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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION: Senate

TEL

FROM: Peter Keller, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and Chair, SCUP

RE: Name Change of the Centre for Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures (SCUP 18-06)

DATE: February 8, 2018

TIME

At its February 7, 2018 meeting, SCUP reviewed and approved the proposal for the request of a name change from the Centre for Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures to the Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies.

Motion:

That Senate approve the name of the Centre for Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures be changed to the Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies.

c: A. Ghazal



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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)	DATE	January 11, 2018
FROM	Dugan O'Neil	PAGES	1/1
RE:	Renaming of Centre for Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures (CCSMSC)		

Attached is a memo from Dr. Lisa Shapiro, Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences requesting a name change for the Centre for Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures to be changed to the **Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies**. The attached memo outlines the reasons for this request.

I recommend approval. Once approved by SCUP the request should be forwarded to Senate for approval.

Motion:

That SCUP approve the name of the Centre for Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures be changed to the **Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies**.

Dr. Dugan O'Neil
Associate Vice-President, Research

Attachment

C: Dr. Lisa Shapiro, Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



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MEMO

TO: Joy Johnson, VP Research

FROM: Lisa Shapiro, Associate Dean, FASS

RE: Renaming of Centre for Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures (CCSMSC)

DATE: 18 December 2017

As you will see from the attached memo, from Amal Ghazal, the Director of the CCSMSC, in their meeting of November 23, 2017, the Advisory Committee of the Centre unanimously approved the renaming of the CCSMSC to the Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies (CCMS).

This new name reflects the mandate of the Centre and will greatly aid communication of the work of the Centre both to the academic community and to members of the community at large. The more concise, yet still meaningful, name will help to raise the profile of the Centre. It will also help to diffuse misunderstandings about the nature of the work of the Centre.

For these reasons, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences approves this name change.

From this date forward, please refer to the Centre as the Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies in any correspondence, reporting processes, or other communication. Prof. Amal Ghazal will from this point forward be the Director of the Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies.

Sincerely,

Lisa Shapiro
Associate Dean, Research, FASS

Cc: Dr. Amal Ghazal, Director, CCMS
Dr. Jane Pulkingham, Dean, FASS
Beth Ann Locke, Director of Advancement, FASS



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**Centre for the Comparative Study
Of Muslim Societies and Cultures**

Dr. Amal Ghazal
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To: Dr. Lisa Shapiro, Associate Dean, Graduate Programs and Research, FASS
Beth Ann Locke, Director of Advancement, FASS

From: Dr. Amal Ghazal, Director CCSMSC

Date: November 28, 2017

RE: *Request to Change the Name of the Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures*

I am writing to request changing the name of the Centre from "Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures" to "Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies". The Advisory Committee has voted unanimously in favour of this change.

As a new director for the Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslims Societies and Cultures, I have been meeting with a number of colleagues, students and community members to discuss a number of issues related to the Centre. One issue that has been coming up in almost all conversations is the name of the Centre. While it reflects the mandate of the Centre in terms of studying Muslim societies and cultures, it is too long, cumbersome, and difficult to remember. Its acronym CCSMSC is also as problematic since it is hard to pronounce. My colleagues who have been working with the Centre in different capacities have also noticed that the current name stands in the way of promoting it. The Centre spends much of its budget inviting speakers and building networks yet my colleagues have complained that members of our networks almost never get the Centre's name right when they mention it.

I do share my colleagues' concern that the Centre's name has been in the way of raising the profile of the Centre to its full potential. At some level, the difficulty in remembering the Centre's name is being counterproductive. For example, I have been introduced by some SFU members as well as by community members as the director of "The Islamic Centre", or "the Centre for Islamic Studies", or even more alarmingly "The Centre for the study of Islam." I say alarmingly because the Centre's title is supposed to reflect our mandate that focuses on Muslims, their history, societies and cultures and not on Islam as a religion. The Centre has



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invited three speakers this term. I asked each one of them, while here at SFU, if they could recall the name of the Centre that is hosting them. None was able to remember the full name of the Centre or remember it properly. I felt that it was indeed problematic that after months all the correspondence between our speakers and us they still could not remember the Centre's proper name.

As a new comer, I have noticed that the Centre has been unofficially called by many in the SFU community, for the purpose of brevity, as the Centre for Muslim Studies. Even staff at the Centre have been using it as they find it an easier way to introduce the Centre or talk about it. I thought that this reflects perfectly the Centre's mandate and that making it its official name solves a problem my colleagues and I see as being a significant one. "Muslim Studies" refers to the study of Muslim societies and cultures rather than Islam (the latter falls within the rubric of Islamic Studies).

I met with each committee member individually to get their opinion on this matter and to discuss with them the new title. They all agreed on it and thought that changing the name is long overdue. To highlight the comparative work the Centre and its members do, we have decided to keep the word "comparative" in the name, hence the new name Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies.

I met with the Advisory Committee on November 23, 2017 to discuss several matters and to vote on a motion to change the name. The committee consists of six members. Two (Paul Sedra and Azadeh Yamini Hamedani) were absent but had sent me their vote by proxy. They voted in favour. All those present (Luke Clossey, Adel Iskandar, Derryl MacLean and Thomas Kuehn) also voted in favour. Thus, there was a unanimous vote to change the name of the Centre, an indication of how important and vital we think the name change is for the Centre's performance and profile.

It is my hope that you agree to the need for this change, which will allow us more visibility and an increased profile worldwide, whether among academics, students or community members.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. A.", is written over the text.