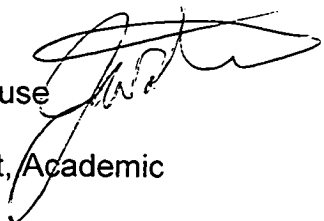


**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**

**Senate Committee on University Priorities  
Memorandum**

**TO:** Senate

**FROM:** John Waterhouse  
Chair, SCUP  
Vice President, Academic



**RE:** Centre for the Comparative Study of  
Muslim Societies & Cultures (SCUP 06- 33)

**DATE:** August 28, 2006

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At its July 12, 2006 meeting SCUP reviewed and approved the proposal for the creation of the Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures. This Centre will be a Schedule A Centre based in the Department of History, under the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

**Motion**

That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the creation of the Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures as a Schedule A Centre.

encl.

c: D. MacLean

## SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM  
OFFICE OF VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH

TO: Sarah Dench, Secretary  
Senate Committee on University  
Planning (SCUP)

FROM: B. Mario Pinto  
Vice-President, Research

RE: Centre for the Comparative Study of  
Muslim Societies and Cultures


DATE: June 19, 2006

---

Attached is a proposal from Dr. Derryl MacLean, Department of History for the establishment of the Centre for Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures as a Schedule A Centre.

The Governing Committee for Centres and Institutes recommends that the Centre be granted approval by SCUP. Once approved by SCUP, the proposal is to be forwarded to Senate, followed by submission to the Board of Governors.

Governing Committee:



Dr. John H. Waterhouse  
Vice-President, Academic and Provost

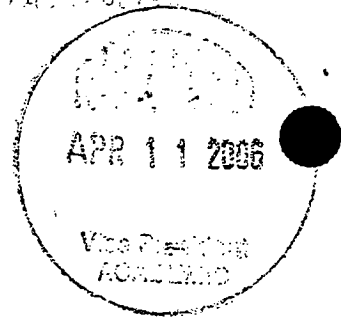


Dr. B. Mario Pinto  
Vice-President, Research

Attachment

C: Dr. John Pierce, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Dr. John Craig, Chair, Department of History  
Dr. Derryl MacLean, Department of History

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**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**  
**Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** John Waterhouse  
VP Academic

**From:** John T. Pierce  
Dean, FASS

**Subject:** Schedule A Centre for the  
Comparative Study of Muslim  
Societies and Cultures

**Date:** April 10, 2006

---

John, I am writing in strong support for the creation of a new Centre dedicated to the "Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures."

I believe that there are four reasons why the University should support this proposal:

- 1) It builds upon teaching and research strengths in History, Sociology / Anthropology, Women's Studies and Contemporary Arts.
- 2) It is innovative and socially important because its focal point is Muslim societies, not Islamic, and it is geographically diverse.
- 3) It is comparative in nature, facilitating a broadening of our own understanding of the diversity of social / cultural landscapes beyond the Middle East.
- 4) It furthers SFU's internationalization objectives and places the study of society / culture as a legitimate centerpiece for international studies, broadly defined.

Derryl MacLean has done an excellent job in conceptualizing the mandate for the Centre and its program of research / activities. I believe that the creation of the Centre will be an important catalyst for fund raising opportunities and ultimately the development of a highly visible and internationally recognized centre of excellence.

JTP/rt

Attachment

Cc: D. MacLean, Department of History

# SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY



8888 UNIVERSITY DRIVE  
BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA  
CANADA V5A 1S6  
Telephone: (604) 291-3521  
Fax: (604) 291-5837

30 March 2006

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

APR 06 2006

FACULTY OF ARTS  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Professor John Pierce  
Dean of Arts and Social Sciences  
Simon Fraser University  
Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6

Dear Dean Pierce:

Attached please find an application for a Schedule A Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures. It will be located in the Department of History under the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences.

The Centre's application has been approved by the Department of History and by the Advisory Committee of the Centre. The Committee further recommended that I be appointed the Director of the new Centre, with a term of three years.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DWM" followed by a stylized flourish.

Derryl MacLean  
Associate Professor

# Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures

## 1. Introduction to the Centre

Muslim societies and cultures increasingly have become the focus of public and academic attention since 9/11. Unfortunately, much of the coverage has focused narrowly on a juristic Arab Islam as normative and ignored more flexible and variable practices and experiences in the wider Muslim world. The proposed Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures would work to redress this imbalance by broadening academic discourse to include more comparison and complexity in the analysis of Muslim societies and cultures from Africa through the Middle East to Asia and the West.

By focusing attention on Muslim (not Islamic) societies and cultures, the Centre will encourage the shift in analysis from the notion of a single unitary religious ideaspcape defined by Islam to that of Muslims as agents in the construction of their societies and cultures within specific contexts. By incorporating the cultural experiences of diverse Muslim societies, the Centre will expand the possibilities of academic comparison and collaboration of critical consequence.

The proposed Centre will further Simon Fraser University's strategic objective to expand opportunities for students to be exposed to global societies and cultures. The Centre will raise the profile of existing courses and programs on the history of Muslim peoples and provide a foundation for the expansion of a field in which SFU has, and should maintain, a comparative national advantage.

Simon Fraser University is particularly well situated for this study of Muslim societies and cultures. The Department of History is the location of a nationally recognized Middle East and Islamic Concentration, which is at present the largest such undergraduate program within Canada, offering eleven undergraduate courses ranging from Islamic India through the Arab, Persian, and Turkish

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Middle East, and on into Muslim Africa, and western Islams. It has the largest graduate program on Muslim history in western Canada, with three graduate courses and eight current graduate students. At present, there are six History faculty members within History teaching and researching related subjects (see attached list).

The Concentration has been and continues to be committed to the comparative study of Muslim societies and cultures. Its current course offerings and research orientation geographically include the Muslim populations of Turkey, Arab Middle East, Iran and Central Asia, Africa, Asia, and the West. Comparative courses have been designed at the undergraduate and graduate levels to meet the Department's concern expressed in its Three Year Plan for increased comparative content. For these reasons, it makes sense to locate the proposed Centre in the Department of History.

There are additional faculty members in Sociology and Anthropology, Women's Studies, and Contemporary Arts teaching Muslim societies and cultures (see below).

Additional existing SFU international initiatives that involve Muslim societies and cultures are student exchange programs in Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, India, and Iran; Persian language courses through the Language Training Institute; W.A.C. Bennett Library Farsi Language Collection, numbering around 1000 volumes; and the Drs. Fereidoun and Katharine Mirhady Endowed Lecture in Iranian and Persianate Studies.

## 2. Activities of the Centre

This section consists of three parts: existing elements that will be coordinated and encouraged by the Centre; existing elements that will be expanded, as funding is located; new activities which require new funding.

The Centre will support and encourage the following existing activities: the Concentration in Middle East and Islamic History; the Drs. Fereidoun and Katharine Mirhady Endowment in Iranian and Persianate Studies; Farsi language instruction; the Bennett Library Farsi Collection; exchange programs with universities in Muslim regions (currently in Istanbul, Cairo, and Tehran); and a public lecture program.

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The Centre will encourage the expansion of existing programs and activities: adding instruction in other languages of Muslim peoples such as Arabic, Turkish, Urdu, and Swahili; expanding exchange programs to universities in Asia and Africa; expanding the library holdings in primary languages relevant to the Centre's mandate (Arabic, Urdu, Turkish), to make it a major research Center.

The Centre will work closely with the University Advancement Office to raise funds for programs related to its mandate: a Visiting Professorship which would bring to campus an internationally renowned academic; an annual Workshop that would draw together major scholars to address a comparative theme in the analysis of Muslim societies and cultures; graduate and undergraduate funding for study abroad.

### 3. Constitution of the Centre

The purpose of the Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures and its activities and programs is the promotion of the teaching, research, and academic and community programming in the study of Muslim societies and cultures. The Centre supports research, publications, colloquia, conferences, workshops, visiting speakers, library resources in the languages of Muslim peoples, and international exchange relationships in the areas of its mandate. The Centre encourages cross-disciplinary and comparative activities at the University and beneficial and mutually supportive links between the University and local communities.

The Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures will be a Schedule A Centre and come under the direct authority of the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences.

The administration of the Centre and its programs will be governed in accordance with University policies, including R.40.01: Centres and Institutes. If this document and University policy differ on any issue, University policy shall prevail.

The Centre will be located in the Department of History.

The Centre will be administered by a Director who will be appointed by the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee of the Centre. The term of office of the

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director normally will be three (3) years. In the absence of the Director, an Acting Director may be appointed from the Advisory Committee.

The activities of the Centre will be guided by an Advisory Committee made up of five (5) Simon Fraser University faculty members, at least two (2) of whom will be from the Department of History and its Concentration in Middle East and Islamic History. Members of the Advisory Committee will be appointed by the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences on the recommendation of the Director.

The Advisory Committee of the Centre will be chaired by the Director. Meetings normally will take place once a semester.

Associate Membership in the Centre will consist of individuals with an academic interest in some aspect of the study of Muslim societies and cultures. Associate Member status will be proposed by the Director and approved by the Advisory Committee.

#### 4. Library resources

There are no additional library costs associated with starting the Centre. Current resources associated with the University's Concentration in Middle East and Islamic History are substantial. The Centre will raise funds for the augmentation of the collection in areas and languages concerned with its mandate.

#### 5. Financial implications

There are no initial budgeting implications on SFU. Space and resources will be supplied initially by the Department of History and its Concentration in Middle East and Islamic History. External funds will be raised in support of the expansion of the Centre's activities.

#### 6. University faculty with Centre interests

Felicitas Becker, Assistant Professor, History, East Africa and the western Indian Ocean, with a special interest in the spread of Islam.

William L. Cleveland, Professor, History, political and intellectual history of the modern Middle East, Arab nationalism.

Andre Gerolymatos, Professor, History, contemporary international political history, including the Middle East.



5

Thomas Kuhn, Assistant Professor, History, late Ottoman empire, comparative imperialisms, and non-western modernities.

Derryl MacLean, Associate Professor, History, Islamics, Muslim Asia, conversion and millennialism.

Paul Sedra, Assistant Professor, History, Middle Eastern modernisms and education.

Yildiz Atasoy, Assistant Professor, Sociology and Anthropology, Turkey, religion, and globalization.

Parin Dossa, Assistant Professor, Sociology and Anthropology, gender and globalization, Iranian diaspora.

Laura Marks, Dena Wosk Endowed Fellow, School of Contemporary Arts, visual art and culture of the Middle East.

Habiba Zaman, Associate Professor, Women's Studies, women and work in comparative perspective, including Muslim communities.

Date: Fri, 16 Jun 2006 16:18:05 -0700  
To: murdoch@sfu.ca  
From: "Megan L. Crouch" <mcrouch@sfu.ca>  
Subject: Library report -- Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim  
Societies and Cultures  
Cc: gbird@sfu.ca

Hi Valerie,

We have completed the library report for the proposed Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures. It is available at [http://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/collections/courseassessments/centre\\_msc.htm](http://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/collections/courseassessments/centre_msc.htm). There are no library costs associated with the Centre at this time. Please see the report for further details.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Thanks,  
Megan

Megan L. Crouch  
Collections Librarian  
Health Sciences Librarian  
Liaison Librarian for Statistics and Actuarial Science  
Simon Fraser University / W.A.C. Bennett Library  
8888 University Drive, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6  
mcrouch@sfu.ca / Tel: 604.291.4962 / Fax: 604.268.6926

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## Library Assessment for the Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures June 15, 2006

This is the Library's report on the proposed Centre for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies and Cultures.

The SFU Library supports the establishment of this Centre as outlined in the proposal. Our English Language holdings have been reviewed and will be adequate to support this Centre. However, the proposal indicates that the Centre is interested in "expanding the library holdings in primary languages relevant to the Centre's mandate (Arabic, Urdu, Turkish) . . ." These languages are currently outside of our collecting scope. Developing collections in these languages will not only require funds for the collection of actual materials, but will also require funding for cataloguing the material, as the requisite language skills are not available in-house.

Currently there are no existing funds to support this type of collection development. Section 4 of the proposal states, "The Centre will raise funds for the augmentation of the collection in areas and languages concerned with its mandate." The Library would welcome partnering with the Centre in this endeavor.

Please see section seven of the SFU Library Collections Policy Statement [ <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/collections/policies/statement.htm#languages> ] for more information.

**There are no additional library costs associated with this centre.**

Maintained by: Megan Crouch [[mcrouch@sfu.ca](mailto:mcrouch@sfu.ca)]

Content last modified: 15/06/2006

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