,

students attend NELC’s pedagogy course for language instructors. For those seeking further expertise, NELC also offers a course in *heritage* language pedagogy. TAs are reviewed quarterly by their lead instructor. All instructors are regularly reviewed through student evaluations.

# QUALITY OF THE CENTER’S NON-LANGUAGE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

* 1. **Extent and Variety of Course Offerings**. Non-language MENA courses at UCLA number

well over 300, in 25 disciplines, 5 interdisciplinary programs and 3 area studies programs. Over

half of these courses are taught annually (see Appendix 1).

**Professional Schools**. The UCLA *School of Law* offers courses on Islamic law and comparative

law of the MENA in a multi-year rotation. Their Promise Institute for Human Rights (PIHR) includes education, research, and career training for global career pathways. **(AP1)**

The *School of Music* offers a wide range of courses and performance ensembles in music of Armenia, Turkey and Iran. Since 2019, students have been able to declare a minor in Persian music. The school regularly collaborates with the World Arts & Cultures Dept.

CNES’ faculty are on the advisory committee of the TFT Archive’s annual festival celebrating Iranian cinema. CNES is a community sponsor of annual MENA-oriented film festivals on and off campus. These include the Arab Film Festival, and the American Film Institute!s (AFI) Fest.

The center is increasingly connecting with students in the *School of Education & Information Studies* (SE&IS) where a newly hired faculty with MENA specialization offers courses on educational ethnography, linguistic anthropology, and migration studies. CNES fellowships have supported graduate students researching comparative education in the MENA.

* 1. **Interdisciplinary Course Examples**. At the Intl Inst, both international Development Studies

and Global Studies majors are interdisciplinary, as is the CNES-affiliated Interdepartmental Degree Program (IDP), that is popular among students of Middle Eastern heritage. All NELC non-language programs are interdisciplinary; each takes the methodology and orientation of a particular discipline such as archaeology, history, economics, or sociology, and applies it to MENA studies. Courses on Islam, political science, literature, and anthropology are cross-listed in the registrar!s list of courses, offering credit across multiple departments. Inter-disciplinary

graduate courses are offered in both history and NELC. The graduate seminar "Urban North Africa and the Mediterranean,” an element of the Urban Humanities Initiative of the Luskin

School of Public Affairs, is cross-listed with both anthropology (social sciences) and NELC (humanities). **(AP1)**

UCLA!s Islamic Studies Program (ISP) offers an interdisciplinary graduate degree with a first-year core that draws on multiple disciplines, ranging from literary studies and history to anthropology and law. Faculty collaboration in the ISP is strong across departments, divisions

and professional schools. Besides advanced courses at the graduate level, the ISP offers

"Introduction to Islam,” “Islam in the West,” and "Women and Islam” for undergraduates. These courses have consistently high enrollment that support UCLA!s diversity goals. The newly

launched year-long Freshmen Cluster course sequence on “Global Islam” expands course offerings and analytical approaches on the MENA region and beyond. Taught by a team of faculty from ISP/NELC, sociology, anthropology, English, this general education (GE)class broadens understanding of different communities across the Muslim world. Students explore nuances within the expansive geography, diverse cultures, and history of Islam through seminars on contemporary issues in Islamic law, debates on gender and sexuality, politics, race, and sectarianism. To enhance the Global Islam course through arts and outreach, ISP has partnered with Fowler Museum to support a community scholar-in-residence to develop community- engaged learning opportunities for students.

* 1. **Sufficient Faculty**. The number of non-language CNES-affiliated faculty has increased to 44

(see Appendix 3). Most faculty supporting MENA studies are tenured professors whose excellence is affirmed by the national ranking of their departments and their own published research. Core faculty is augmented by scholars who have significant interests in the Middle East and Islam but whose focus is in other disciplines such as Sephardic studies, African studies, European studies, and comparative literature.

**Pedagogical Training for Teaching Assistants***.* Departmental programs have trained more than

150 MENA graduate students as TAs over the past four years. TAs plan and conduct discussion sections, develop instructional material, and give examinations under the guidance of faculty members. They receive additional training through Office of Instructional Development (OID) which holds an orientation conference, workshops, and specialized departmental programs; awards mini-grants for instructional improvement; publishes a TA handbook; and provides videotaping services to enhance teaching skills.

CNES hosts seminars throughout the year to enhance professional development and introduce the latest research approaches, with a particular focus on minorities in the MENA. Faculty and graduate students from the departments of anthropology, art history, comparative literature, history, ISP, NELC, and sociology participate in these seminars.

* 1. **Depth of Course Coverage***.* MENA studies programs center on two humanities Depts: History and NELC. The History Dept is rated among the country!s top ten (*USA Today*, *US News &World Report*, *QS*) and encompasses specialists in early Islamic history, Byzantine and Anatolian history, medieval and Ottoman history, Indian Ocean history, modern Middle East history, and contemporary Israel studies. UCLA also offers the nation!s largest program in Armenian history. The History Dept offers over 40 courses on various MENA topics (see Appendix 1) which testify to the depth and breadth of the program. Examples of course articulation and progression include the Dept!s gateway courses for the world history

requirements: "History of the Middle East,” the introductory survey class, "The Makings of Muslim Globalization, 1800-1940,” on Muslim interactions between the MENA and the global south; a course on the expansion and contraction of "The Persianate World, 900-2000;” and a survey of religion “Multiple Islams?” These courses lead to upper-level undergraduate classes

such as the full year “Survey of the Middle East, 500 to the Present” designed for juniors and seniors and "The Rise of Islam.” Students then choose among specialized upper-level courses and directed studies such as those in Table C-1. NELC offers nearly 70 non-language courses in a variety of fields, at all levels, from the archaeology, history, and civilizations of the Ancient

Near East to bibliography and research methods and teaching practices. Recent NELC hires have

expanded offerings in Hebrew and Aramaic literature, Arabic, and ISP courses. Beginning next

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| **Table C-1. History Dept Course Series – Middle East Field** |
| Iranian history: a series of cross-listed courses from NELC, taught by Rahim Shayegan. For Iranian specialists across a range of disciplines, the series covers the archaeology of Iran, Iranian civilization, and the history of the Baha’i faith. |
| South Asian history: three classes taught by Nile Green and Sanjay Subrahmanyam. “Indo-Islamic Interactions, 700-1750” surveys the development of Muslim social and political communities in South Asia; a follow-up class on “Indo-Islamic Interactions, 1750-1950” covers Indian Muslim responses to colonialism leading up to the foundation of Pakistan; and “History of Modern Afghanistan. |
| Classes on Medieval and modern Middle East include “History of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1881 to Present”; “History of Islamic Iberia;” “Survey of the Middle East: 500 to the Present,” which is split into three separate courses taught by Michael Morony, Choon Hwee-Koh, Sebouh Aslanian, and James Gelvin. |
| Modern North Africa/Maghreb history and anthropology: classes taught by Susan Slyomovics and Aomar Boum and cross-listed with the Anthropology Department: “Cultural Studies of North Africa”; “Making the Modern Middle East”; “Minorities in the Middle East”; and “Anthropology of Islam.” Annually, the course titled “Topics in Middle East Studies” offers advanced courses in rotation, covering Cities of North Africa; Ottoman Urban History; and Anthropology and History of the Mediterranean. |
| Armenian History taught by Sebouh Aslanian, is a full year history course for juniors and seniors covering the ancient, medieval and modern periods up through the Armenian question and genocide, the national republic, Soviet Armenia, and dispersion. Advanced seminars in Armenian history have included paleography and manuscript studies as well as the early modern period under colonialization and a course on “Early Modernity, Global History and Mobility: The View from Armenian and MENA History.” |

year, a newly hired tenure-track professor will teach courses on the roles of women in Egyptology and Nubian Studies. As for the social sciences, UCLA’s Political Science Dept (also top-ten ranked) offers courses in ME international relations, comparative politics, Islam and politics, U.S. foreign policy in the MENA, great power relations with the ME, Israeli diplomacy, ethnic conflict in the ME, Iranian politics, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Table C-2 summarizes last year!s enrollments in non-language courses.

Anthropology and Sociology (both top-ten Depts), Asian American Studies, African American Studies, Gender Studies, and Political Science offer a range of new comparative

courses focusing on the MENA. The Economics Dept offers a degree in international area studies. Six new faculty hires contribute to a growing Social Sciences curricula. New specialties in anthropology encompass the anthropology of Islam, ethnic minorities of the MENA, militarism, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, and psychological anthropology. The anthropology Dept is also hosting this year’s Scholar at Risk, who specializes in Kurdish Studies,

state, sovereignty, social movements, political activism, and environmental anthropology.

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| **Table C-2. 2020-21 Enrollments in Non-Language Courses by Department** | | | | | |
| **Department** | **Courses** | **Enrolls** | **Department** | **Courses** | **Enrolls** |
| Anthropology | 12 | 233 | Gender Stds | 10 | 535 |
| Archaeology | 5 | 102 | Germanic Languages | 4 | 24 |
| Art History | 26 | 1092 | History | 46 | 1851 |
| Comparative Literature | 14 | 174 | Law | 5 | 61 |
| Communication Stds | 3 | 278 | NELC | 92 | 3765 |
| Economics | 2 | 440 | Political Science | 16 | 629 |
| English | 12 | 283 | Religion | 15 | 326 |
| Ethnomusicology | 29 | 749 | Sociology | 16 | 416 |
| French & Francophone Stds | 11 | 234 | World Arts & Cultures | 4 | 28 |

The Sociology Dept has added two new faculty members who focus on the MENA, in a dept particularly strong in the subfields of ethnicity, nationalism, race relations, migration, diaspora studies, and education in the MENA. Recent hires in the Gender Studies Dept specialize in Islam, labor, religion, secularism, and women and the law. The Art History Dept provides courses on Eastern and Western Islamic Art. A relatively new faculty member offers classes in North African and Iranian art and architecture. Of particular note is the strength in MENA literature and literary criticism gained through the recent appointments in Anthropology, English and Comparative Literature, Ethnomusicology, ISP, History, NELC, Education, Sociology, and Political Science.

# QUALITY OF CURRICULUM DESIGN

UCLA departments offer students degree programs covering the modern, medieval and ancient Middle East. At the undergraduate level, there are 5 majors and 6 minors, and over a dozen other Depts with a depth of courses that allows students to specialize in various aspects of Middle Eastern culture, language, and history (see Appendix 1). NELC offers undergraduate and graduate degrees, providing the core language and non-language courses upon which disciplinary, area, and trans-regional studies depend. All modern MENA languages are offered at the elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels (see Table B-1). The extensive Arabic curriculum includes courses on, for example, oral literature, Arabic translation, paleography, medieval Arabic grammar, Arabic dialectology, the history of Islamic Iberia, modern Arabic literature, and modern Arabic critical literary theory. Given UCLA’s deep commitment to interdisciplinarity, students are encouraged to enroll in seminars outside their discipline.

* 1. **Undergraduate Instruction***.* Students frame their studies on the MENA in several ways.

First, the Intl Inst offers a BA in African and Middle East Studies (AMES). The AMES program– which is rare on American campuses– integrates regional MENA studies within an international frame and focuses on such issues as global health, international development, environmental studies, and human rights. Students take courses from various Depts and schools offering MENA courses. Institute faculty advise students writing their senior theses and capstone research projects. Second, NELC has a Middle East Studies IDP giving students an honors option and the opportunity to jointly earn a Master’s degree. This program requires eighteen area studies courses and competency in one ME language. Students focus on an area or sub-region of the MENA. Third, undergraduates in the Divisions of Social Sciences and Humanities can concentrate on the region by selecting ME courses to fulfill major, minor, or concentration

requirements in specific departments. They do not need to major in a MENA program to pursue this option. In Art History, History, Political Science, and most of the LCTLs, students may also pursue directed individual research.

Besides its IDPs, NELC offers BAs in 5 MENA fields: Ancient Near East & Egyptology, Middle Eastern Studies, Arabic, Iranian Studies, and Jewish Studies. NELC also offers 6 undergraduate minors: Ancient Near East & Egyptology, Arabic and Islamic Studies, Armenian Studies, Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Iranian Studies, and Israel Studies. Students may combine their major with one in another department (double major) or add a minor.

Many undergrads fulfill GE and language requirements with ME courses. During their UCLA career, over 200 Bachelor!s degree recipients, including STEM majors, take more than 4 ME courses during their UCLA career. The ISP courses, "Introduction to Islam” and "Islam in

the West,” have grown, each enrolling over 150 students in AY 19-20. Our new Global Islam Freshmen Cluster enrolled over 320 students. Departmental collaborations with the 27 area studies centers of the Intl Inst have prompted students to enroll in Global Studies courses within their regional interest, making for a more comprehensive understanding of societies throughout the world. **(AP1)** New undergraduate courses are offered every year in accordance with faculty members’ new areas of research. Table D-1 displays a selection of new courses.

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| **Table D-1. A Selection of New Courses** | | |
| Agadjanian | Sociology 236A | *International Migration* |
| Balafrej | Art History 119A/B | *Western Islamic Art; Eastern Islamic Art* |
| Chism, Guhin, Sayeed, Slyomovics | Freshman Cluster 27A, B, C | *Global Islam* |
| Green | History M174 | *Indo-Islamic Interactions, 1750-1950* |
| Gandhi | Asian American 178 | *Critical Refugee Studies* |
| Garcia-Sanchez | Education 222B | *Participant-Observation Field Methods* |
| Kligman | Music/Jewish Stds M67 | *Popular Jewish and Israeli Music* |
| Harris | Int’l Development | *Contemporary Iran: Social, Political, & Economic Transformations* |
| Ingenito | Anthropology M247Q | *Central Asian Studies: Discipline, Methods, Debates* |
| Peters | Political Science | *International Relations: Politics of Migration* |
| Young | Int’l Development 140 | *Decolonizing Political Economy: Colonialism and Development* |

* 1. **Academic and Career Advising Services** are provided by Student Affairs Officers (SAOs) in

all departments and programs. Peer counselors supplement the departmental SAOs in the AMES, IS, and NELC programs, providing information about classes, instruction, and requirements.

CNES circulates academic and professional opportunities via its website and listservs to support career development. Each graduate student has a faculty advisor and a dissertation committee.

Seminars in aspects of ISP methodology for new graduates are supplemented by writing and PD courses. Another resource for academic and career support is UCLA’s Career Center, which offers access to counselors, job listings, resumé workshops, career fairs, and an extensive library. Both UCLA students and alumni benefit from PD resources online to connect with a vast global network to find and post jobs, join industry and resource groups, and mentor current students in career planning.

* 1. **Graduate Instruction**. The graduate ISP is interdisciplinary in nature and global in scope. It

includes core faculty members from several departments. Affiliated faculty across humanities, social sciences, and the law school mentor students who are also supported by a faculty program director and a formal advisory committee. Faculty expertise is not limited to the MENA but also includes South Asia and Muslim immigrant communities in non-Muslim majority countries. **(AP1)** This rigorous program has awarded some 95 degrees since its founding as the first such program in an American university. The interdisciplinary PhD ISP requires advanced proficiency in Arabic and a modern research language, intermediate proficiency in a second “Islamic” language, and courses in the humanities, social sciences, or a professional field.

Approximately 64% of graduate students concentrating in MENA or Islamic subjects are pursuing degrees in the Divisions of Arts, Humanities, or Social Science. Almost 36% are in professional schools, including business, community health sciences, education, film television

and digital media, law, and music. Besides training MA and PhD students, the Law School hosts a number of students specializing in Islamic law or comparative law of the MENA who graduate with a Doctor of Juridical Science degree.

Currently, 52 graduate students are in NELC majors, where they must become proficient in at least one modern research language and 2-3 MENA languages and cultures, depending on the program. Another 23 graduate students are in History, which offers concentrations in relevant fields of African, Jewish, and Middle Eastern history, with language requirements based on the field of specialization. Almost 60 graduate students are pursuing MENA oriented degrees in Anthropology, Archaeology, Art History, Comparative Literature, European Languages & Transcultural Studies, Gender Studies, Geography, Linguistics, Political Science, Sociology, Spanish, World Arts & Cultures, and Dance.

* 1. **Research and Study Abroad**. Before the pandemic, 17% of UCLA's undergraduate students enrolled in study abroad programs, and we expect programs to resume capacity. UCLA!s International Education Office offers services for students to study abroad, advising on academic, cultural, and financial issues and scholarship opportunities. Students choose from

summer, quarter, semester, and yearlong programs. Summer travel study programs combine the excitement of study abroad with the academic rigor of classes taught by UCLA faculty. The UC EAP coordinates the official, UC system-wide study abroad academic year programs. Rich academic opportunities are available to study in the MENA, including courses for any major of study, both in English and in the languages of the host universities in Cyprus, Israel, Jordan and Morocco. UCEAP has over 100 university partnerships worldwide for students to enroll in courses abroad, earning UC units and maintaining UC student status while being exposed to diverse global viewpoints. **(AP1)**

**Facilitation of Student Access to Other Institutions! Programs**. In addition to Fulbright

fellowships, field research and language study abroad are facilitated via the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) in the MENA, including ARIT - affiliated with universities in Ankara and Istanbul - and PARC. CNES faculty hold membership on the boards of CASA and AIMS. Students have access to and can transfer unit credit from non-UCLA summer language programs, and several graduate students spend their summers at field

where linkages via CNES institutional CAORC memberships allow them to access libraries, archives, and meet with scholars to facilitate research and share expertise. Currently UCLA COVID-19 protocols require that students and faculty obtain an approved Field Safety Plan for research and travel abroad, from their Dept chair and UCLA’s Division of Environment, Health & Safety. And the trip must be registered for UC Travel Insurance.

# QUALITY OF STAFF RESOURCES

* 1. **Teaching Faculty**. The current CNES Director is Ali Behdad. The center boasts 94 affiliated

faculty members (see Appendix 3), including 14 active emeriti, 59 tenured/tenure-track professors (6 who also teach MENA LCTLs; 17 hired since 2018), and 21 in lecturer, adjunct, visiting, or in-residence positions (including 11 language instructors). Female professors represent 42% of the affiliates, another tenure-track faculty member will join in 2022-23. Core faculty are proficient in at least one MENA language (usually more), possess extensive field experience, and actively publish (see Table E-1). **(AP1)**

Faculty members are on editorial boards of major journals in the field and frequently appear in the media. Many serve on the Faculty Advisory Committees (FAC) of the African and Middle Eastern (AMES) interdepartmental major, ISP, and the CNES, whose current FAC also includes the MENA Librarian, new faculty from the departments of Anthropology, Gender Studies,

NELC, Sociology, and the Fowler Museum’s Director of Education & Interpretation. The CNES FAC meets quarterly to discuss programs, policies that impact students and scholars, and opportunities for cross-disciplinary cooperation.

Recently hired faculty have moved the study of the MENA in new directions that include an

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| **Table E-1: Some Recent Faculty Books** |
| Salıh Can Açiksöz (Anthropology*). Sacrificial Limbs Masculinity, Disability, and Political Violence in Turkey.*  University of California Press. 2019. |
| Lamia Balafrej (Art History). *The Making of the Artist in Late Timurid Painting*. Edinburg University Press. 2019. |
| Aaron A. Burke (NELC). *The Amorites and the Bronze Age Near East: The Making of a Regional Identity*. Cambridge University Press, 2021. |
| Michael David Cooperson (NELC). *Impostures by al-Hariri: Fifty Rogue’s Tales Translated Fifty Ways.* NYU Press, 2020. |
| Evyn Lê Espiritu Gandhi (Asian American Studies). *Archipelago of Resettlement: Vietnamese Refugee Settlers and Decolonization across Guam and Israel-Palestine*. University of California Press. 2022*.* |
| James Gelvin (History). *The Contemporary Middle East in an Age of Upheaval.* Stanford University Press, 2021. |
| Nile Spencer Green (History). *Global Islam: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press. 2020. |
| Domenico Ingenito (NELC). *Beholding Beauty: Saʿdi of Shiraz and the Aesthetics of Desire in Medieval Persian Poetry.* Brill. 2020. |
| Sarah Abrevaya Stein (History). *Family Papers: A Sephardic Journey Through the Twentieth Century.* Macmillan Publishers. 2019. |
| Dov Waxman (Political Science). *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: What Everyone Needs to Know. Oxford University Press. 2019.* |
| Luke Yarbrough (NELC). *Friends of the Emir: Non-Muslim State Officials in Islamic Thought.* Cambridge University Press. 2019. |
| Alden Young (African American Studies). *Transforming Sudan: Decolonization, Economic Development and State Formation.* Cambridge University Press. 2017. |

emphasis on the often overlooked religious and ethnic minorities in the region. CNES’ support of junior faculty assures that their scholarly interests and fresh insights are reflected in CNES programming, including high-profile conferences open to the public. **(AP1)** These conferences frequently result in publications to assure junior faculty advancement. All UC ladder appointees undergo rigorous peer evaluation for advancement every 2-3 years. Service (to the university and the community), teaching (including student evaluations, classroom visits), and research profile (reports by outside reviewers) are the main criteria for advancement and promotion.

**Professional Development Opportunities.** Faculty receive grants for research and course development from the Academic Senate and UCLA!s OID. They are able to use sabbatical grants and CNES supplements for field research. Faculty and staff receive travel grants for professional meetings, conferences, research and the acquisition of data and library materials. Release time is

available for staff to attend PD courses. MENA and ISP faculty and students are eligible for CNES and Intl Inst grants for PD activities in the United States and abroad.

**Advising students.** All faculty teach, supervise, and advise graduate and undergraduate students, training individuals to become culturally competent experts in the MENA and Islamic Studies. **(AP1 & NRC CPP)**

* 1. **CNES Staff**. Our program manager coordinates student awards, personnel, visiting scholars,

other faculty grants and travel, annual reports and manages budgetary tasks. She has over 15 years of UC administrative experience in student affairs and interdisciplinary research centers, and holds degrees in Global & International Studies and Spanish. Our program & outreach coordinator organizes faculty lectures, conferences, and K-14 initiatives. He holds a BA in International Development Studies and Anthropology and has 8 years of UCLA administrative experience. We plan to hire a new MENA Studies Lab coordinator, with expertise in MENA languages to assist in pedagogical workshops, special faculty research projects, course development, library resources digitization, and a subtitles project webpage. Student assistants handle data collection, visitor reception, and communications. The Intl Inst provides finance management, fiscal oversight, and IT services.

The library!s MENA staff comprises over a dozen people including full time librarians who specialize in Jewish and Israel Studies, Middle Eastern, South Asian, Central Asian, and Islamic Studies, as well as catalog, reference and acquisitions librarians and GSRs for Arabic and Islamic

Studies, Armenian, Persian, Hebraica, Judaica, and Music.

**Oversight**. The quality of CNES personnel and programs are monitored through several levels of review. The Intl Inst, which is the administrative unit that oversees UCLA!s international research centers, requires submission of annual reports. As an Organized Research Unit of the UC system, CNES is also subject to the state!s external review process every 5 years, the most recent in spring of 2018, where external reviewers noted that “CNES admirably fulfills its mission to promote interdisciplinary study and understanding of the MENA”. They recognized that we connect faculty across disciplines and offer an intellectual home for scholars who

specialize in a wide variety of time periods and countries. Since the last review, we have been implementing the reviewers’ suggestion to involve graduate students in planning programs linked more closely to the curriculum and to provide additional funding to support travel and research. The Center director is also reviewed every five years by a faculty committee of the Intl Inst.

Academic departments affiliated with CNES receive an external review every 8 years. A 2017 external review for the NELC Dept commended the faculty strength in research, and its undergraduate and graduate programs, as one of the top NELC departments in the country, and suggestions to strengthen individual majors are being incorporated.

* 1. **Nondiscriminatory Hiring and Employment Practices**. Diversity is a defining feature of the

UC system, and UCLA in particular, and we embrace it as a source of strength. UCLA Human Resources rules state that all personnel decisions such as hiring, promotion, reclassification, etc., are made without any consideration of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship or service in the uniformed services. In 2019,

UCLA enacted a policy that requires all faculty candidates to submit an equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) statement as part of their application. Each faculty must include an EDI statement for every advancement and promotion. CNES is committed to UC policies and practices of non-discrimination, fairness and diversity in recruitment of faculty, staff and students alike. The current CNES office staff are all members of under-represented groups.

# STRENGTH OF THE LIBRARY

UCLA’s superb library collections attract faculty, students and visiting scholars to campus.

In addition to housing more than 17 million volumes and more than 2 million electronic resources, the UCLA Library serves as a depository for national and multinational organizations such as the Arab League and the World Bank. With its rich collection, award winning staff, and linkages to institutions abroad, the library provides a wealth of resources for students and scholars of the MENA, as well as for the local community.

## Young Research Library!s Holdings on the MENA, North Africa, Anatolia and Central

**Asia**. This collection, numbering over 580,000 volumes, constitutes one of the most significant

MENA research collections in the U.S. and the largest on the West Coast. Holdings are particularly strong in Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Armenian, Ottoman Turkish, Modern Turkish, Kurdish, Assyrian, and several Central Asian languages. Some 85% of the items were published in the MENA. The collection of materials from Yemen and the Persian Gulf countries is considered the most comprehensive in the US. The International Digital Ephemera Project offers another 179,000 items from our partners in the MENA, hosted on UCLA servers.

The MENA manuscript holdings are the second largest in North America, numbering over 15,000 items in Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew, Assyrian, Ottoman Turkish and Persian. The Library!s Minasian Collection of manuscripts, in Arabic, Persian, Armenian, Turkish, and Urdu,

is part of an ongoing digitization project, with 1,531 of the approximately 15,000 manuscripts already available for researchers through UCLA Library Digital Collections.

YRL has Arabic, Persian, and Turkish electronic reference materials, including encyclopedias of Hadith literature, Arabic poetry, Arabic, Persian, and Turkish film, the complete collection of speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini, and the Iranian National Bibliography. The library also facilitates access to online article and primary source databases in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish and Western languages, and online reference sources such as the Encyclopedia of Islam, Encyclopedia of Women in Islamic Cultures, Encyclopedia of the Quran, and Index Islamicus.

**Other campus research resources**. UCLA’s second largest library, the College Library, is organized to support the undergraduate curriculum. The Art History Dept’s Visual Resource Collection includes 26,000 slides on the MENA and the Islamic world. The TFT Archive and the Media Library house 800 documentary and feature films and many newsreels on the MENA. With recent acquisitions, our collection of pre-collegiate instructional materials is possibly the largest in the western United States. Fowler Museum holds and exhibits a collection of material culture from around the world, including ethnographic and archaeological objects, textiles and clothing from throughout the MENA. The Ethnomusicology Dept has a musical instrument collection for research as well.

**Financial Support for Research Library Acquisitions and Staff**. With university support, YRL maintains an expert MENA staff and systematically acquires such standard MENA resources as current periodicals, databases, and newly published scholarly books. CNES contributes to travel budgets for library staff to seek less-common items.

1. **Availability of Research Materials from Other Institutions**. The collections of the UC

system (over 39 million books) as well as materials from libraries both within the U.S. and abroad are available to UCLA students and faculty through interlibrary loans subsidized by the library. During the pandemic, materials from Hathi Digital Trust and other online collections have been made available to UCLA students free of charge. The UCLA library is also a major contributor to the CA Digital Library, the largest U.S. consortium for collecting and providing access to electronic resources for students at CA universities. The library is a member of the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), a national cooperative that lends scholarly materials such as foreign dissertations to patrons of its member libraries. YRL is a regular contributor to CRL’s Middle East Materials Project, which digitizes rare materials for increased access.

**Accessibility of UCLA Library Holdings to Non-UCLA Personnel**. UCLA serves students

and faculty from other area colleges and universities; public and private secondary schools (K-12 teachers who participate in our training programs are eligible to receive free or discounted library cards and use primary documents to create new lesson plans); visiting scholars from around the world; organizations such as the Getty Research Institute, the RAND Corporation, CA Rare Book School; and researchers in the media and entertainment industries. The general public can also access the collections by purchasing a library card. The library has created online bibliographies of online resources as a service to all users. The library’s Digital Library Program is engaged in two major faculty-directed online endeavors to facilitate worldwide access to primary research material: the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative and the UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology. In addition, the library’s online workshops offer training on digital research tools and methods as well as introductions to specific collections of library material.

**Digitizing, Hosting, and Making Available Sources Globally** The UCLA Library is collaborating with Early Manuscripts Electronic Library and St. Catherine!s Monastery of the

Sinai, Egypt to provide digital access to 160 palimpsests from the 6th CE located at St. Catherine!s Monastery today. It is one of the most extensive collections of pre-Islamic and early Islamic manuscripts in Greek, Coptic, Arabic, and other languages and is a national treasure for Egypt as well as crucial source for early Islamic and Christian history and theology. The Modern

Endangered Archives Program is a UCLA Library granting program

funded by the Arcadia Fund to digitize and make accessible endangered archival materials from the 20th and 21st centuries, with many projects submitted from the MENA.

# IMPACT AND EVALUATION

## Impact of Center Activities on the University, Community, Region, and Nation: CNES’

teaching, research and programmatic activities have a palpable impact on campus. Affiliated undergraduate courses consistently have high enrollment– over 18,000 in AY20-21. In last year’s graduating class, there were over 130 undergraduate minors and over 300 majors with degree concentrations on the MENA. Current graduate students specializing in MENA topics number almost 200. Last year, over 30 obtained a PhD with a MENA focus. The center's language training, interdisciplinary coursework, and professional development opportunities prepared them for strong positions in the field.

CNES programs fuel scholarship on the MENA and result in publications, digital resources, and innovative curriculum design. Audio visual recordings posted on the CNES website, such as those from recent Islamic manuscript workshops have become instructional resources for UCLA students and specialists around the globe. Timely and need scholarly publications have resulted from the *Minorities in the Middle East series* that examined religious and ethnic histories and theoretical approaches. CNES produces curricular resources on the region available online for use by U.S.-based and international scholars, government policy makers, journalists and

students (see Table G-1).

|  |  |
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| **Table G-1. Some CNES Online Resources for the General Public** | |
| TYPE OF RESOURCE | URL |
| Remote Research Forums | [www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/article/228519](http://www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/article/228519) |
| Podcasts of Center events | [www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/podcasts](http://www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/podcasts) |
| Sites of Encounter K-12 materials | [www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/article/211168](http://www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/article/211168) |
| Minorities in the MENA | [www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/minorities-program](http://www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/minorities-program) |
| Averroës Series on Jewish communities | [www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/averroes-lecture-series](http://www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/averroes-lecture-series) |
| Manuscript research guides | [www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/resources#Islamic](http://www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/resources#Islamic) |
| Faculty Experts for media queries | newsroom.ucla.edu/ucla-faculty-experts-middle-east-and-israel |
| Library Research guides | guides.library.ucla.edu/mideast-guides |
| UCLA Subtitle Project | [www.youtube.com/channel/UCYF2\_2TRaOq4kdPf5bumvbg/featured](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYF2_2TRaOq4kdPf5bumvbg/featured) |
| Turkish Tutor, free online course | [www.turkish-tutor.org](http://www.turkish-tutor.org/) |

The coronavirus pandemic created unprecedented obstacles for MENA researchers. To address these challenges, CNES organized forums on remote research, offering guidance and strategies for working with MENA digital collections, archives, and tools, as found on the CNES website (see Table G-1). **(AP1)** CNES has been actively investing in these digital resources to support MENA studies.

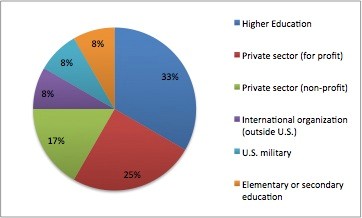
UCLA’s location informs the development and impact of our activities. Southern California (So Cal) boasts a large number of educational, business, and cultural organizations with connections to the MENA. Los Angeles has the country’s largest populations of Iranians (estimated 300K-500K) and Armenians (over 150K), along with significant Arab, Israeli (estimated 50K-100K), Kurdish, and Turkish communities. CNES’ outreach programs are enhanced by Los Angeles’ linguistic and cultural diversity, and our students enjoy unique opportunities to engage with MENA diasporic communities– practicing their language skills and enjoying MENA food, music, and visuals arts in the city.

CNES is dedicated to advancing education in local public schools and community colleges (CC) by offering K-14 teacher workshops on MENA topics (see Section H. NRC and I. NRC 3: Project Goal #3). Educators receive History-Social Science curricular resources and gain content knowledge of MENA regions and civilizations, while expanding their pedagogical skills to

integrate into K-12 classrooms. The majority of the 108 teachers who participated in CNES *Sites of Encounter* PD series over the last 3 years teach in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the second largest public school district in the country. LAUSD’s student population is overwhelmingly from under-served and under-represented groups. Recent online sessions and resources have reached teachers throughout California. Continuing this partnership under the rubric *Interconnected Worlds* will give educators in one of America’s largest public school districts opportunities to become more informed about the MENA and prepare students to engage with multilingual and multicultural societies both in the U.S. and abroad. CNES is also broadening its impact through a new partnership with Fowler Museum that fortifies teacher and student engagements with the MENA through museum visits and teacher institutes. CNES’ co- sponsored programs with the Fowler and the History-Geography project strengthen the quality of K-12 education within the state so that our students will have access to a wide-range of views to reinforce critical thinking and cultural competency skills necessary for participating in the business, education, public policy, healthcare and nonprofit workforce. **(AP1 & AP2) Disseminating Information to the Public:** CNES cultivates appreciation of MENA societies

and cultures among the public by organizing free and accessible lectures, film screenings, and cultural events. Many are disseminated via the CNES website as free podcasts, expanding access to scholarly expertise. Among these is a co-sponsored Persian-English *Bilingual Lecture Series on Iran* that has generated wide interest both from local Persian speakers and from students and faculty at So Cal colleges and universities. A larger audience follows the series through the series’ podcasts, also featured on BBC Persian, IRTV (Iranian Television), and Radio Iran (KIRN 670 AM), which communicate more inclusive understandings of the MENA through the lens of the region’s diversity.

## Placing Students and Contributing to an



**Enhanced Supply of MENA Specialists**. **(AP1)**

About 64% of our undergraduate MENA studies

alumni continue their studies to advanced degrees. UCLA students in MENA fields have a strong

**Figure 1: MENA Alumni Placements**

record in securing employment after graduation. Last year 74% of PhD graduates secured postdoctoral fellowships or university teaching positions at such key institutions as Middlebury Language Schools, City University of New York, and CA State University (where an alumnus developed the first Arabic language degree program). Besides academia, UCLA alumni have gone on to apply their knowledge of the MENA in other professional fields. A few examples will suffice here. Several alumni hold government positions in the

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| **Table G-2. Recent Alumni Higher Education Tenure- Track Positions** |
| Cambridge University |
| Colgate University |
| Dartmouth College |
| Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, Qatar, |
| Leiden University |
| Ohio University |
| New York University, Abu Dhabi |
| Penn State University |
| Princeton University |
| Stanford University |
| UC Santa Cruz |
| University of Colorado |
| University of Exeter |
| University of Michigan |
| Virginia Commonwealth University |
| Whitman College |

Depts of State and Homeland Security. A recent UCLA Law School graduate who focused on human rights in the MENA is now a legal officer at Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain. An alumna who majored in Public Health founded a women’s health organization and works on women’s empowerment in the Muslim world. Another, from Political Science, is an intelligence officer at the National Intelligence Council. An alumna who studied Islamic Law at UCLA currently serves as a judge advocate general in the military. We will continue to train students to contribute to areas of national need. (See Section I-NRC) **(AP1)**

* 1. **Addressing National Needs:** Located in Los Angeles, with its interdisciplinary academic

resources and deep commitment to pedagogy, research and outreach, CNES is uniquely positioned to respond to national teaching and research needs related to MENA languages and histories and to make knowledge about the MENA widely available. Citizens with a global perspective and cultural fluency are vital to the U.S. in the 21st century. Our programs are designed to train experts to engage pressing global issues and to uplift the diversity of perspectives and experiences in the MENA region. Our students are challenged to harness their critical thinking and language skills to gain a deeper understanding of the MENA region and international affairs. This rigorous training prepares them to join the national workforce in government service, education, business, nonprofit sectors and other areas of national need. **(AP1)** Linguistic competency, global expertise, cultural literacy, and critical thinking are ensured by the intellectual scaffolding provided by CNES in strong partnership with the Intl Inst. UCLA curricula and Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) programs have trained a wide range of specialists and experts who now serve in areas of critical national need.

**Awarded Fellowships Address National Needs.** When faculty committees select fellows, they

consider the students’ potential to become active researchers and scholars who will train future experts on the MENA. PD workshops encourage students to pursue careers in public service, whether in government or the non-profit sector. **(AP1)** Over the past 3 years, CNES has awarded FLAS and other MENA awards to assist graduate students with excellent records who demonstrated financial need. **(FLAS CPP #1)** A similar process will be used for FLAS awards to increase the number of MENA experts who are highly proficient in LCTLs of the region (see Section H-FLAS.) **(FLAS CPP #2)**

## Evaluation Plan.

* + 1. *Evaluating the New Courses:* UCLA evaluates MENA course offerings, and will evaluate the

newly proposed classes described in Section I. NRC - Program Planning and Budget. UCLA students submit a course rating form at the end of every course, which solicits both numeric data (e.g., ratings from 1 to 5) and qualitative data (e.g., sections for comments). The UC Educational Evaluation Center (UCEC) devised these forms, analyzes them, and disseminates data that promotes well-designed educational activities, including the use of evaluations.

Anonymous responses on the forms give the faculty and TAs feedback on the course material, the way it was conveyed, and the students’ level of comprehension and interest. Instructors are required to use this feedback to improve their course. Graduate student TAs keep results as part of their professional portfolio (see section B-4).

Student evaluations provided both numeric and qualitative feedback. For all courses, including new Section I. NRC Goals #1 and #2, quantifiable data such as enrollments and grades are collected by the registrar’s office. The CNES FAC serve as a sounding board for course evaluations and new ideas for curriculum and collaborations. Affiliated departments implement changes based on external review committee recommendations to improve outcomes (see Section D).

* + 1. *Evaluating Teacher Training Activities.* Content offered via PD opportunities for teachers by

our SE&IS History Geography Project partners is planned, evaluated, and refined on the basis of evaluations. The curricular resources on world regions and civilizations, described above, are evaluated not only by the participating teachers, but also by experts designing new curricula. A similar commitment to evaluation is demonstrated by the Fowler Museum, our other partners for K-12 programming.

CNES is committed to enhancing methods of evaluation and we will work with the evaluation firm Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) to assess the impact of our outreach programs.

We have consulted with TPMA to design an evaluation plan, with data collection and analysis to be done annually. Similarly, the National Heritage Language Resource Center (NHLRC) co- sponsored workshops rely on post-course questionnaires to assess program activities and goals to increase the number of U.S. citizens learning, speaking, and teaching critical-need foreign languages. Quantitative measures of the workshop’s continuing success are gathered from the number of applicants and attendees, and from the growing number of requests for private workshops that the NHLRC receives from school districts across the country.

* + 1. *Evaluating PD training for MENA area specialists through interdisciplinary research series:*

Evaluation methods for CNES programs continue to be employed to analyze best practices and modify approaches for state-of-the-art training of MENA experts. Moving forward, to evaluate CNES programs and initiatives TPMA will design surveys and conduct focus groups for students participating in PD workshops and research series over the next four years. Feedback from graduate students, FLAS recipients, and other workshops/conferences attendees will provide TPMA yearly analytical data on application of skills developed, career and academic plans/outcomes, and professional development needs. TPMA will summarize findings in annual reports with recommendations for improvement. Assessment will indicate ways to make changes and enhance the effectiveness of CNES initiatives.

Questionnaires are also distributed at events (including online via Zoom) to collect audience responses and suggestions. Exchanges with CNES faculty, staff and invited visitors participating in our programs enable us to collect informal feedback about the quality of our events and issues that audience members would like to see explored in additional programming. We use this formal and informal feedback as we plan our programming for the coming academic year and determine co-sponsorships and collaborations in support of audiences’ interests. We have an

online event portal where students and faculty can request CNES program sponsorship.

5**. Equal Access:** UCLA and CNES are fully committed to providing equal access for and

treatment of project participants from historically under-resourced and under-represented groups. As part of this commitment, in 2021 UCLA announced initiatives in its plan to be federally designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution by 2025, including a pledge to create new faculty lines and fellowships. UCLA's strengths lie in the diversity of its student body, faculty, and class offerings. As one of the world's most ethnically and culturally diverse communities, UCLA welcomes students from all 50 states and more than 120 foreign countries, though the majority of undergraduates are from CA. The undergraduate demographic statistics for 2020 are 29% Asian/Pacific Islander, 26% White, 22% Hispanic, 3% African American, 20% other. A significant number of undergraduates are the first in their family to attend college (30% of direct entry students and 44% of transfer students), 55% of undergraduates receive some sort of financial assistance.

UCLA’s commitment to student success regardless of background is confirmed by its number one national ranking among state universities in Pell Grant student achievement. Students with Pell grants, approximately 38% of UCLA’s undergraduates, are from families below the U.S. poverty threshold. Nationwide, fewer than half of Pell Grant students complete college. Due to a variety of year-round academic support services, this group at UCLA has achieved an 88% graduation rate.

Since a diversity course requirement was mandated for the undergraduate degree several years ago, new student audiences have discovered MENA classes and enrollments have increased. **(AP1)** CNES is committed to innovative outreach programs in pre-collegiate schools and CCs in order to increase the number and diversity of students capable of pursuing

international careers. CC transfers account for more than one-third of the UC student body. Our West Los Angeles College (WLAC) partner is a Minority Serving Institution (MSI). **(NRC CPP #1)** CNES assisted WLAC in establishing an Associate Degree in Middle East Studies. WLAC’s new Arabic courses are taught online by CNES alumni and language instructors trained in pedagogy.

Affiliated MENA faculty deploy an array of institutional resources to ensure student success among the overlapping categories of minority students, transfer students, and Pell Grant students. For instance, professors regularly revise their syllabi to allow for additional components such as extra teaching assistants to help with writing and integrating student-faculty research projects.

They take advantage of the UCLA library’s WI+RE (Writing Instruction and Research Education) program, whose online tutorials on academic writing and research can be taken individually or be integrated into coursework. CNES programs have been held remotely since 2020 when the pandemic moved most classes online. We look forward to resuming in-person outreach to students, inviting them to meet with MENA experts, expanding their knowledge beyond MENA curriculum, and lead coffee hours in which MENA languages are spoken.

UCLA is also veteran friendly and has one of the largest contingents of former veterans as students in the UC system. The campus participates in federal initiatives helping veterans and active-duty service members pay for their degrees. The Veteran Resource Center provides personalized support to UCLA undergraduate and graduate student veterans, offering mentorship from experienced student veterans, guidance on educational benefits, and tools for academic and personal success. UCLA works with CA military bases to ensure active-serving soldiers can attend UCLA classes in which they receive faculty support. UCLA’s Center for Accessible Education (CAE) facilitates academic accommodations for students with disabilities,

including learning disabilities. The CAE guides access to the numerous educational opportunities available to students on our campus and empowers students to realize their academic potential.

Real-time captioning and sign language interpreters serve deaf students and faculty members. The Committee on Disability advises on best practices towards accessible campus environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

*Commitment to diversity of perspectives:* UCLA’s commitment to fostering a diversity of

perspectives on our campus, and enabling wide-ranging debate on national and world affairs are reflected in other recent initiatives taken by the central campus administration. Of these, perhaps the most prominent new undertaking is the creation of the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), which has brought a rich array of new tools and programs to our campus to foster diversity and a supportive environment for the airing of diverse perspectives. Among the programs created by the EDI Office is a series of regular town-hall meetings for our campus as a whole that brings together faculty with a diversity of views—diverse ideologically, politically and in terms of disciplinary training—to discuss current affairs of interest to members of the campus community. Faculty affiliates of CNES, including at least one center director, have been involved in a number of these meetings bringing the perspectives and insights of scholars of the MENA to a broad cross-section of the campus community.

# NRC - OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

* 1. CNES programming offers a robust menu of educational activities and events to stimulate debate and expand understanding of the MENA among academics and the general public. Teacher training with an emphasis on languages and cultures of the region is a key to CNES outreach. To amplify our reach and enhance the content offered, we collaborate with several departments and units on campus. **(AP2** & **NRC CPP)**
     1. **Outreach to Elementary and Secondary Schools.** CNES co-sponsors outreach activities for

K-12 teachers, including annual workshops and language pedagogy conferences.

*1) Non-Language Activities.* Curriculum development and dissemination are essential to our

outreach program. CNES partners with the UCLA Intl Inst, Center for Southeast Asian Studies and the UCLA School of Education & Information Studies’ History-Geography Project (HGP) and the Fowler Museum to organize course-content workshops for K-12 teachers, led by teams of UCLA faculty, staff, and curriculum experts. **(AP2)** We have used the "Sites of Encounter”

model from the California History-Social Science Framework in these workshops to explore global historical sites (especially in the MENA and Southeast Asia). Over 100 teachers throughout CA have participated in the series over the past three years. Working with historians, geographers, political scientists, and staff from UCLA museums, libraries, and archives, the attendees created standards-based teaching materials about the MENA. Lesson plans developed in the workshops and curated resources on the sites explored are publicly available (see Table G- 1). This year, we also launched a new partnership with the Fowler Museum based on a shared investment in MENA programming and K-12 teacher opportunities to widen our outreach (see Section I. NRC). Pre-pandemic the museum welcomed more than 60,000 people each year, including approximately 7,000 K-12 students, of which 75% are from Title I schools. After pivoting to a virtual platform for public programming the Fowler’s audiences are truly global: Since June 2020, 94 programs have brought in 28,764 RSVPs and 17,465 attendees from 79 countries (a 39% attrition rate and an average of 186 participants per program).

## Outreach to Postsecondary Institutions

* + - 1. *Non-Language Activities.* CNES enjoys an ongoing partnership with West Los Angeles

Community College (WLAC), an MSI, to develop their MES major. Through this collaboration,

WLAC students are able to enroll in UCLA MENA classes with the shared goal of preparing students to transfer for BA programs at UCLA. **(NRC CPP)** The program!s Arabic instructor is a NELC alumnus and former CNES FLAS fellow who recently used an international curriculum development grant to transition to online course instruction using UCLA!s training modules.

CNES initiated a consortium of MENA departments and faculty experts in So Cal to share resources and research. Our group includes 3 UC campuses, 2 CS universities, and 10 private universities and liberal arts colleges. Several of these are MSIs. (**NRC CPP)**

NELC faculty are spearheading the new summer program “Pathways to a PhD" which will bring students from historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to UCLA to take an intensive course on ancient Egyptian language and culture. Free for qualifying students, and combining research on Ancient Egyptian, North African, and Western Asian Studies with diverse perspectives and approaches, the program seeks to encourage students from under-represented groups to pursue graduate studies. A CNES staff affiliate, who also directs a program at Morgan State University (HBCU in Baltimore, Maryland) has offered to support HBCU outreach for this program: https://[www.religionandcities.org/leadership.](http://www.religionandcities.org/leadership)

* + - 1. *Language Activities.* CNES co-sponsors the annual week-long heritage language teacher workshop and research institute organized by UCLA!s NHLRC and attended annually by thirty K-16 language teachers. **(AP2**) Held online in recent years, K-16 public or community schools instructors of Arabic, Armenian, and Persian have attended from the US, Canada, and Israel. The

workshops create a cohort of language teachers to act as mentors in heritage language instruction drawing upon project-based learning (PBL) and authentic materials. Supporting heritage learners of critical MENA languages offers an efficient way to develop a pool of proficient MENA language speakers for national security. **(AP1 & AP2)** CNES co-sponsored the 2021 NHLRC

International Conference on identifying and addressing linguistic gaps amongst HL students, differentiated teaching, and mixed classes. **(AP2)**

* + 1. **Outreach to Business, Media, the General Public, and Government.** Community outreach

beyond academia is important to our work, especially considering diasporic MENA communities in So Cal, who provide heritage students, diversifying campus and its programs. For example, our popular Bilingual Persian-English Lecture Series is co-organized with a professor from CSU Northridge, an MSI. **(NRC CPP)** This longstanding program attracts individuals from the business, media, and government sectors as well as general audiences, including many from Los Angeles’ Iranian community.

Another popular public series is the Averroës Lecture Series on Jewish communities living in Muslim lands prior to the 20th century, offering quarterly lectures by experts and an occasional paper series published by CNES. These lectures and podcasts attract large LA Jewish audiences. A pre-pandemic lecture on the Ottoman history of Jewish settlers in Rhodes attracted members of the local Jewish community. Attendees learned about research that excavates the history of inter-communal life and pluralism in ME societies. **(AP1)** Although the event was attended at full capacity, its audience more than doubled over the following week through podcast downloads alone.

Virtual platforms amplify the Center's outreach efforts. The CNES quarterly newsletter (sent to 3,000 readers worldwide) and website serve a broad constituency. The “In the Media” page presents faculty op-eds and interviews from local, national, and international media, including NPR, Al-Jazeera, Washington Post, Huffington Post, New York Times, Noticias Mundo Fox, ABC, KPFK, and Newsweek. **(AP1)** The CNES site hosts over 480 podcasts serving as resources for research and training that present diverse views.

# I. NRC - PROGRAM PLANNING AND BUDGET

CNES proposes the following initiatives designed to highlight diverse perspectives and experiences in the MENA region and to prepare students to join the national workforce in areas of national need. **(AP1)** The proposed projects develop innovative pedagogic approaches to undergraduate and graduate teaching and expand opportunities for K-14 teachers to learn about MENA languages, histories, and cultures. TPMA will collect, analyze survey data and outcomes for continuous improvement. For costs and timeline, see Budget Narrative.

## Project Goal #1. Support teaching and curriculum development to foster diverse understandings of the MENA.

*In support of these new initiatives, we request funding towards library acquisitions, area studies course instruction, travel and speaker fees for course development workshops*

* 1. *Workshop and course development – deserts in the MENA.* Situating the study of the MENA

in conversation with environmental studies and eco-criticism, we will build a curriculum on the basis of faculty-graduate student workshops dedicated to interdisciplinary and transhistorical explorations of the desert as an ecosystem and as a discourse– as both landscape and trope. Arid regions constitute no less than 80% of the MENA and are home to indigenous populations. These environments are imagined as barren, desolate terrains, if not as obstacles to culture and civilization. Yet, they have played and continue to play a major role in facilitating the mobility of objects, people, and ideas. Inquiries will examine how both representation and practice fashion the idea of the desert as empty land. The course will gather viewpoints from outsiders’ imagination to insiders’ lived experiences and will explore the textual and material cultures of desert wanderers, from pre-Islamic and Islamic Bedouin poetry to textiles to architecture.

Redressing relationships between landscape and power, ecology and archive, minority and majority viewpoints, this course will provide students with analytical tools to move away from forest- and ocean-centric, as well as civilizational approaches to human histories by examining

the overlooked and misunderstood arid environments of the MENA. **(AP1)**

* 1. *Undergraduate course exploring Armenian communities through music.* We will design an

introductory level GE course introducing Armenian music to undergraduates across disciplines to acquaint them with historical and contemporary diasporic Armenian communities.

Generations of Armenians throughout the MENA and the West have contributed to a linguistically and stylistically diverse musical heritage. This course will explore the historical and political conditions that influenced repertories created in Armenian, Turkish, Kurdish, Persian, Arabic, Greek, Syriac, and other Middle Eastern languages. This musical heritage bridges Armenian communities across the globe, dispersed due to civil wars, regime change, and repressive political conditions. This course will meet various requirements and has the potential of recruiting students interested in human and cultural rights as well as pedagogies of inclusion within the education and non-profit sectors. **(AP1)**

* 1. *Undergraduate course on Iran social survey data.* Survey data collected in Iran during two

waves (2016, 2022) of nationally representative polls will be used in this course to teach undergraduates data methods with a MENA and sociological focus and to test theories and arguments about the region. Survey questions cover topics of social and economic change, ethnic and linguistic identity, educational attainment, gender dynamics, and political behavior. The course trains students in the use of survey data and analytical tools, gaining career skills while expanding their critical thinking and knowledge of Iran and other global societies.

* 1. *Undergraduate and graduate courses by a visiting scholar at risk.* In partnerships with

UCLA’s Promise Institute for Human Rights (PIHR), the Program on Central Asia, and the School of Public Health, CNES will host academics from Afghanistan, while continuing to offer yearly fellowships to scholars from throughout the MENA who face repression as a consequence

of war or government policy. At UCLA, the Afghani scholars will remain academically active and be connected to a vital network of MENA scholars. From the visiting scholars’ courses and mentoring, our students gain a better understanding of academic discourse on the MENA in the region and opportunities for future international collaborations.

1. **Project Goal #2. Create a robust pipeline to LCTL proficiency in languages of the Middle East***. In support of these initiatives, we request funding towards language course instruction, travel for professional development, personnel for lab coordination, pedagogy training, institutional memberships, and instructional media resources.*

CNES proposes initiatives focusing on MENA language instruction to fortify national security by training highly proficient linguists. **(AP1)**

* 1. *Workshops to create Armenian curriculum materials and an advanced Armenian course for*

*UCLA and UC MSIs focusing on literacy in diaspora communities*. Students and faculty will

form a working group to collect materials from a range of contemporary sources, including news reports, political speeches, and opinion pieces to reshape the paradigm of language instruction and preservation. These sources will be used in Armenian language courses to expand students’ skillsets. The result will be a multipurpose Armenian language environment, promoting print, digital, multimedia, and public discussion of contemporary issues. Materials developed will be available online for Armenian language schools, community colleges, and California State Universities. Most importantly, the resulting course *“Language in Action: Creative Literacy”*

will be offered as a distance learning (DL) cross-campus course available to students enrolled at UC MSIs such as UC-Merced and UC-Riverside. **(NRC CPP)**

* 1. *Persian-language newspaper and archival digitization project.* UCLA library contains a large

corpus of uncatalogued or under-cataloged newspapers, journals, and ephemera published in Persian, both in Iran and abroad throughout the 20th century. With advances in optical character recognition, materials will be made available in an online, searchable, and open-access

format. Students and scholars will therefore be able to access and easily navigate primary sources representing diverse views that inform social history, migration studies, and language instruction. **(AP1)**

* 1. *Courses on Arabic language pedagogy & dialect.* These courses impart techniques of modern

proficiency-based language teaching to advanced-level undergraduates and graduates. Students will gain valuable skills and opportunities to use their language pedagogy in a professional setting, increasing the nation’s potential supply of instructors in a strategically significant language. **(AP1)**

* 1. *Persian subtitles project*. This project will yield a new course in Persian translation, training

students to subtitle in English culturally significant and newsworthy foreign-language videos that reveal a range of views in the MENA region. **(AP1)** While developing useful tools for advanced Persian students, this project will provide accurate translation and lessen cultural misunderstandings caused by mistranslations of popular videos online. We will utilize a YouTube channel and submission infrastructure already well-established by CNES faculty for Arabic translation (see Table G-1).

* 1. *Distance learning for Turkish*. A distance learning year-long Turkish courses will be open to

all 9 University of California campuses. Students enrolled through an MSI, where they likely do not have the same level of MENA resources at their universities, will gain access to in-depth curricular opportunities. Courses will be supplemented by conversation labs, where language learners at all levels are invited to practice with native speakers to promote higher-level language acquisition. Interacting with different people on a range of subjects, students advance oral language skills due to the communicative requirements of this framework. **(NRC CPP)**

## Project Goal #3. Expand teacher training activities for K-16 educators, and collaborating with MSI & CC. (AP2 & NRC CPP)

*In support of these initiatives, we request funding towards pedagogy training, instructional resources, local travel, personnel, and CC professional development programs.*

The MENA continues to be marginalized in public school curricula nationwide. Our initiatives address this gap and serve a national need by expanding international, intercultural, and global dimensions of the K-12 curriculum, with a focus on under-represented minority students.

* 1. *History Geography Project*. In partnership with the History Geography Project (HGP), a component

of UCLA’s School of Education & Information Studies (SE&IS), along with the Centers for Latin America, Africa, Asia and Southeast Asia, we will collaborate on a teacher training and curriculum development sequence. The aim is to increase capacity and resources for world history teachers of grades 6, 7, and 10 – school years when the California Public School Social Science Framework covers non-US regions. **(AP2)**

The program encompasses the theme *Interconnected Worlds: Past, Present, and Future* – comparing sites, world regions, and historical events that have shaped the present exchanges of products, technologies, people and ideas over a broad range of geographic areas, incorporating historical texts, literature, and art. Pedagogical training by expert scholars for K-12 educators is enhanced through the series components (see Table I-1).

|  |
| --- |
| **Table I-1. Components of the Pedagogical Training Workshops** |
| *Interconnected Worlds: Past, Present, and Future*  Global perspectives include MENA, East Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, & Latin America experts. |
| * Annual three-day thematic summer institute for teachers on topics such as “Global Resistance Movements,” “Empire & Diversity,” “Indigenous Histories,” and “Global Migrations”. Attendees receive professional development credits (Summer) |
| * Development of curriculum materials and lesson plans and making them publicly accessible for educators. (Fall/Spring, Year 2) |
| * Curating resources and producing lecture videos and multimedia to publish online to supplement those themes. Evaluation of the lesson plans (Fall); evaluation of lesson implementation (Year 2). |

* 1. *K-16 Language Teacher Training*. We will allocate funding for the annual NHLRC

nationwide summer workshop. Guided by a team of pedagogical experts, teachers from public

and community schools across the country, including MENA heritage teachers, work in teams with heritage language expert researchers to produce project-based open access educational resources materials for classrooms (Years 2-4) for HL learning and proficiency assessment. The focus will be on under-represented HL communities in the following workshops: “immigrant languages & cultures in a post pandemic world” (Year 1); “preventing language loss by addressing teenage bilingual populations” (Year 2); and “from heritage speakers to heritage learners” (Year 3). The workshops aim to create a cohort of leaders and mentors in the field of HL instruction, serving a national need for individuals with competence in critical languages. **(AP1 & AP2)**

* 1. *CC Partnership.* To expand opportunities to learn about the MENA for traditionally

underserved students, we propose 2 half-day workshops with colleagues at the local CC MSI WLAC hosted at the Fowler Museum to further explore how CNES and UCLA resources can be shared to support the newly established Going Global Associate Degree and the Certificate in Middle East Studies at WLAC **(NRC CPP)**. CNES has offered to guide new curriculum programs to teach Arabic, host PD seminars, concerts, and panel discussions that enhance MENA studies at WLAC. We also intend to develop a program about Middle Eastern communities in Los Angeles with WLAC for CC and high school students and teachers. This program will include guided tours by MENA experts to enhance intercultural studies via field trips to UCLA, local museums and culturally significant institutions while strengthening the college transfer pipeline and inspiring further learning about the MENA.

* 1. *K-12 Teaching about MENA through the Arts.* In partnership with the Fowler Museum, we

will collaborate on two engagements for K-12 teachers. During the summer (Year 2) the

*Engaging Lived Religion* teacher institute will focus on the plurality within religions of the

MENA. We will also support the development and implementation of a digital educational platform Vital Matters: Stories of Belief. This online resource is designed for teachers of middle school, high school, and university classrooms (Year 2-3) and will provide interactive modules showcasing different perspectives on arts from the MENA region, with the goal of bringing together knowledge embedded in the practice of MENA faith-based leaders, artists, academic and community thought leaders with the knowledge produced by UCLA academics, educators, and curators. Both initiatives equip teachers with knowledge, digital resources, and pedagogies that will enable them to offer a richer understanding of the diversity of beliefs and practices of MENA’s religious communities.

1. **Project Goal #4. Training MENA specialists through increased interdisciplinary collaborations.** *In support of these initiatives, we request funding towards interdisciplinary research, workshops, lectures, colloquia, travel for professional training, institutional memberships and personnel for lab coordination.*

Training and professional development of MENA area specialists relies on scholarly initiatives and programming that increase interdisciplinary collaboration on topics of global importance, edifying students who will contribute to areas of national need in government service, business, the non-profit sector, and academia. **(AP1)**

* 1. *Workshop series on strategies for de-carbonization in the greater Middle East.* This series

will bring together scholars of green energy from across the MENA region, as well as East and Sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia. In partnership with the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, we will host experts on green energy and scholars researching migration and natural resources to encourage vigorous debate about the future of the carbon extractive industries in the Middle East. This project focuses on the MENA region as a partially cohesive economic unit, largely centering on the industrial, financial and transportation infrastructure of the carbon exporting Arab Gulf States. Consequentially, significant sectors of the national

economies in the region are relatively dependent on carbon extractive industries and the financial resources accumulated from these processes. As the international community pushes for decarbonization, the future of this regional industrial capacity remains in question. Many states in the MENA have begun planning for a post-carbon future but unfortunately little planning is taking place at the regional level, particularly looking at the impacts the Arab Gulf Countries’ industrial bases on East Africa and South Asia. As the United States has identified climate change as a major national security concern, this project will help to train a new generation of scholars to address its relationship to the security of the Arabian Peninsula. **(AP1)**

* 1. *Conference resulting in edited volume - Repatriation: The Heritage of the MENA*. This

conference and publication will train students and scholars to work in the non-profit-sector of museums, historical societies, community centers, and libraries to analyze material objects from the MENA region which have been in Euro-American museums or in the hands of private collectors following wars, looting, and colonial occupation. Scholars, educators, policy makers, human rights activists, museum workers and artists from the MENA region, Europe, and the U.S. will present diverse views, and debate transferring, studying, and sharing the material heritage of the MENA region. **(AP1)** This project draws on the strengths of UCLA’s archaeologists, anthropologists, and art historians to discuss a variety of examples such as Roman North African artifacts, Muslim ritual objects, Armenian manuscripts, Ottoman weaponry, Iraqi archives. The organizers will partner with colleagues from MSIs and include outreach through the California African American Museum of Los Angeles and the Fowler Museum, whose holdings include traditional African art from Western, Central, and Sub-Saharan Africa. **(NRC CPP)**

* 1. *Comparative Law & Government Series*. Two workshop series with PIHR will train MENA

experts to be part of a globally competent workforce addressing pressing international

challenges, provide opportunities for students to engage in fieldwork in a region with ties to U.S. national security priorities, with immersion experiences that support language proficiency. **(AP1)** *Decentralization in the MENA* will examine excessive consolidation of power in MENA states, source of both governance crises and identity-based conflicts. *Constitutional and legal emergency regimes* analyzes how MENA governments adapt and reform the conceptualization of “emergency” in ways suitable to addressing “social emergencies,” such as health pandemics and climate change.

* 1. *Interdisciplinary research series.* To address pedagogical and different scholarly concerns,

students and faculty exchange, improve, and present MENA research inquiries on such topics as historiography, social science approaches, visual studies. To improve research methodologies, conversations will highlight research in conflict zones, archives, and counterpart institutions in the MENA. Students are encouraged to prepare CVs for career opportunities beyond academia. Research and travel grants will enhance professional development. **(AP1)**

* 1. *Workshop series investigating the UCLA Arabic-script manuscript collections.* These

workshops allow students and faculty to work alongside library staff to initiate plans for cataloging and digitizing one of the oldest and second-largest assemblage of MENA manuscripts in North America (See Section F). Written in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu, this collection holds enormous potential for research and teaching about the languages, cultures, religions, history, and intellectual traditions of the MENA. Engaging debates around cultural heritage, manuscript provenance and preservation, course curricula will allow students to make major strides in their linguistic and research skills deciphering rare and valuable materials while making tangible contributions to a unique resource of major value to scholars across the world. Presenting their findings to the broader Los Angeles community at public forums, they

will also gain speaking and public-relations skills necessary for successful careers, forge ties between UCLA and the broader community, and contribute to understanding of MENA-heritage community.

# H. FLAS AWARDEE SELECTION PROCEDURES

## Selection Plan

* 1. **Advertisement and information sessions of the FLAS Awards** are conducted at university- wide fellowship fairs starting with the fall quarter, annual campus-wide International Education week, on site at CNES headquarters, and online via websites, campus-wide and center’s listservs and individual emails. Prospective students may apply for a FLAS award with their application for admission to UCLA Graduate School. CNES posts complete information with links to an online application and distributes advertising materials via its listserv to 125 undergraduate and graduate Student Affairs counselors (including in professional schools), 101 core and associated faculty and more than 200 MENA students, resending the information monthly until the deadline three months later. We especially encourage students with financial need to apply. Students are encouraged to take a NELC placement test to determine which language course level to enroll during the award period. **(FLAS CPP1)**
  2. **Students Apply** through a CNES web portal, electronically submitting an application with a statement of purpose, two letters of recommendation, and a current transcript. A link to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application is included on the FLAS application website. Applicants’ Expected Family Contribution (EFC) data is generated through the FAFSA, and sent to the UCLA Financial Aid Office (FAO). CNES-affiliated faculty and center staff make themselves available for application consultations and recruitment of excellent candidates.
  3. **Selection Criteria** include financial need **(FLAS CPP1),** career goals, language experience,

the suitability of the target language to the proposed course of study (we award 100% of our FLAS fellowships for modern LCTLs) **(FLAS CPP2)**, articulation of the issues and themes addressed in the statement of purpose, grades, and faculty recommendations, with special consideration being given to undergraduate and graduate applicants who need advancing their modern foreign language training in all levels (listening, speaking, reading, writing) in combination with area studies, international studies, or the international aspects of professional studies.

* 1. **The Fellowship Awards Committee** is composed of the Center’s awards committee chair and faculty representing a variety of departments and expertise on the MENA in the Social Sciences, Humanities and UCLA’s professional schools (education, law, and business), with strong representation from NELC and History Departments.
  2. **Selection Plan.** The faculty awards committee uses a two-tier selection process to evaluate FLAS awardees: first selecting a pool of qualified applicants based strictly on merit (GPA, letters, statement of purpose, etc.), and second, asking the committee to review the applicants’ FAFSA EFC data provided by the FAO, to determine who demonstrates financial need and their level of need compared to other applicants scored similarly. The committee gives priority to financial need when deciding among viable applicants of equal merit. Prior Center federal grants provided faculty and staff experience in awarding fellowships based on financial need, working closely with FAO administrators, as well as various academic departments. **(FLAS CPP1)** Our aim is to increase the pool of area specialists across the disciplines with a high level of proficiency in Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew, Persian, or Turkish. **(FLAS CPP2)** All students in NELC and ISP Depts of achieve proficiency in one or more of those languages. In the Center’s recent fellowship cycles, the largest number of awardees have come from NELC, ISP, and

History, with some awardees also in Anthropology, Art History, Ethnomusicology, Comparative Literature, Sociology, and Education.

* 1. **Timeline.** Information packages are distributed in October, and reminders are sent monthly until the application deadline in early-March. Departmental nominations of both new and continuing students are due in March. The awards committee makes its decisions by the end of March and immediately notifies the awardees and their departments. Language instructors will administer fellows’ proficiency exams at the beginning and end of the award period.

# FLAS - COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES

Below is a summary of CNES commitment to meet FLAS competitive priorities.

## FLAS Competitive Preference Priority 1: Centers that give preference to students who demonstrate financial need as indicated by the students’ expected family contribution.

CNES will use a two-tier selection process. First, we select a pool of qualified applicants based on merit; then we review their financial aid information. We will give priority to financial need when deciding among viable applicants of equal merit.

## FLAS Competitive Preference Priority 2: Centers that propose to make 25 percent or more of academic year FLAS fellowships in any of the 78 priority languages selected from the U.S. Department of Education’s list of LCTLs.

All of CNES’s FLAS fellowships will be awarded for study of priority languages, primarily Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish.

# J. NRC - COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES

CNES plans follow absolute and competitive priorities stated by the Dept of Education. Details of activities planned are described in Section I. NRC and is summarized below.

## NRC Competitive Preference Priority: Partnership with MSIs or CCs

CNES will continue its ongoing curriculum-building partnership with West Los Angeles College, its ongoing consortium of MENA Depts at nearby CSU, UC, and Community College.