

Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilization

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization is devoted to teaching and research concerning the principal cultures and languages of the Near and Middle East, including Central Asia, emphasizing not only their contemporary manifestations but also their ancient and medieval roots and their significance within the history of world civilizations.

STUDENTS (AUTUMN 2009)

105	Undergraduate majors
6	Master of Arts students
1,588	Total student enrollment (2008-09)

DEGREES AWARDED (JULY 2008-JUNE 2009)

34	Bachelor of Arts degrees
3	Master of Arts degrees

MAJOR STUDENT AWARDS (SINCE 2000)

1	Rhodes Scholar
6	Mary Gates Scholars
1	Elizabeth Kerr MacFarlane Scholarship in the Humanities
8	Dorot Fellowships for Study in Israel
2	Ronald E. McNair Scholars
4	National Fellowships for Advanced Arabic Study
25	Maurice and Lois Schwartz Fellowships for Study Abroad
4	Roshan Institute Fellowships for Excellence in Persian Studies
4	Naficy Scholarships in Persian Studies
4	Turkish and Ottoman Literature Endowed Fellowships
34	Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship

FACULTY

4	Professors
1	Research Professor
4	Associate Professors
2	Assistant Professors
6	Lecturers
7	Adjunct Faculty
4	Affiliate Faculty
4	Emeritus Faculty

Education

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization (NELC) offers BA and MA degree programs that investigate major literary and cultural traditions of the Near East and Central Asia. Arabic, Persian, Tajik, Turkish (Modern and Ottoman), and Central Asian Turkic (such as Uzbek, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur) are the languages of the most significant manifestations of Islamic civilization. Hebrew and Aramaic are languages of the Bible and are central to Judaism and Jewish culture. A rich and vast heritage from other ancient Near Eastern cultures is explored through study of languages and literatures such as Egyptian (Hieroglyphic, Coptic), Akkadian, Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Syriac. Undergraduates can select from degree options concentrating in Languages and Civilization; Culture and Civilization; Comparative Islamic Studies; and Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies.

NELC serves a broad spectrum of undergraduates, including those with plans to acquire specific linguistic and cultural proficiencies and those simply interested in the histories and cultures of these regions. NELC graduates have pursued further study in the humanities or social sciences, professional degree programs in law or medicine, employment with government or non-governmental organizations, and other careers.

The department participates actively in exchange programs, sending UW students for language and cultural study and research to a variety of locations—from North Africa, to the Middle East, and across Central Asia—and training many students from institutions overseas.

Faculty

The Department ranked third in the *Chronicle of Higher Education's* Faculty Scholarly Productivity rankings, with only Harvard University and University of Arizona rating higher. Awards and leadership roles for Department of NELC faculty include:

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| 6 Fulbright Scholars | 1 President, Pacific NW American Research Center in Egypt |
| 3 National Endowment for the Humanities grants | 1 President, Pacific NW American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature |
| 3 Fellows, American Research Center in Egypt | 1 Director, American Research Center in Egypt |
| 1 Senior Fellow, American Center for Oriental Research | 1 Director, Center for Arabic Study Abroad |
| 2 Presidents, Middle East Studies Association | 1 Samuel and Althea Stroum Chair |
| 1 President, Society for Iranian Studies | 1 Mentor Award, Middle East Studies Association |
| 1 President, Middle East Medievalists | 1 Service Award, Middle East Studies Association |
| | 7 Editors of leading journals |

Scholarship

NELC faculty are engaged in a wide variety of individual research endeavors with emphases including post-colonial theory, intercultural exchange, literature as performance, gender theory, literary dynamics in exilic or diaspora communities, children's literatures, linguistics, legal theory, and comparative religion. Departmental research on Jewish, Christian, and Islamic literatures and cultures is characterized by the study of these not as isolated entities but rather as integral to wider Near Eastern cultural developments.

Faculty in NELC have been leaders in numerous national and international team research projects including:

- ▶ the Ottoman Text Archive Project, an international effort to make accessible—in a central web-based text archive—vast collections of documents crucial to understanding the history and cultural heritage of the Ottoman Empire;
- ▶ federally-funded grants for innovative Arabic distance learning programs;
- ▶ national grant initiatives to develop more effective and advanced pedagogies for proficiency in Arabic and Persian;
- ▶ organizing and hosting international conferences as well as a Western Jewish Studies Association conference; and
- ▶ a \$1million, three-year U.S. Department of State grant for developing educational partnerships with institutes of higher learning in Uzbekistan.

Outreach

- ▶ An NELC advisory board, composed of outstanding and committed leaders from the community, organizes numerous community events.
- ▶ Annual events include the Hooshang Afrassiabi Distinguished Lectureship in Persian Studies, the Farhat Ziadeh Distinguished Lectureship in Arab and Islamic Studies, and the Nicolas Poppe Symposium in Central Asian Studies. Additional lectures and cultural presentations are supported by the Turkish Studies Endowment, the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near East Fund, the Ravani Endowment, and the Friends of Persian Studies Fund.
- ▶ NELC faculty participate in the annual World Languages Day at the UW, an event that introduces high school students to language study at the University.
- ▶ Programs and cultural activities are presented throughout the year by the Central Asian Circle, the Persian Circle, and other student interest groups.

AREAS OF SCHOLARSHIP

Hebrew Bible, Ancient Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

Judaism in Late Antiquity

Ancient Christianity and Religions of Antiquity

Islamic Law, Institutions, Philosophy, Religion

Comparative Religion

Arabic Language and Literature

Coptic Language

Modern Hebrew Language and Literature

Persian Language and Literature, Iranian Culture and Civilization

Turkic Languages and Literatures

Modern and Ottoman Turkish Language and Literature

Linguistics and Near Eastern Studies

History of the Middle East

DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS

Bateh Scholarship in Arabic Studies

Paul LeRoy Award in Egyptological Studies

Naficy Family Fellowship in Persian Studies

Cole and Firoozeh Papan-Matin Scholarship for Excellence in Persian and Iranian Studies

Nicholas Poppe Memorial Fellowship in Central Asian Studies

Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute Graduate Fellowship in Persian Studies

Maurice and Lois Schwartz Fellowship for Study Abroad

Michael A. Williams Scholarship for Excellence in Near Eastern Studies

CONTACT INFORMATION

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