



UNC
COLLEGE OF
ARTS & SCIENCES

THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

DEPARTMENT OF ASIAN STUDIES

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October 14, 2015

Administrative Boards of the College of Arts & Sciences and the General College
Office of Undergraduate Curricula
Campus Box 3504

Dear colleagues,

The Department of Asian Studies would like to propose a new minor in Middle Eastern languages. The new minor is aimed at students from various disciplines who are interested in learning more than one of the Middle Eastern languages offered in the Department of Asian Studies (Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi-Urdu, Persian, and Turkish) for academic purposes and to enhance their employment opportunities.

The purpose of the proposed minor is to encourage linguistic training that will prepare students for graduate study and careers related to the Middle East. Training in two languages provides students with broad regional competency that will be helpful in a number of careers that involve movement throughout the region (e.g., journalism, foreign service, and international business). The proposed minor will also make our students attractive candidates to MA and PhD programs in Middle East Studies that traditionally require the study of multiple Middle Eastern languages. Through their study of two Middle Eastern languages, our students will also develop a level of cultural competency related to those languages.

Students electing the proposed minor will be able to demonstrate commitment to Middle East studies, which the FLAS review committee will consider favorably in its selection process. FLAS funding for Middle Eastern languages is available at UNC (contingent on Title VI funding) through the following centers: Carolina Center for the Study of Middle East & Muslim Civilizations (for all Middle Eastern languages), African Studies Center (for Arabic), CGI (for Urdu), Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and Eastern European Studies (for Persian), and the Center for European Studies (for Arabic and Turkish).

In the long run, we hope that a minor in Middle Eastern languages will strengthen all the Middle Eastern language programs in Asian Studies and will increase enrollment in three of the smaller programs in our department—Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish.

In the last few years faculty in the Department of Asian Studies have been teaching and working with several students whose academic work involves more than one Middle Eastern language. With the hiring of a lecturer in Turkish (fall 2015) and the expected hiring of an assistant professor in Persian Studies (fall 2016), and the expanding offerings in the respective languages, it is likely that students' interest in studying more than one Middle Eastern language will only increase.

Furthermore, some of the content courses offered in our department employ texts in more than one Middle Eastern language; while most students have to rely on translation, other students will be able to read the texts in their original languages.

In the first year the minor is in place, we expect five students to declare it. We anticipate the number will increase to ten students in the following years.

Students will not be allowed to use the same Middle Eastern language for this minor and for a minor in Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi-Urdu, or Persian, or for the concentrations in Arab Cultures or South Asian Studies. (Thus, for example, a student majoring in Arab Cultures could not do the Middle Eastern languages minor using Arabic and Hebrew, but could do it using Hebrew and Persian.)

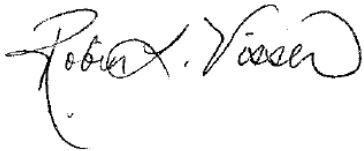
To meet the requirements for the proposed minor, students will have to take a total of five semesters of language classes beyond the three semesters of language requirement. Students must complete through the third year of one language and two classes at any level of a second language (e.g., Arabic 204, 305, 306 and Persian 101 and 102).

The work involved in administering this new minor should be minimal. Yaron Shemer will serve as the initial advisor for this new minor.

The proposed text for the Bulletin is attached. We request a minor code of MELG.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal, and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Visser". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "R" and a distinct "V" at the end.

Robin Visser
Associate Professor and Chair

Minoring in Middle Eastern languages

The undergraduate minor in Middle Eastern languages consists of five courses. Students pursuing this minor will take courses in any two of the Middle Eastern languages offered by the Department of Asian Studies: Arabic, modern Hebrew, Hindi-Urdu, Persian, or Turkish. Three courses will be language courses above 203 in one Middle Eastern language. The other two courses will be language courses at any level in a second Middle Eastern language. All courses must be selected from the lists below:

- Arabic: ARAB 101, 102, 203, 204, 300, 305, 306, 407, 408.
- Hebrew: HEBR 101, 102, 203, 204, 305, 306.
- Hindi-Urdu: HNUR 101, 102, 203, 204, 305, 306, 407, 408, 410, 490. (Note that HNUR 220 and 221 do not count toward this minor.)
- Persian: PRSN 101, 102, 203, 204.
- Turkish: TURK 101, 102, 203, 204.

Placement credit (PL) may not be used to meet minor requirements.