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EXHIBIT 95

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

# AAUP News

HOME / NEWS

Founded in 1915, the AAUP remains the nation's leading organization primarily dedicated to protecting academic freedom and shared governance in higher education. Faculty members turn to the AAUP for assistance in the thousands each year. Some of these faculty members are well-known figures with resources and support. Most, however, are ordinary faculty members who need guidance in responding to troublesome or threatening professional attacks.

The AAUP has helped to shape American higher education by developing the standards and procedures that maintain quality and the security of academic freedom, and by ensuring that this country's colleges and universities contribute to the common good. Through the AAUP, faculty determine the principles of our profession and the procedures by which to protect them. When the AAUP speaks, it is the voice of the profession.

Learn what's new at the AAUP or read selected media coverage of our work.

If you are a member of the media seeking comment or interview, contact aaup-news@aaup.org.

## Join the AAUP

Help protect quality higher education and shape the future of our profession.

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Bi-annual Newsletter of the Middle East Studies Association

Vol 47 Issue 1 Spring 2025





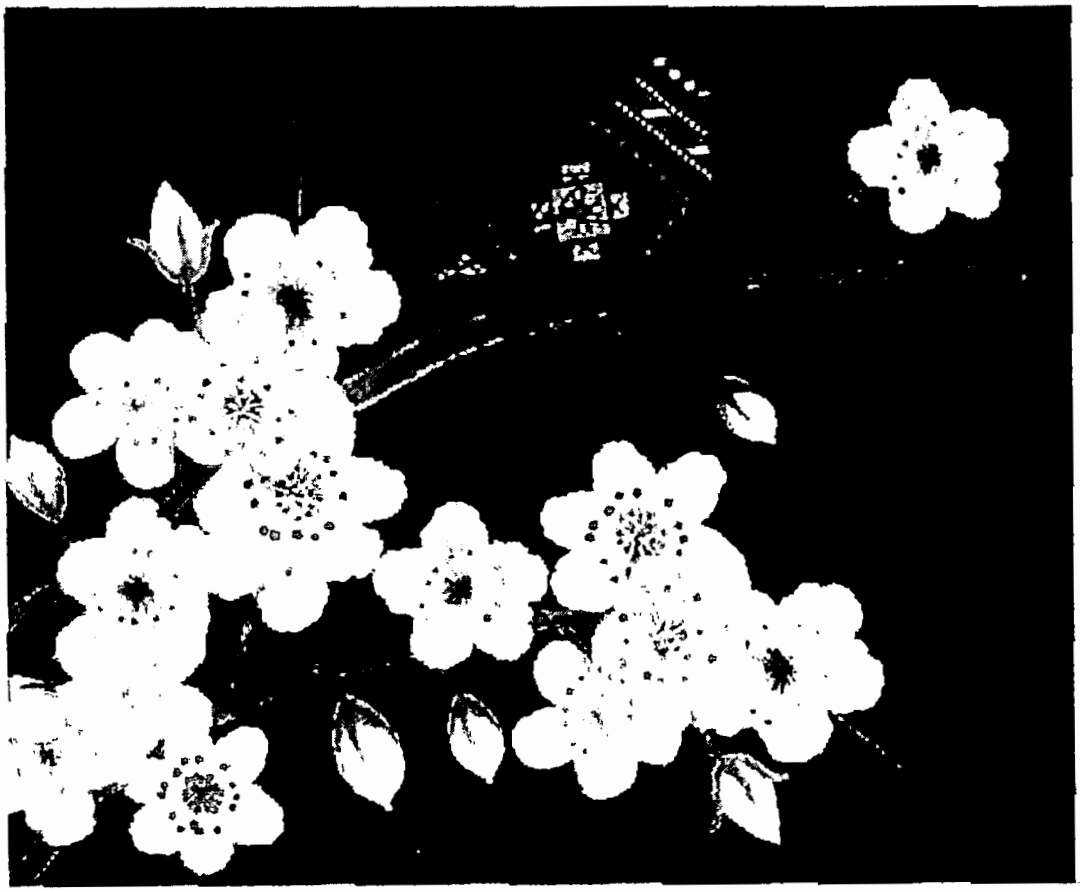


EXHIBIT
96

AAUP-01104

# IN THIS ISSUE


## BOARD & SECRETARIAT NEWS

3 From the President
7 From the Executive Director
8 Board Updates

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

15 Task Force on Civil and Human Rights
18 Committee on Academic Freedom
20 MESA Global Academy

## PUBLICATION NEWS

22 RoMES

## ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

24 MESA 2025 Tentative Schedule
25 Registration & Hotel Information
26 Resources for International Travelers
27 Participation Opportunities
28 Submission Statistics

## NEWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

30 Election Results & Statistics
30 New Staff Members
31 Contributions
32 Virtual Annual Meeting Survey Results
33 Institutional Members
36 Upcoming Awards Competition Deadlines


*Issues in Middle East Studies* is the biannual newsletter (spring, fall) of the Middle East Studies Association of North America, Inc. and is a benefit of membership. Hard copies are available to members upon request; postage will be collected for those residing outside the United States.

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## ABOUT MESA

The Middle East Studies Association (MESA) is a private, non-profit, learned society that brings together scholars, educators and those interested in the study of the region from all over the world. From its inception in 1966 with 51 founding members, MESA has increased its membership into the thousands and now serves as an umbrella organization for dozens of institutional members and affiliated organizations. The association is a constituent society of the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Council of Area Studies Associations, and a member of the National Humanities Alliance.

As part of its goal to advance learning, facilitate communication and promote cooperation, MESA sponsors an annual meeting that is a leading international forum for scholarship, intellectual exchange and pedagogical innovation. It is responsible for the International Journal of Middle East Studies, the premiere journal on the region, the MESA *Review of Middle East Studies* and *Issues in Middle East Studies*, a biannual newsletter. An awards program recognizes scholarly achievement, service to the profession, undergraduate education, and exemplary student mentoring. MESA is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors elected by the membership.

AAUP-01105

FROM THE PRESIDENT



**Asli Bâli**
Yale Law School

# Working Together Amidst the Storm

The first months of 2025 have felt like decades; it is hard for me to believe it has only been five months since I last wrote this column. We have all experienced one of the most difficult semesters in living memory, albeit for different reasons. For our colleagues in Palestine, the acceleration of death, destruction, ethnic cleansing and now starvation is unimaginable and only getting worse with each passing day. For those elsewhere in the region, we have witnessed an array of new and ongoing threats, whether as a result of continuing conflict in Sudan, Libya and Yemen, Israeli strikes on Lebanon and Syria, the further deterioration of conditions in Afghanistan or new waves of student arrests in Turkey. In terms of novel risks, students, scholars and researchers in North America have been subjected to threats from the U.S. government that are nearly unprecedented in the country's history.

**We are only one scholarly association but we are better placed than most to understand what it means to be on the frontlines at a time like this.**

Since January we have witnessed changes at the borders and in trade policies by the U.S. government that have adversely impacted Canadian colleagues (who have been vocal in expressing their indignation, including by writing to us at MESA). But far-reaching actions against higher education internal to the U.S. have been so alarming they have made headlines around the world. We have witnessed students and scholars arbitrarily targeted for visa revocations and abducted without cause in broad daylight by government agents. For weeks members of campus communities in the United States on visas lived in fear, often unwilling to leave their homes due to anxieties that they, too, might be subjected to lawless detentions and dragged across state lines to distant for-profit immigration prisons. Nearly every university and college that receives federal research grants have faced massive funding cuts without notice or rational explanation. Moreover, some campuses have been singled out for deeper cuts, with the government weaponizing allegations of discrimination to engage in arbitrary reprisals without investigation let alone findings of wrongdoing. Foreign students and scholars across the country continue to face the real risk of mass visa revocations despite a reprieve this spring and are being advised to avoid international travel for research or to visit family this summer lest they be denied re-entry for the coming academic year.

There is no way a single column can provide a complete catalog of the Trump administration's multi-pronged targeting of students and scholars, universities and colleges. Nor is there any meaningful way I can convey the damage and distress caused by gratuitous acts of calculated cruelty against those who are targeted for holding and expressing pro-Palestinian views. Moreover, these chaotic immigration policies and arbitrary losses of research funding compound the underlying anguish and trauma so many MESA members based in the U.S. have experienced due to the ongoing violence and suffering

inflicted on the communities with which we share scholarly connections and ties of kinship across the Middle East — often with the active participation or open complicity of the American government. All that I can provide in this column is the assurance that MESA as an association will take every measure available to forcefully resist and condemn these actions and to seek to undo some of the attendant harms.

One way we are engaging in such resistance is by suing the Trump administration in a case that seeks to block ideological deportation policies against those who speak in defense of Palestinian human rights. We have joined with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in filing this lawsuit, represented by the Knight First Amendment Institute, and intend to pursue the case vigorously in the coming months, with the support of our membership.

We also continue to document all of the actions taken by the Trump administration, intervening when we can in the cases of individuals who are being targeted with violations of their academic freedom and basic free speech rights. Increasingly we also intervene in defense of whole programs, centers and departments in the field of Middle East studies that find themselves under attack. We are working actively to develop resources for our membership, often in partnership with other organizations ranging from sister scholarly associations to civil rights organizations. Indeed, together with AAUP's Center for the Defense of Academic Freedom we are leading efforts to coordinate existing initiatives and develop new ones with a wide range of scholarly and civil rights associations. We have organized several Know Your Rights workshops this spring and will continue to do so in the run up to the fall semester. And we have developed or collected some of the most useful resources available for our membership to protect themselves, their communities and their research at a time when higher education and our field of study is under attack.

**All that I can provide in this column is the assurance that MESA as an association will take every measure available to forcefully resist and condemn these actions and to seek to undo some of the attendant harms.**

We can already foresee many more threats just over the horizon. There are debates underway as I write this over a new tax bill that includes a dangerous provision to target nonprofit organizations and civil society groups that the government disfavors, including many that fund higher education. Ongoing cuts to federal research funding from the National Institutes of Health to the National Endowment for the Arts are fundamentally reshaping academic fields of study. The administration has threatened to revoke the tax-exempt status of universities it dislikes. University and college accreditation systems are also being politicized and possibly weaponized. Meanwhile efforts to codify in federal law a definition of antisemitism that treats criticism of Israel — and defense of Palestinian rights — as prohibited discrimination threaten to further chill speech across the country. And further immigration policy changes to facilitate cancellation of student visas remain under consideration. Higher education is the tip of the spear of a broader assault on civil society and the institutional prerequisites of freedom of speech— universities, law firms, media companies, non-profits, philanthropies, journalists and many others face escalating repression.

For those in the MESA community who study the modern history and contemporary politics of the region, we are well-acquainted with many aspects of this authoritarian playbook. As a scholar of comparative law of the Middle East, I have studied other instances in which governments target students and scholars for their academic research, their political views and their expressive conduct in defense of human rights. I also know that authoritarian actors often attack those parts of civil society — higher education and the media — where critical inquiry and thinking might challenge the preferences of a government consolidating its power. Populists, with their polarizing narratives of "us" and "them" — the "people" versus the "elites" — often pursue a kind of cultural revolution against the authority and legitimacy of their perceived opponents. Universities are targeted because they possess cultural influence that perpetuates the values authoritarians seek to displace or supplant. As these dynamics take hold in the U.S. the magnitude of the damage is proportionate to the share of global research funding present in this country and the

number of impacted institutions of higher education in America that exert global influence. We are tracking the repression of knowledge production in the U.S. in part because the repercussions will be felt far beyond its borders.

The field of Middle East studies is at the intersection of all that is currently under attack in the U.S.: we are a diverse community of scholars reviled by those who aspire to flatten and homogenize knowledge production; we encourage free, critical and independent inquiry, research, thinking and writing about the Middle East, including Israel-Palestine, at a time when such scholarship is demonized and even presented as a national security threat. We critique and deconstruct the internal contradictions of the terrorism frameworks long used to mischaracterize, stereotype and repress populations across the greater Muslim world just as the current government seeks to revive these framings for its own political ends. In the face of this gathering storm, we are a scholarly association whose very name and field of study places us in the crosshairs.

But we have also shown that we are a scholarly association like no other, capable of an uncommon degree of solidarity and resilience that will see us through this storm. Last summer, we ran a fundraising campaign to support Gazan and Sudanese scholars and raised enough through MESA contributions alone to support ten scholars throughout this academic year. We also knew well before the election results of 2024 that academic freedom was under unprecedented attack in this country and prepared, receiving grant-funding from the Mellon Foundation to initiate our ongoing Academic Freedom Initiative. We are now working actively to identify risks and find strategies to blunt them and protect our scholarly community and the autonomy we all need to be able to do our work. We take this responsibility very seriously and we know we can only fulfill it by acting collectively. I know from correspondence with our members how many have risen to these challenges, working to support the communities on our campuses hardest hit over the last five months. I am confident that we will all use the summer as a time to regroup and redouble those efforts. The MESA Secretariat, together with all of the volunteers on our advocacy committees, will also be spending the summer reinforcing initiatives to support our membership.

...we are a scholarly association like no other, capable of an uncommon degree of solidarity and resilience that will see us through this storm.

We are only one scholarly association but we are better placed than most to understand what it means to be on the frontlines at a time like this. And we know through years of experience that there can be no Palestine exception — acquiescence in or compliance with the violation of constitutional and legal rights is a slippery slope from which there is no turning back. We know that authoritarian overreach must be met with organized resistance, through legal challenges but also many other forms of advocacy, using our scholarly expertise to reach broader publics. No community of scholars is better placed to engage in the public intellectual advocacy we need to counter disinformation than this one. We hope that MESA can help in these efforts, by organizing not only rights-related webinars and resources but also more expert convenings open to broad audiences.

We will be meeting in Washington, DC for our annual meeting this fall, following a survey of our members that overwhelmingly favored a return to in-person meetings. There are many benefits to gathering together as a scholarly community and I look forward to connecting with many of you in November. But changes to border policies and the new risks of travel also mean much will be lost if our in-person meeting is not accessible to all of our members. Because our annual meetings have to be planned far in advance and involve a substantial financial obligation to the conference hotel, we cannot switch from an in-person to a virtual format on short notice (absent a global emergency like the pandemic). Regrettably, hybrid meetings are also unaffordable because of their complexity and the exorbitant rates charged for labor and technology to create the necessary audio-visual capacity. I am painfully aware of the fact that an in-person meeting in the U.S. may pose an inordinate, indeed insuperable, obstacle to participation for some members. We are actively planning to address this challenge, both by finding creative ways to accommodate overseas virtual participation and by experimenting with a new model for hosting a mid-year virtual research forum that will provide a second opportunity for MESA members globally to present scholarship and join roundtable discussions.

Finally, we are actively considering venues outside of the U.S. for future meetings. Stay tuned for more information as we develop these plans.

I end my third presidential column with a profound sense of gratitude, as always, for being part of the MESA scholarly community. We have tackled enormous new projects over the course of this past year and everyone has risen to the challenge with gusto, whether in supporting a larger cohort of displaced scholars, developing new grant proposals, advising colleagues in distress, or designing initiatives to protect our community in light of the unprecedented threats we now face. We owe special gratitude to the many MESA members who volunteer with our active committees and have given generously of their time and expertise over these last few months, galvanized by our shared commitment to protect our field, our colleagues and our students. Lara Deeb and Darryl Li, in particular, gamely agreed to co-chair our Task Force on Civil and Human Rights knowing that its workload would grow exponentially over the course of the semester and have become invaluable additions to our work in defense of academic freedom and in collaboration with the AAUP. Indeed, I am grateful to all of our Task Force members who have volunteered to take on work at a time when I know so many of us feel exhausted and drained. The decision to put our noses to the grindstone while so many institutions of higher education have opted, instead, to keep their heads down is only possible because of the hard work of MESA's staff and membership, which I will never take for granted. We have also been fortunate in the last few months to welcome two new members to the MESA Secretariat — Ceren Abi, who has joined us as the new Program Manager for the MESA Global Academy, and Janan Shouhayib, who now serves as our Academic Freedom Initiative Coordinator. Ceren and Janan have added new energy and enthusiasm to the work of MESA's tireless staff, all of whom deserve our thanks for their dedication.

Over these last many months we have come together as an association and a community to meet this moment, raising our voices together to denounce and actively oppose genocide; to demand that our universities and colleges show the courage to protect more than just their endowments; and to expand our own resources in defense of academic freedom and our rights to study, teach and write about the Middle East free from government orthodoxies. I have no doubt that Omar El Akkad's brilliant formulation captures an abiding truth: "one day, everyone will have always been against this." For us as a scholarly community that "one day" is yesterday, today, tomorrow and every day. We have always been against tacit acquiescence in repression, and against forms of silence that amount to complicity. We have, and we will continue, to raise our voices against those who would stifle dissent to facilitate genocide. It remains a great privilege to be able to work should-to-shoulder with MESA colleagues who share a commitment to our common intellectual endeavor and an uncompromising sense of principle as we stand in abiding solidarity with our colleagues and friends. I look forward to continuing to work together over the summer and as the new academic year begins.

...we have come together as an association and a community to meet this moment, raising our voices together to denounce and actively oppose genocide; to demand that our universities and colleges show the courage to protect more than just their endowments; and to expand our own resources in defense of academic freedom and our rights to study, teach and write about the Middle East free from government orthodoxies.

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Jeffrey D. Reger**

First of all, thank you for your membership in MESA. Together, we continue to take the lead in defending academic freedom, something I could not be more proud of.

This spring 2025 issue of *IMES* documents and compiles much of the work that we have been doing since the last issue, in addition to all of our usual tasks, which include planning for the annual meeting and coordinating our dozens of committees. My thanks as always to Sara Palmer, Calliandra Hermanson, and Donia Khraishi for keeping things on track, despite the world threatening to go off the rails. We are thankfully joined by two new staff members, Janan Shouhayib and Ceren Abi, whose brief bios can be found on page 30, to support two of our important initiatives.

After last fall's virtual meeting with some experimental in-person and hybrid special events, we conducted a detailed survey on our members' preferences moving forward, and the consensus was quite clear on remaining in person as much as possible, for as long as possible. Please see page 32 for the full results. For those who do not know, the annual meeting planning is a years-long process governed by contracts signed years in advance, meaning that we must be deliberate and look ahead as far as we can, though the only constant of course remains change. We will continue to do our absolute utmost to serve our members and our communities, as we remain the space for us to gather as scholars, students, and professionals in the field of Middle East studies.

We addressed many of these concerns and questions coming out of the peak of the Covid pandemic in 2022, with our frequently asked questions about the future annual meeting format. Yet two evergreen questions remain: Why can't you just move this year's conference somewhere else? And why can't we just be hybrid?

To the first: our contracts have severe penalties for canceling, short of the objective impossibility of convening the meeting. And note: Impossible means truly impossible, not just difficult. Incurring such penalties voluntarily would jeopardize the association.

To the second: Hybrid sounds like the best of both worlds, but it isn't. It cannabilizes our own meeting, while imposing onerous costs. It could work, if our registration rate was triple or quadruple what it is now. But at $85 or $185, it's not even close. Hybrid events, especially ours with many concurrent sessions, are very costly and difficult to execute. The technology and support needed for broadcasting live events with true two-way participation for both in-person and online attendance has only gotten more expensive in terms of staffing labor costs. In short, the expense of a hybrid session is actually more than running both an in-person meeting and a virtual meeting at the same time, because of the extra technology and labor costs. This is on top of the financial losses incurred due to the loss of room nights (toward the hotel room block) and food and beverage purchases (toward a minimum commitment) that an in-person attendee contributes (which subsidize most of the cost of the space needed for an in-person Annual Meeting program). Beyond the labor power needed to mount a hybrid conference (involving the MESA Secretariat staff, the conference hotel staff, and both in-person and online technology and audiovisual contractors), it would also split attendance in such a way that the in-person meeting loses its most critical attribute: our scale.

So the answers to both questions boil down to our duty to hold the meeting, which is part of the core mission of the association, in a sustainable and effective way.

We know that 2025 has already been overwhelming for many. For those with travel concerns, please see page 26 for some best practices and current advice.

I would like to draw our members' attention in particular to the work of the Task Force and the associated Academic Freedom Initiative. You will find a summary of their work over the past few months on page 15, as well as two joint statements with the MESA Board on pages 12-14. The findings from two of the initial datasets of the Academic Freedom Initiative are summarized on pages 16 and 17, regarding adverse employment outcomes and recent immigration actions affecting higher education.

I will conclude my column by citing our revised vision statement, which we have adopted as part of our ongoing strategic planning process:

> The strength of MESA lies in its dual commitment to scholarship and advocacy. MESA fosters, sustains, and disseminates scholarship, intellectual exchange beyond borders, and pedagogy. MESA advocates for academic freedom as well as the civil and human rights of scholars and students in the field of Middle East studies. MESA is proud to serve as an association that gives voice to the value of studying the Middle East in its global context, opposes all forms of discrimination, and defends the mission of higher education in both North America and in the MENA/SWANA region.

Thank you once again for your support of our work and of your fellow colleagues in all of these efforts.

# AAUP v. Rubio

## MESA is a plaintiff in a lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's policy of ideological deportation.

On March 25, 2025, the Knight Institute filed a lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's policy of arresting, detaining, and deporting noncitizen students and faculty who participate in pro-Palestinian activism. The lawsuit, filed on behalf of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), AAUP's Harvard, NYU, and Rutgers campus chapters, and the Middle East Studies Association, argues that the policy chills noncitizens from speaking and, by extension, robs these organizations and their U.S. citizen members of noncitizens' perspectives on a matter of significant public debate.

The lawsuit responds to a climate of repression and fear on university campuses. Federal agencies are attempting to deport multiple individuals for their pro-Palestinian advocacy, including Mahmoud Khalil, a leader of protests at Columbia University. These actions have sent chills through the community of noncitizen students and faculty on campuses around the country, causing some to pull out of academic conferences, stay home from protests, and withdraw from other forms of public advocacy and engagement.

The lawsuit alleges that the administration's policy of ideological deportation violates the First Amendment right of the plaintiffs to hear from and associate with noncitizen students and faculty, that it is unconstitutionally vague, and that it violates the Administrative Procedure Act. The suit seeks a court order declaring that the policy is unlawful and enjoining the federal government from enforcing it.

### Case Overview (as of May 15, 2025)

| | |
|---|---|
| March 25, 2025 | **Complaint filed** |
| April 1, 2025 | **Plaintiff's Motion for a Preliminary Injunction** |
| | • **Declaration of Aslı Ü. Bâli** |
| April 8, 2025 | **Amicus Briefs in Support of plaintiffs** |
| | • **The Commonwealth of Massachusetts & 18 other states** |
| | • **Amicus Brief of the Presidents' Alliance** |
| | • **Amicus Brief of 30 Academic Associations** |
| April 14, 2025 | **Government's Opposition** |
| April 18, 2025 | **Plaintiff's Reply** |
| April 29, 2025 | **Opinion** |

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### American Association of University Professors

The mission of AAUP is to advance academic freedom and shared governance; to define fundamental professional values and standards for higher education; to promote the economic security of faculty, academic professionals, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and all those engaged in teaching and research in higher education; to help the higher education community organize to make our goals a reality; and to ensure higher education's contribution to the common good. Founded in 1915, the AAUP has helped to shape American higher education by developing the standards and procedures that maintain quality in education and academic freedom in this country's colleges and universities.

### Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University

The Knight First Amendment Institute defends the freedoms of speech and the press in the digital age through strategic litigation, research, policy advocacy, and public education. It promotes a system of free expression that is open and inclusive, that broadens and elevates public discourse, and that fosters creativity, accountability, and effective self-government.

https://knightcolumbia.org/

### Middle East Studies Association

MESA is a non-profit association that fosters the study of the Middle East, promotes high standards of scholarship and teaching, and encourages public understanding of the region and its peoples through programs, publications and services that enhance education, further intellectual exchange, recognize professional distinction, and defend academic freedom.

https://mesana.org/

**Keep current on *AAUP v. Rubio***

# Recent Statements and Letters from MESA's Board of Directors

The MESA Board has released several statements and letters in recent months. Members are sent email announcements when a statement or letter is released. We provide a list of along wtih the full text of each statement here.

## Overview

| | |
|---|---|
| January 17, 2025 | MESA Board Joint Statement with CAF Concerning the Impact of the Israeli Military Campaign on Education in Lebanon |
| March 13, 2025 | MESA Board Statement on the repression of academic freedom in the United States |
| March 28, 2025 | Joint Statement regarding Columbia University and the Department of Education |
| April 11, 2025 | MESA Board Joint Statement with the TFCHR regarding deportations |
| April 28, 2025 | MESA Board Joint Statement with the TFCHR regarding visa revocations |

## JOINT LETTER WITH CAF

Concerning the Impact of the Israeli Military Campaign on Education in Lebanon

17 January 2025

The Board of Directors of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and its Committee on Academic Freedom register our profound concern regarding the interruption of education and the damage to Lebanese educational facilities as a result of the intensified Israeli military campaign which began in September 2024. Widespread aerial bombardments across Lebanon combined with a ground invasion in the south have killed more than 4,000 people, of whom at least 316 are children, and injured 16,500, of whom 1,456 are children.[1] The ceasefire announced on 27 November 2024 is a welcome development, but the damage to the education sector will have lasting effects. It remains far from clear whether the ceasefire will be sustainable or whether its terms will protect Lebanese educational facilities, scholars, researchers and students from ongoing Israeli attacks.

Lebanon's Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) mandated that education facilities, including universities and schools, close on 24 September 2024. The beginning of the school year was then postponed from 14 October to 4 November 2024 for public schools; however, private schools were granted permission to start the academic year using either online or in-person formats, with each school bearing the risk associated with its chosen methods. Over 1,177 facilities, including schools, were transformed into shelters to house the more than 1.3 million people displaced from South Lebanon and South Beirut. Even in the cases of schools that were able to continue providing instruction, traveling to them was a safety risk for students and staff.

Similar to the situation in primary and secondary schools, instruction and related educational activities at universities were suspended between 28 September and 6 October 2024. In early October, the MEHE announced that over 80,000 university students had been displaced. Many universities resorted to online instruction to continue the academic year. Further, as the Israeli bombardments damaged over 50 hospitals and killed health workers, university hospitals had to expand their health care provision. Teachers and students in medical school were redirected to support this expansion. The American University of Beirut, the largest private sector employee in Lebanon, reported that half of its students had been displaced and a further 700 had become homeless. Université Saint Joseph de Beirut reported that 20% of its staff and one third of its students had been displaced.

Educational facilities located in South Beirut were under consistent threat of aerial bombardment. According to the Beirut Urban Lab, 78% of the schools, universities and vocational institutes in that area were in the vicinity of announced Israeli air strikes. Particularly in Haret Hreik, Azad University was within the area of 27 strikes and Al-Afak Institute was in the area of another 24 strikes.

The Lebanese University, the only public university in Lebanon, was severely impacted by the Israeli military campaign. Its main campus in Hadath in South Beirut, which houses many core faculties, was damaged in an air strike on 9 November 2024. Approximately 30,000 students at the Lebanese University were displaced. In response, the university implemented an emergency plan to provide temporary housing for displaced staff and students, launched online registration and teaching, implemented programmes to pay students fees, and provided psychosocial support. Facilities across Lebanese University branches have further been used to house displaced members of the university.

University communities are also grieving the deaths of students, scholars and staff—from Lebanese University, Lebanese American University, American University of Beirut, Université Sainte Famille Batroun, Phoenicia University, and the University of Sciences and Arts Lebanon, who were killed as a result of Israeli attacks since September 2024.

As described above, the higher education sector faces extreme hardship as it contemplates continuing the academic year. Additionally, revenue shortfalls from tuition fees and the interruption of research activities will impact the future work and sustainability of these institutions. The National Erasmus+ Office in Lebanon, which supports capacity building

in higher education, has further reported that foreign staff and students have begun to leave the country. Concurrently, there are fears that Lebanese students may look abroad for higher education opportunities as international scholarships become increasingly available. This will further adversely affect the sustainability of higher education in Lebanon.

The right to education is an internationally protected human right, and educational institutions are protected under international law including under Article 94 of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention and Article 13 of the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Israeli military attacks in Lebanon, including on educational facilities and their environs, are direct infringements on these rights and protections, as well as on academic freedom. We express solidarity with our colleagues in Lebanon and urge international organizations to support Lebanese educational institutions as they resume their important activities and rebuild their sector.

[1] It is worth noting that over half a million students and 45,000 teachers were living in areas where Israeli bombardment occurred. These numbers do not include the 470,000 Syrian refugee students, of whom 110,000 have been internally displaced.

## BOARD STATEMENT

On the repression of academic freedom in the United States

13 March 2025

The second Trump administration has ushered in an existential threat to academic freedom and higher education in the United States. The current campaign targeting universities is an extension of earlier right-wing efforts to attack and defund teaching about race, gender, and sexuality at the state level, but it is a significant escalation and one at the federal level. In the midst of Israel's genocidal war in the Gaza Strip of the last sixteen months and the fragile ceasefire in place as of this writing, Palestine solidarity protest activity on university and college campuses became a target of attacks that sought to undermine criticisms of Israel while simultaneously extending a pre-existing far-right war on higher education. The consequence has been, above all else, a censorious climate of repression to stifle voices in support of Palestinian self-determination and human rights and to secure ongoing, unconditional support to Israel. In the process, Palestine-related scholarship and advocacy have now become focal points of a frontal assault on universities as centers of critical thinking and knowledge production in a battle to destroy the autonomy of institutions of higher education in the US.

The groundwork for this moment was unfortunately laid through the demonization and criminalization of campus anti-war protests in 2023 and 2024, including statements by the Biden administration and lawmakers across the aisle, as well as the bi-partisan congressional hearings investigating US universities. The Trump administration is now engaged in a multi-agency attack on institutions of higher education and is working in concert with a highly mobilized and organized set of private actors, including lobby groups, non-profits, social media personalities, and extremist right-wing organizations, to target universities and campus communities directly. The federal government is doing so primarily by cynically deploying a broad, vague, and flawed definition of antisemitism to chill constitutionally protected free speech rights and produce a chilling effect on teaching about, and public discussion of, Israeli policies toward Palestinians on college and university campuses.

On January 29, President Trump issued an Executive Order on "Additional Measures to Combat Anti-Semitism," demanding action from every executive department or agency. Accordingly, a multi-agency "Task Force to Combat Anti-Semitism" was established on February 3, whose "first priority will be to root out anti-Semitic harassment in schools and on college campuses." The Task Force is led by the Department of Justice's Office of Civil Rights and includes elements of the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, as well as the General Services Administration and other agencies not yet announced. Little else is known at this moment about the Task Force's exact composition, scope of authority, or manner of operation.

In a matter of weeks, the Task Force has spearheaded the government's weaponization of spurious antisemitism charges against higher education. It has announced a Department of Justice (DoJ) investigation into the University of California (UC) to assess whether the UC has allowed "an Antisemitic hostile work environment to exist on its campuses." The Task Force has announced plans to visit at least 10 university campuses to consider "remedial action" action against them. In what appears to be the most egregious instance of government overreach against, and undermining of established due process for, higher education institutions, the Task Force announced the suspension of $400 million in federal funding to Columbia University without any clear legal basis.

The Task Force's suspension of federal funding to Columbia merits particular attention because it underscores the existential threat posed by the Trump administration to higher education. Only days after initiating an investigation of Columbia for alleged violations, the Task Force announced the suspension of funding as a punitive measure. It has been long-established practice that a university under Department of Education (DoE) investigation is given an opportunity to present evidence and afforded the option of a "resolution," that is a voluntary agreement with the DoE to take certain corrective steps. Only after the conclusion of an investigation, the issuance of findings and a resolution process would the DoE ever reach the point of instituting measures against a university. Even then, the long-established practice has been that any compulsory measures be tailored to address specific findings of violation. In other words, general funding cuts as a punitive measure are outside of the bounds of ordinary DoE practices. Instead of following these established procedures, the Task Force, rather than DoE, announced the suspension of federal funding without providing Columbia University an opportunity to respond to the allegations underlying the nascent investigation. The public record suggests that the Task Force neither provided an explanation of the specific basis for its action, nor did it identify particular corrective measures to be undertaken. Moreover, the suspension of the $400 million was not tailored to any specific, alleged violation. Days later, the DoE announced that it had sent letters to 60 other universities under investigation, creating the appearance of a decision to make an example of Columbia University and thereby intimidate other institutions of higher education into taking preemptive measures to avoid similarly punitive cuts.

In addition to these threats to universities and their institutional funding, the government has also taken steps to target individuals on campuses for immigration enforcement actions specifically on the basis of their speech and associational activity. This includes the use of AI to scan social media accounts to identify statements and activities the government disagrees with, and the subsequent use of social media posts as the basis for arrest, detention, and deportation. The most prominent example has been the arrest and detention, using ICE officers, of Mahmoud Khalil, who holds a green card. Khalil was apparently detained for having served as an organizer of protests at Columbia, where he was a graduate student last year. President Trump has made clear on social media that this case "is the first arrest of many to come," explicitly threatening that his administration will go after additional students at Columbia and other universities. Whatever specific legal pretext the government uses as the basis for this arrest and attempted green card revocation (or in other cases against targeted individuals), the intention is clearly to use the threat of deportation to deter all non-citizens from speaking out in support of views disfavored by the Trump administration.

Moreover, additional grounds to go after universities and their funding seem to be prolifer-

ating daily. The recent action pausing federal funding from the Department of Agriculture to the University of Maine over allegations that the university is allowing transgender athletes to compete in sports, makes clear that the Trump administration's determination to go after university funding is in no way limited to claims related to alleged antisemitism.

Beyond the actions targeting universities and individuals, there remains in the background potential legislation that would strip universities, scholarly associations, and philanthropic foundations of their nonprofit status on the basis of unilateral determinations by executive officials that they have allegedly engaged in vaguely defined forms of support to groups on terrorism blacklists, including through speech or other associational activity. Passed by the House of Representatives in the waning weeks of the Biden administration, the reintroduction of such a measure in Congress continues to loom over higher education as a whole.

These and other recent policy initiatives represent an attempt to focus repression against university administrators to enlist them in efforts to monitor protest activity on their campuses as part of a campaign of intimidation. In this context, and in a continuation of the campus repression that began last year, some universities have, prior to any federal case or investigation, begun implementing measures in line with the Trump administration's preferences, communications, and executive orders. Multiple institutions have begun defunding or dismantling various DEI initiatives, scrubbing or retooling language about valuing diversity and inclusion, and even threatening to decrease funding for longstanding gender studies and ethnic studies academic departments and programs. School administrators have instituted ad-hoc changes to campus policies to further limit opportunities for expressive and associational activities. Disciplinary proceedings against students, faculty, and staff who have participated in pro-Palestine protests have intensified. Some universities have gone so far as to expel students for protest activity. Such anticipatory obedience threatens to radically scale up the government's repressive agenda. Further, as recent developments demonstrate, such compliance does not in fact protect institutions from federal threats.

The example of Columbia is again instructive. Repeated efforts by university leadership to anticipate and comply with demands by hawkish government actors—including multiple crackdowns on student protestors with police and draconian disciplinary measures, as well as the disciplining of faculty and staff via administrative leaves, suspensions, and threats of termination—have only exposed the university to even more extreme forms of sanction. Succumbing to intimidation has failed to assuage the university's antagonists; indeed it seems only to have emboldened the government to intensify its attacks. The government's announcement of massive funding cuts to Columbia University within days of announcing its investigation against the university is an extraordinary punitive measure no other university has experienced to date.

In the current national climate, as institutions of higher education and their mission of critical inquiry face unprecedented attack, MESA unequivocally supports efforts to stand up for freedom of expression, academic freedom, and institutional autonomy. Rather than facilitating or acting in the interests of government repression, we must all take a collective stance to defend higher education in the United States.

First and foremost, the MESA Board of Directors demands that the government immediately end its repressive campaign against American colleges and universities. We call on all branches of the federal government as well as elected officials and civil servants working at all levels to reject this brazen undermining of fundamental protections enshrined in the Constitution, including due process.

The MESA Board of Directors also calls on lawmakers to recognize the threat these policies represent to higher education in general, and to the specific campuses based in their constituencies in particular. Lawmakers have a critical role to play in ensuring transparency, accountability, and the constitutionality of any and all policies.

The MESA Board of Directors urges university and college administrations to affirmatively defend the autonomy of higher education and the rights of all members of their campus to engage in lawful, First Amendment-protected activity. We also call on university and college administrators to protect and support vulnerable members of our campus communities. Leaders in higher education must recognize that voluntary cooperation — beyond what is legally compulsory — with repressive efforts targeting individual members of our campuses or those abrogating the autonomy of higher education will compromise the safety of campus communities and render all universities more vulnerable to governmental overreach and censorship. Anticipatory obedience is neither a defense against repression nor a viable strategy to avert risk. Rather, it is an invitation to greater repression that endangers students, faculty, and staff, and compromises the integrity of institutions of higher education in a democratic society.

Lastly, we recognize that all of these events, and the climate of fear they have produced, are deeply traumatic to our members. The MESA Board of Directors is determined to face this new threat level and act as a resource in solidarity with our membership in defense of freedom of speech, academic freedom, and institutional autonomy. We will support our members in their efforts to mobilize their own campus communities.

## JOINT STATEMENT WITH OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

### Regarding Columbia University and the Department of Education

### 28 March 2025

We, the Middle East Studies Association joined by the undersigned associations, write to express our deep condemnation of actions taken in the past weeks that imperil the autonomy of centers for regional study at universities across the United States and the future of area studies as a domain of scholarship and research in American higher education.

Two developments have caused alarm among our members: the demands issued by the Trump administration against Columbia University, and the Trump administration's attempts to dissolve the Department of Education.

First, the administration's demands to Columbia University to place its Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies (MESAAS) department under "administrative receivership" is a fundamental abrogation of the autonomy of university governance. Moreover, Columbia University was not offered basic procedural protections, such as being told the basis of the government's actions and being given a right of response, before punitive measures were taken against it. Confronted by government threats to research funding, Columbia Board of Trustees not only acquiesced, they also placed the Center for Palestine Studies under receivership as well, unbidden. If this kind of demand can be issued by federal officials against Columbia University, then no public or private university in the United States can be safe from intrusive government intervention in the governance of its appointments procedures, curriculum, teaching, research activities, faculty scholarship, or internal disciplinary procedures. The decision of Columbia University to acquiesce to the government's demands threatens to set a precedent that may be the death knell of university autonomy in the United States.

Second, dismantling the Department of Education will have an irreversible impact on the many programs and initiatives that have shaped the core of our research practices and the production of cutting-edge knowledge in area studies fields across the United States.

For the U.S. to continue leading the world in research innovation, the government must not impede the global exchange of research. Such exchange is made more robust by the free and unfettered support of area studies units within universities, which provide the necessary information, training, knowledge, and pathways for innovative research across the globe.

New executive actions dismantling the Department of Education—together with announced funding freezes and cuts and the targeting of individual universities with even more intrusive measures—affect all of higher education.

We demand that:

- Elected officials and civil servants reject the brazen undermining of fundamental protections enshrined in the Constitution, including the separation of powers, and the right to due process.
- Lawmakers recognize and respond to the threat that these actions represent to higher education in general, and to the specific campuses in their districts.
- Lawmakers seek to ensure transparency, accountability, and constitutionality of any and all new policies.
- University and college administrations reject the tactic of withholding or freezing federal funding as a form of blackmail, which seeks to interfere with and destroy the autonomy of higher education and the rights of all members of their campuses to education.
- Columbia University officials, in particular, desist from measures that compromise faculty self-governance in the MESAAS Department and the Center for Palestine Studies.

American Comparative Literature Association
American Studies Association
Association for Asian Studies
Middle East Studies Association
National Women's Studies Association

## JOINT STATEMENT WITH TFCHR
Regarding Deportations

### 11 April 2025

The MESA Board of Directors and the MESA Task Force on Civil and Human Rights condemn in the strongest terms the Trump administration's targeting of noncitizen students and researchers for their constitutionally protected speech and advocacy. As part of an expansive anti-immigrant agenda, President Donald Trump has revoked visas and ordered the detention and deportation of non-citizens, including lawful permanent residents, for their advocacy of Palestinian rights and human dignity. The pretextual use of federal laws and executive orders to penalize political advocacy, speech, and protest is a direct assault on the foundations of democracy. It is a brazen attempt to deter individuals and institutions from expressing and hearing dissenting viewpoints. It is also a direct attack on the academic freedom of US universities, threatening the viability of these institutions as sites of free research, debate, and knowledge production.

On January 20, 2025, President Trump issued Executive Order No. 14,161 stating that it is the policy of the United States to protect its citizens from noncitizens "who espouse hateful ideology," directing the Secretary of State and other cabinet officials to "vet and screen" all noncitizens who are already in the United States "to the maximum degree possible." On January 29, 2025, the president issued Executive Order No. 14,188 stating that it is the policy of the United States "to combat anti-Semitism vigorously, using all available and appropriate legal tools, to prosecute, remove, or otherwise hold to account the perpetrators of unlawful anti-Semitic harassment and violence." The White House released a fact sheet about the order vowing "to investigate and punish anti-Jewish racism in leftist, anti-American colleges and universities." The fact sheet characterizes the order as demanding "the removal of resident aliens who violate our laws."

The Executive Orders laid the groundwork for a disturbing series of arrests and deportation proceedings of noncitizen academics who participated in pro-Palestine protests or other related expression and association. MESA and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) have challenged in court this "ideological deportation policy" as patently unconstitutional. In March 2025 alone, the following arrests were carried out or attempted by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency:

- On March 8, ICE agents arrested Mahmoud Khalil, a recent Columbia University graduate and U.S. permanent resident. The agents ambushed Khalil in the lobby of his university-owned apartment building, separating him from his wife (a U.S. citizen) and whisking him away to an ICE facility in Louisiana.
- On the same day, ICE signed a detention order for Yunseo Chung, a Columbia University student and permanent resident who has lived in the United States since she was seven. A federal judge temporarily stopped ICE from detaining Chung while attorneys litigate the case.
- On March 11, Ranjani Srinivasan, an Indian national and doctoral student at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, fled the United States for Canada after receiving notice that her visa had been revoked, and experiencing two warrantless visits from ICE agents at her Columbia University-owned housing.
- On March 13, Rasha Alawieh, a Lebanese citizen on an H-1B visa, was detained for 36 hours at Boston's Logan Airport and then deported back to Lebanon. A kidney transplant specialist who was to start a position at Brown University's medical school, Dr. Alawieh was deported despite a court order temporarily blocking her expulsion.
- On March 17, ICE arrested Badar Khan Suri, an Indian national and postdoctoral fellow at the Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. Suri was surrounded by masked agents, separated from his wife (a U.S. citizen) and three children, told that his visa was revoked, and detained in an ICE facility in Louisiana.
- On March 21, the Justice Department wrote to attorneys for Momodou Taal, a British-Gambian national and doctoral student in Africana Studies at Cornell University, requesting that Taal voluntarily "surrender to ICE custody." Taal had filed a preemptive lawsuit to block his detention, but the court has denied his motion seeking a halt to the administration's deportation efforts.
- On March 25, masked ICE agents surrounded Rumeysa Ozturk, a Turkish national and doctoral student in Child Study and Human Development at Tufts University, outside her home and transported her to a facility in Louisiana. In his defense of the arrest, Secretary of State Marco Rubio told reporters, "We gave you a visa to come and study and get a degree, not to become a social activist that tears up our university campus. We've given you a visa and you decide to do that we're going to take it away." Rubio did not specify what actions led to Ozturk's arrest, beyond her co-authoring of an Op-Ed urging Tufts to divest from companies with ties to Israel.

As the ostensible legal basis of the arrests, the government has invoked a little-used provision that was introduced into the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1990 that empowers the government to deport noncitizens if the secretary of state determines that their activities "would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States." This provision, which purports to vest extraordinary discretion in a single government official, is of dubious validity. It

was ruled as unconstitutionally vague by a federal judge – the sister of President Trump, no less – in 1996, although the decision was overturned on unrelated procedural grounds.

The arrests evince a clear pattern of penalizing Palestine solidarity, by redefining it as hateful, anti-Semitic terrorism, with universities as alleged incubators. President Trump reinforced this framing in a post on Truth Social on March 10, after Mahmoud Khalil's arrest:

> This is the first arrest of many to come. We know there are more students at Columbia and other universities across the Country who have engaged in pro-terrorist, anti-Semitic, anti-American activity, and the Trump Administration will not tolerate it. Many are not students, they are paid agitators. We will find, apprehend, and deport these terrorist sympathizers from our country—never to return again.

In addition to these arrests, hundreds of international undergraduate and graduate student visas have been revoked without notice. The government has also taken the unprecedented step of terminating hundreds of individuals' records in the federal database regulating the stay of international students, threatening them with potential deportation proceedings. We do not yet know how many of these moves have been prompted by Palestine-related political alignments and/or impact members of the MESA community but they have created a climate of fear among international students and faculty, and, when related to advocacy, are a clear infringement of first amendment rights. The administration's attempt to stigmatize noncitizens and punish them for their protected speech flies in the face of a broad legal consensus that the First Amendment applies to all persons residing in the U.S., regardless of citizenship status.

As the MESA Board emphasized on March 13, "Palestine-related scholarship and advocacy have now become focal points of a frontal assault on universities as centers of critical thinking and knowledge production in a battle to destroy the autonomy of institutions of higher education in the US."

The MESA Board of Directors and Task Force on Civil and Human Rights demand first and foremost that the U.S. government desist from actions designed to repress pro-Palestine speech and expressive conduct and to punish those who have engaged in such constitutionally-protected speech and conduct, especially noncitizens who are being threatened with the pretextual and punitive use of immigration laws for expressing views with which the government disagrees.

At a time when the government is abusing immigration laws in this way, and also possibly threatening to expand repression of speech to citizens through criminal laws, universities and colleges owe heightened protections to members of their campus communities, particularly noncitizens. There are a series of minimal steps that universities and colleges should take to ensure they are protecting their campus communities. The MESA Board of Directors and Task Force on Civil and Human Rights call on our members and colleagues to ask their university and college administrations to:

1. Refuse to turn over personal student information in response to Title VI investigations;
2. Make a clear commitment to avoid voluntary cooperation or information sharing with Immigration and Customs Enforcement or other federal agencies charged with facilitating deportation or other forms of immigration enforcement;
3. Make a clear commitment to not comply with Section 3 of the expanded Executive Order 13899, which calls for universities to "monitor for and report activities by alien students and staff relevant to those grounds and for ensuring that such reports about aliens lead, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law, to investigations and, if warranted, actions to remove such aliens;"
4. Maintain the enrollment of international students in the event of visa revocation, legal status termination, detention, and/or deportation;
5. Allow impacted international students and scholars to continue their studies and research remotely, if necessary;
6. Ensure that graduate students and workers whose enrollment is contingent upon funding through graduate teaching appointments or fellowships can continue their coursework, research, and teaching appointments;
7. Communicate reliable, timely information to international students and scholars, including immediate notification of changes in their legal status;
8. Provide and pay for legal counsel for those students and scholars whose visas have been revoked;
9. Work swiftly and affirmatively—through lawsuits, if necessary—to stop the termination of legal status of students and scholars without any due process.

Finally, in this climate of escalating fear, we reiterate our commitment to our membership to continue to act as a resource in their defense, and in defense of freedom of speech, academic freedom, and constitutional rights.

## JOINT STATEMENT WITH TFCHR

Regarding Visa Revocations

### 28 April 2025

The MESA Board of Directors and the MESA Task Force on Civil and Human Rights call on all U.S. universities and colleges to heed the Trump administration's reversal of the unlawful mass visa revocations that have terrorized international students and scholars in recent weeks. We urge campus administrations to immediately inform their communities and recent alumni that international students and scholars remain legally entitled to stay in the United States.

On April 25, following more than 100 lawsuits against the administration, the Department of Justice announced it would reverse course. This reversal was no doubt a response to the fact that courts across multiple jurisdictions issued restraining orders finding the administration's actions likely unlawful, citing arbitrary practices, violations of existing legal requirements and the failure to afford basic procedural protections.

The lesson is clear: the administration's strategy of shock and awe aims to destabilize through unlawful overreach, forcing affected individuals and institutions to expend enormous resources to assert their rights. The legality of actions is almost irrelevant if fear induces voluntary compliance.

Complying with lawless demands amounts to a voluntary forfeiture of legal and constitutional rights and risks irreversible damage that might otherwise have been avoided. We warn university and college administrators against the self-inflicted harm that comes from failing to challenge unprecedented actions by the government in the context of its chaotic immigration policies and its broader attack on higher education. Instead, universities must assert constitutional rights, reinforce legal constraints on executive action, and, where necessary, pursue defensive litigation.

Over the past month, the Trump administration revoked the visas of thousands of foreign students and scholars. As of April 28, MESA recorded 1,674 revocations

among current students and recent alumni on temporary (Optional Practical Training) employment—undoubtedly an undercount, as this figure relies on open-source data from university statements, campus newspapers, local journalism, and lawsuits. MESA's data show that visa revocations affected over 200 schools in 44 states, spanning public and private institutions. Impacted students come from at least 24 countries.

The administration's method of communicating visa revocations was shrouded in secrecy: rather than notifying students directly, it deleted their records in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), the government database regulating student visa holders, forcing universities to convey this change to students often without a clear understanding of its implications. Since students cannot access SEVIS directly, this maneuver conscripted colleges into the administration's campaign of intimidation. Most were informed of their revoked visas without explanation. Some were allegedly flagged through "criminal records checks" for minor, dismissed, or even dropped charges.

Crucially, termination of a SEVIS record does not affect a student's lawful status inside the U.S., a fact the government has now acknowledged in court filings. Yet government communications blurred this distinction, misleading students and institutions into conflating SEVIS terminations with loss of legal status. It must be emphasized: a visa grants entry into the U.S., but lawful status once inside is separate. Termination of a SEVIS record or visa revocation does not require immediate departure; it only necessitates obtaining a new visa if one leaves and seeks reentry.

The revocations triggered mass panic on campuses, often exacerbated by inaccurate university communications. Examples include:

- Johns Hopkins University barred affected students from "non-public areas of University property", presumably including dormitories, stating DHS had instructed them to leave the country.
- Duke University asserted students with SEVIS terminations could no longer study or work legally in the U.S.
- Virginia Tech urged immediate departure after nine students had SEVIS terminations.
- The University at Buffalo (SUNY) told impacted students and alumni that departure was "required."

We know that some students "self-deported" due to misinformation and fear, and actual numbers are likely far higher than what has been reported to date. While it may be too late to undo all the harm for those who have left, universities must immediately cease any adverse actions based on SEVIS terminations and support students in completing their education whenever possible.

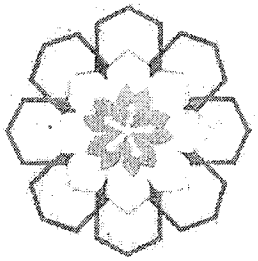
Even as the visa revocations have been reversed and new visa policies are under review, the damage is lasting. International students are now less likely to apply to U.S. institutions. Universities have been warned they risk punitive exclusion from the government program that allows them to admit students on visas, as exemplified by threats against Harvard. Students, advocates, and institutions have borne enormous costs defending basic legal rights—and a new, troubling baseline has been set.

In response to these acute harms, the MESA Board of Directors and Task Force on Civil and Human Rights call on the U.S. government to cease manipulating the student visa system. We further demand that any visa policy reviews prioritize the original purpose of these programs: facilitating the lawful admission of foreign students, scholars, and visitors to the United States.

At a time when the government has made clear its willingness to abuse immigration laws, we remind universities and colleges that they owe heightened protections to members of their campus communities. The MESA Board of Directors and Task Force on Civil and Human Rights reiterates its demand that university and college administrations take the following basic steps to protect community members from arbitrary government action:

1. Refuse to turn over personal student information in response to Title VI investigations;
2. Make a clear commitment to avoid voluntary cooperation or information sharing with Immigration and Customs Enforcement or other federal agencies charged with facilitating deportation or immigration enforcement;
3. Reject compliance with Section 3 of Executive Order 13899, which calls for universities to voluntarily "monitor for and report activities by alien students and staff."
4. Maintain the enrollment of international students in the event of visa revocation, legal status termination, detention, and/or deportation;
5. Allow impacted international students and scholars to continue their studies and research remotely, when necessary;
6. Ensure that graduate students and workers whose enrollment is contingent upon funding through graduate teaching appointments or fellowships can continue their coursework, research, and teaching appointments;
7. Communicate reliable, timely information to international students and scholars, including immediate notification of changes in their SEVIS status;
8. Provide and pay for legal counsel for those students and scholars whose visas have been revoked;
9. Work swiftly and affirmatively—through lawsuits, if necessary—to stop the termination of legal status of students and scholars without any due process and to defend students and scholars from their campus who have been detained.

Finally, in this climate of escalating fear, we reaffirm our commitment to our membership to continue to act as a resource in their defense, and in defense of freedom of speech, academic freedom, and constitutional rights.



# Task Force on Civil and Human Rights Update: First 100 Days

MESA's Task Force on Civil and Human Rights (TFCHR) advocates for civil and human rights on multiple fronts, including litigation, policy guidance, and research and resources to support our members.

Over the last three months, the Trump administration has expanded its incessant campaign against our communities on various fronts. This has included attempting to dismantle the Department of Education and defund schools, targeting Middle East studies centers and programs, and leveraging federal power to create a pervasive culture of fear and repression on university and college campuses.

We are dedicated to supporting our membership, and as we approach the 100th day of the Trump administration's second term, the urgency of our work is clear. To meet the various threats that challenge our members, we have expanded MESA's advocacy efforts through various initiatives.

As noted previously, we have reactivated the MESA Task Force on Civil and Human Rights (TFCHR), originally established in 2017, in light of the intensified repression of academic freedom and free speech rights on North American campuses since October 2023. Through the TFCHR, MESA advocates for civil and human rights on multiple fronts, including litigation, policy guidance, and research and resources to support our members.

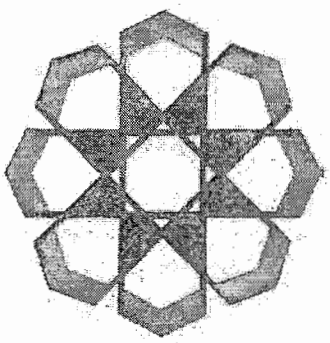
For instance, MESA is one of the key plaintiffs, along with the American Association of University Professors, in the lawsuit AAUP v Rubio, which the Knight Institute filed on March 25. The suit challenges the Trump administration's policy of arresting, detaining, and deporting noncitizen students and faculty who participate in Palestine activism. Three amicus briefs have been filed thus far in support of the case, one by 30 faculty associations and AAUP chapters, another by 86 universities and colleges that are part of the Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration, and the most recent by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts joined by 18 other states.

MESA is also a co-signatory to a filing that was sent to the United Nations Human Rights Council concerning the widespread human rights violations by the US government, under both the Biden and Trump administrations, against speech and protest in defense of Palestinian rights. The filing enters the empirical record of the US human rights review, and it may create space for testimony to the Human Rights Council in Geneva, which would increase international attention to the ongoing repression.

Over the past winter, MESA and the TFCHR launched our Academic Freedom Initiative (funded by the Mellon Foundation) in order to document, analyze, and publish research on the constantly changing landscape of academic freedom and its repression in North America, an endeavor that has become even more important since Trump's inauguration. Launching this initiative included the hiring of two staff members, one full-time and one part-time, wholly dedicated to building out this project and supporting the TFCHR.

The Initiative's first research project has been to create and build out a database that tracks cases of adverse employment outcomes for university employees who have advocated for Palestine, which we hope to launch publicly soon. Currently, we are also collecting data on all visa revocations, border entry denials, deportations, and detentions of university students, faculty, and staff over the last three months. Our next priorities include tracking Title VI litigation and creating an independent website that displays our research and houses resources later this year.

In addition, the TFCHR has helped coordinate a series of Know Your Rights trainings to equip MESA members with legal resources and recommendations regarding travel, digital security, and related topics. We are also in the process of developing a general FAQ of KYR-related questions to create a public living resource for our membership and beyond. This resource will soon be available on our TFCHR Advocacy Resource Center. We will continue to update our website to centralize vetted resources created by various coalition partners, such as the AAUP and AFT, and we will continue to send monthly updates to MESA members about recent developments. As we face uncharted territory, MESA remains committed to supporting its members. The TFCHR and MESA's Academic Freedom Initiative remain attentive to the ever-changing climate that threatens both Middle Eastern studies and higher education more broadly. Our work continues, in support of the critical work of scholarship and teaching that our members and colleagues do.



# MESA's Academic Freedom Initiative

Over the last few months, MESA has been building out the **Academic Freedom Initiative (AFI)**, a project funded by the Mellon Foundation to identify and track trends regarding academic freedom and repression on campuses across North America. Since starting the initiative in February, our research priorities have been to document recent mass immigration enforcement and incidents of employment retaliation on campuses, with upcoming projects focused on tracking litigation among other efforts.

## Tracking Higher Education Immigration Enforcement

We have built a database to track the Trump administration's recent campaign to revoke the visas and terminate the immigration records of thousands of students and scholars across the U.S. Although the Department of Justice announced its intention to reverse these moves on April 25, these measures, along with the numerous cases of individuals currently detained or deported, have created a lasting sense of fear across campuses in recent weeks. It is not yet clear that the government has indeed changed course, or that there have been reversals in all cases where visas were already revoked. Moreover, universities' inability to properly protect or inform their communities has exacerbated this panic.

We have therefore continued to track all visa revocations and immigration record terminations, entry denials, deportations, and detentions of university students, faculty, and staff to comprehensively record and analyze such changes on campuses. Sourcing from open-access data such as court filings and media reports, we have also collaborated with individuals at allied organizations to corroborate our data for accuracy and completion. To date, we have identified 1,708 total cases.

More than half of the affected individuals were current students (975 out of 1,708), while 250 were recent alumni on temporary employment status.

In 478 cases, we have been able to identify affected individuals by name, citizenship, or immigration status.

From this data, we have identified multiple patterns.

Out of more than 200 universities and colleges with reported cases, over 65 percent of cases were reported from public institutions.

We have also identified a demonstrated national origin pattern across the dataset. Out of the cases where citizenship is known, the affected individuals held citizenship from more than 25 countries. Yet, less than 2 percent of these cases involved European citizenship. The overwhelming majority—over 98 percent of cases for which country of citizenship is known—are nationals of countries in the Global South.

We also have reason to believe the reversals are a prelude to further targeting of vulnerable individuals.

## Academic Freedom and Employment Retaliation Database

In addition to higher education immigration, we have created a database that tracks all adverse employment outcomes for university employees who have advocated for Palestine since October 2023.

Thus far, we have identified the following incidents of employment retaliation:

| Incidents of Retaliation | |
|---|---|
| Suspensions | 27 |
| Terminations | 13 |
| Forced resignations | 3 |
| Rescinded offers | 2 |
| Removals from service positions | 2 |
| Miscellaneous | 14 |
| **Total # of incidents of retaliation** | **61** |

| Individual Data | |
|---|---|
| Tenured faculty | 24 |
| Tenure-track faculty | 9 |
| Non-tenure faculty | 22 |
| Staff | 4 |
| **Total # of individuals affected** | **59** |

| Institutional Data | |
|---|---|
| Public universities | 16 |
| Private universities | 21 |
| **Total # of universities** | **37** |

## Future Research Directions

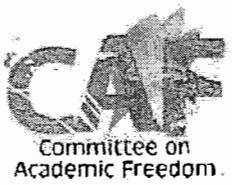
As new policies continue to emerge, our next area of research will focus on legal actions and lawsuits brought under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to track major cases of lawfare concerning Palestinian advocacy within academia. We will build out a new database to capture Title VI litigation since October 2023, to be launched over the summer.

Across the country, universities and colleges remain under attack. Threats to immigration status, funding opportunities and employment, and to First Amendment protections including academic freedom continue to grow.

MESA will continue to develop our research initiative to address these concerns. Our research will be centralized on a publicly accessible website to be launched before the end of the year. In doing so, we will ensure our data is available to our membership and to the public. In addition to our findings, the new standalone website will house resources that are currently located in the MESA Advocacy Resource Center.

As we face continual threats of censorship, and repression, MESA is committed to defending academic freedom and free speech tenaciously, to document the range of experiences affecting our membership and our field, to encourage campuses to protect their communities, and to provide anticipatory support to all affected.

# Recent Activity from MESA's Committee on Academic Freedom




CAF comprises two sub-committees: MENA (Middle East and North Africa) and NA (North America). The mission of CAF is to address violations by protesting them at the highest government and diplomatic levels of the country where the violation occurs. If you learn of human rights or academic freedom violations please email the committee at caf@mesana.org.

*Below are summaries of letters sent to heads of state, other high-ranking officials, or educational officials in response to an issue of academic freedom. The country listed represents the country receiving the letter. To view the full content of the letter, please see MESA's website (mesana.org).*

16 December 2024 (US)
Letter to New York University expressing concern about recent actions that have exacerbated the climate of repression on campus.

28 January 2025 (US)
Letter to the Columbia University Senate expressing concern about the flawed disciplinary proceedings involving Dr. Katherine Franke and the circumstances surrounding her "retirement".

10 February 2025 (US)
Letter to Emory University expressing concern about the suspension of Umaymah Mohammad, a student from the Emory University School of Medicine, for a statement that she made during a media interview that was deemed in violation of the student code of conduct.

10 February 2025 (US)
Letter to MIT expressing concern about the decision of MIT's Department of Linguistics and Philosophy to deny Professor Michel DeGraff permission to offer a proposed course on language, linguistics and decolonization in Israel/Palestine.

6 March 2025 (Iran)
The tenth letter to express our outrage and deep concern, and demand the release from prison of the dual national (Iranian-Swedish) Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali who has been detained on false charges for nine years and condemned to death on the basis of a forced confession.

6 March 2025 (US)
Letter to NY Governor Hochul and leaders of the City University of New York expressing grave concern about Governor Hochul's unprecedented demand that Hunter College of the City University of New York (CUNY) take down a posted advertisement for a new open-rank position in the field of Palestinian studies.

17 March 2025 (US)
Letter to the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture xpressing concern about the decision of the Board of Directors of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture to cancel a planned issue of the Journal of Architectural Education (JAE) focused on Palestine. We are equally disturbed by the board's termination of JAE Interim Executive Editor McLain Clutter for protesting this decision.

17 March 2025 (US)
Letter to Columbia University leadership expressing outrage about the letter dated 13 March 2025 that was sent to you by three Trump administration officials, and to urge you to respond in a principled and forceful manner to the unprecedented, unacceptable and extreme demands that it sets forth.

31 March 2025 (US)
Letter to Harvard University expressing concern about Harvard University's decision to remove Professor Cemal Kafadar and Associate Professor Rosie Bsheer as, respectively, director and associate director of the university's Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

8 April 2025 (US)
Letter to Yale University expressing concern about the termination of Dr. Helyeh Doutaghi, deputy director of Yale University's Law and Political Economy Project and associate research scholar at Yale Law School, in the wake of allegations made on an obscure website whose founders and contributors are anonymous.



AAUP-01121

15 April 2025 (Egypt)
The third letter to Egyptian officials regarding the unjust circumstances of Egyptian researcher and translator, Kholoud Said. We call on the authorities to dismiss all charges against her and reinstate her in her job at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

28 April 2025 (Turkey)
Letter to Turkish officials regarding the use of violence by the police, as well as disciplinary and criminal proceedings against students, academics, and related institutions participating in protests against the pretrial imprisonment of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu following the annulment of his bachelor's degree.

28 April 2025 (US)
Letter to the University of Colorado-Boulder about the University of Colorado-Boulder's apparent failure to meaningfully respond to a physical assault committed on campus against students advocating for Palestinian rights.

29 April 2025 (US)
Letter to the University of Notre Dame condemning the last-minute cancellation of a keynote lecture that was to be given by Professor Eman Abdelhadi, purportedly on grounds of security.

12 May 2025 (Iran)
Letter calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Iranian students Ali Younesi and Amirhossein Moradi, who were denied fair trials and have been unjustly imprisoned for five years on baseless charges and subjected to mistreatment. In addition, the letter urges President Pezeshkian to uphold his campaign promises by protecting students and academic freedom. It also highlights the broader crackdown on students in Iran, especially following the 2022 "Woman, Life, Freedom" protests, during which thousands faced arrests, suspensions, and disciplinary actions.

19 May 2025 (US)
Our letter expressing concern about the decision of NYU to withhold the diploma of graduating senior Logan Rozos and subject him to disciplinary action because of remarks he made about Israel's war on Gaza during the recent graduation ceremony of the Gallatin School of Individualized Study.

Email *caf@mesana.org* with information on academic infringements that you would like considered.

## Committee on Academic Freedom

**Laurie Brand (CAF Chair)**
University of Southern California

**Asli Bâli (MESA President)**
Yale Law School

### MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA (CAF-MENA)

**Miriam Lowi (Chair)**
The College of New Jersey

**Fida Adely (Board)**
Georgetown University

**Rana Barakat**
Birzeit University

**Catherine Duryea**
St. John's University

**Dyala Hamzah**

**Manal A. Jamal**
James Madison University

**Marc Owen Jones**
Hamed bin Khalifa U

**Atef Said**
University of Illinois at Chicago

**Nahid Siamdoust**
University of Texas at Austin

### NORTH AMERICA (CAF-NA)

**Zachary Lockman (Chair)**
New York University

**Ziad Abu-Rish**
Bard College

**Elizabeth Bishop**
Orient-Institut Beirut

**Lara Deeb (Board)**
Scripps College

**Jennifer Derr**
UC Santa Cruz

**Mona El-Ghobashy**
New York University

**Nina Farnia**
Albany Law School

**Maryam Jamshidi**
UColorado Law School

**Vickie Langohr**
College of the Holy Cross

**Pete W. Moore**
Case Western Reserve

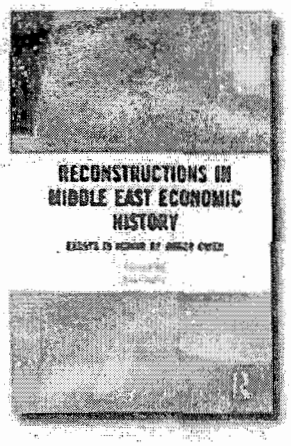
**Jacob Mundy**
Colgate College

**Leila Pourtavaf**
York University

**Mira Sucharov**
Carleton University

Available from Routledge

*Reconstructions in Middle East Economic History*
Essays in Honor of Roger Owen
Edited by Don Babai




Currently USD $144
with free shipping

# The MESA Global Academy
## Responding to Current Challenges

*The MESA Global Academy supports displaced scholars from MENA. It harnesses the strengths of MESA's institutional and individual members to bolster the careers of researchers whose academic trajectory has been adversely affected by developments in their home countries.*

*This academic year we are supporting 31 new scholars and 15 continuing scholars from Afghanistan, Iran, Israel, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, and Yemen. This group includes 9 scholars from Gaza, including four fellows placed in visiting professorships at the American University in Cairo. In previous years, scholars from Egypt, Iraq, and Lebanon have been part of the cohort. Close to half of the scholars have been women.*

**The MESA Global Academy is nearing completion of its sixth year of support to displaced scholars from the MENA region and has received a record number of applications for the 2025–2026 academic year. The Global Academy Committee will review the applications and announce the scholars in early Summer.**

## Spring 2025 Activities

**The Spring of 2025 saw Global Academy scholars featured in many online events, including:**

- **A panel on Spirituality, Political Religion, and Lived Experience in Iran hosted by UCLA's Center for Near Eastern Studies**
- **A panel on the Rise of the Houthis, Yemen, and their Global Connections and Impact hosted by the Global Academy and Georgetown University's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies**
- **A talk on Constitutional Imagination in Afghanistan hosted by Florida State University's Middle East Center**
- **A lecture on Online Censorship as a Tool of "Failed Governmentality" in Turkey hosted by the Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program at Northwestern University**
- **A talk on Resilience Amidst War: Scholasticide and Food Crisis in Gaza hosted by USC's Department of Middle East Studies**
- **A presentation on Refugee Livelihoods and Host Country Politics: Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and Jordan hosted by Georgetown's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies**
- **An online discussion on a report on higher education in Sudan, "Research in Displacement: The Impact of War on Sudan's Higher Education and Academic Research Community" hosted by Georgetown University and the African Studies Association**



A screenshot from our latest event hosted by UCLA with fellows Dr. Leyla Hajimeh ditajer, Dr. Maryam Heydarkhani, and Dr. Zahra Khoshk Jan.




Flyer from our May 2025 event on Houthis and Yemen hosted by Georgetown University's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies with Dr. Mansour Al-Maswari and Dr. Adel Dashela.

This Spring, the Global Academy offered its fellows a number of professional development workshops, a core component of our program. These included a grant writing session with Dr. Suad Joseph, Distinguished Research Professor at the University of California, Davis and a book publishing workshop with Thomas Lay of Fordham University Press and Maria Marsh of Cambridge University Press. In addition, we hosted a workshop on navigating visa processes that was led by Global Academy alumni. Forthcoming professional development workshops include one on navigating the Canadian Academy and one that brings together scholars for peer-led book writing review sessions.

We are thrilled that at the upcoming online conference of the American Academy of Religion, Global Academy fellows will have a designated panel, and at the University of Chicago, Global Academy fellows will present in a panel on Narrative, Power, and Language. Look for fellows' roundtables in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* and the *Review of Middle East Studies*.

## New Projects and Elements

We are pleased to introduce new elements in our program:

- A monthly coffee hour to bring current fellows and alumni together to share experiences and knowledge.
- See the Global Academy on its new YouTube channel.
- Stay in touch through BlueSky (@mesaglobalacademy.bsky.social).
- Follow us through LinkedIn (@MESAGlobalAcademy).

Finally, the Global Academy welcomes its new program manager, Dr. Ceren Abi, who was officially greeted by the MESA Global Academy Committee, fellows, and alumni in an online meeting at the beginning of the semester. Mimi Kirk, the outgoing program manager, continues to support the program by serving as a volunteer on the Global Academy Committee.

## Contact Us

Ceren Abi can be reached at *ceren@mesana.org* for those with questions or those wanting to make contributions to the Global Academy.

The Global Academy website: mesaglobalacademy.org

MESA Global Academy Committee

Beth Baron (Chair) CUNY
Fida Adely Georgetown University
Ash Bali Yale Law School
Ash Izzat New York University
Mimi Kirk Georgetown University
Judith Tucker Georgetown University
Jeffrey Reger (ex-officio) MESA Executive Director
Ceren Abi (Program Manager)

# Review of Middle East Studies

## Heather Ferguson, Outgoing Editor & Hoda Yousef, Incoming Editor






**Heather Ferguson**

Ending June 30, 2025
Heather Ferguson, Editor
Claremont McKenna College
*romes@cmc.edu*

It is with a strange sense of nostalgia – rather a problematic sentiment for a historian – that I write my last submission to the newsletter as Editor of the *Review of Middle East Studies*. True, nostalgia may simplify past effort and potentially romanticize and distort, but only if we ignore the collective power of words in virtual print during almost 7 years of national and global chaos. The voices contained in *RoMES* issues have often centered me, even while navigating a world seemingly unmoored. In these short blurbs I have also often commented on the importance of *RoMES* as a bridge between the various roles and obligations assumed by MESA members: we act as teachers, scholars, activists, organizers and administrators. And, so, for this final comment, I turn once again to the classroom and call up a phrase I repeat over and over to students: words matter, they shape the possible and provide new openings that we might step through to act in the world.

In the last week of the semester, my students and I read the eponymous poem in Solmaz Sharif's 2016 collection *Look*. The poem opens: "It matters what you call a thing" and then moves through a devastating sequence of scenes including one in front of a federal judge at a sentencing hearing: "Whereas You mean I should be disappeared because of my family name? and he answered Yes. That's exactly what I mean, adding that his wife helped draft the PATRIOT Act." As we face detentions, abductions, and disappearances and continue to navigate a world in which genocide and ethnic cleansing continues unabated, it does indeed matter what you call a thing, and academic publishing has a key role to play.

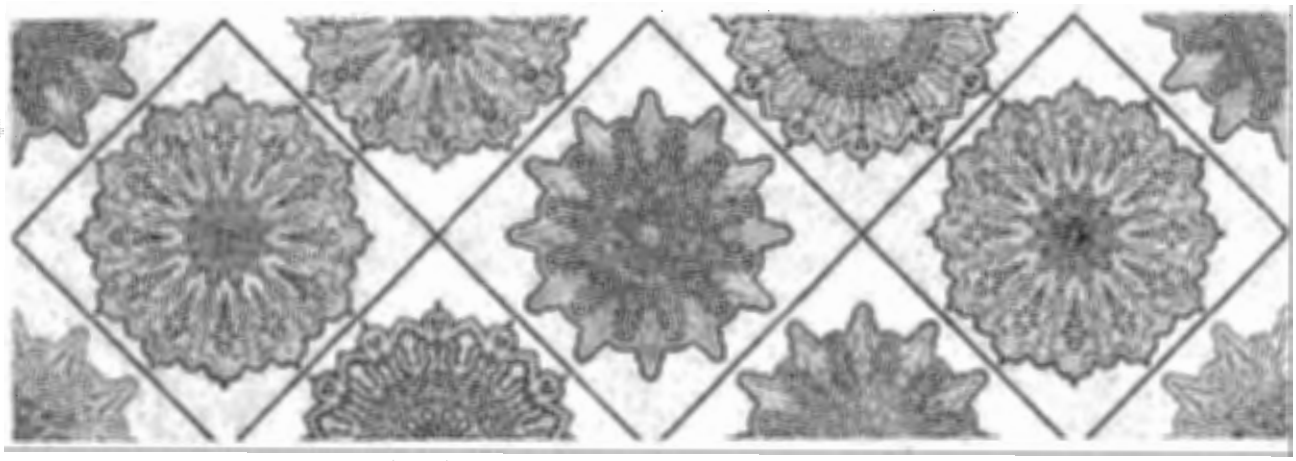
The words published in *RoMES* these past years have toured us through emergent crises and past histories, reviewed new scholarship and newly released films, and embodied the various committees and commitments of MESA as an organization. Ideally, they have also opened new possibilities, and allowed us to look at things anew, or from new angles, and to name the things that matter.

I now turn these pages (and words!) over to Hoda Yousef (Denison University) and, along with Managing Editor Ghayde Ghraowi, we have been working hard together to ensure a seamless transition. The Publication's Committee of the MESA Board has also played an instrumental and proactive role in this process, and I am thrilled about this new horizon for the *Review* and for the future of MESA publishing.

Thank you for being *RoMES* with me over these past years and welcome to our new Editor!



AAUP-01125





**Hoda Yousef**

Beginning July 1, 2025
Hoda Yousef, Editor
Denison University
*romes@mesana.org*

I'm honored to serve as the next editor of the *Review of Middle East Studies* (*RoMES*) starting this summer. *RoMES* has consistently excelled in fostering professional growth and academic advancement among MENA scholars through its curation of scholarly work and pedagogical discussions. As editor, I aim to build on this foundation by continuing to develop *RoMES* as a resource for critical reviews, emerging research, and interdisciplinary dialogue for Middle East studies scholars at all career stages. Our commitment to this geopolitically significant region demands rigorous intellectual engagement, and I regard *RoMES* as a crucial forum for academics in our field.

I come to this position as a professional, scholar, and teacher who has spent years immersed in this region and its study. My research, which includes work on literacy and education in modern Egypt, gender and feminism in the Arab world, and the cultural history of the Nahda period, has been published in journals such as the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* and the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. My book, *Composing Egypt: Reading, Writing, and the Emergence of a Modern Nation* (Stanford, 2016) drew on methodological approaches from anthropology and literacy studies to argue that notions of reading and writing were central to how Egyptians came to value education, produce gendered perceptions of "good literacy," and structure their public engagement. In my teaching, I have developed courses on topics as diverse as the history of the Islamic world, women in the modern Middle East, and the Ottoman Mediterranean.

Looking forward, we can see the challenges to our profession on the horizon: the repercussions of the current war and humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, the threats to academic freedom facing students and faculty, and the looming questions that generative artificial intelligence poses for both our teaching and research. I hope to see *RoMES* serve as a space where we can explore and strengthen our understanding and responses to these issues. But above all, this is a journal for us as academics and scholars of the Middle East. I encourage you to reach out with your ideas—to showcase scholarly work, propose special issues, or to start important discussions. In these challenging times, I am committed to ensuring *RoMES* continues to serve as a valuable resource for our community.

# MESA 2025

## November 22–25

## Westin Washington, DC Downtown

MESA returns to the Eastern Seaboard for its 59th Annual Meeting this November having last met in DC in 2017. The recently remodeled Westin Washington, DC Downtown Hotel is an ideal location for travelers as well as those living in the area. Attendees will enjoy the expansive lobby and multiple areas for conversation for friends and colleagues to reconnect.

The MESA Annual Meeting is the largest gathering of our community centered on Middle East and North Africa studies. The conference is open to anyone interested, but all must register to attend events.

The FilmFest remains an important part of the conference and is held virtually, which gives registrants a chance to view films before, during, and just after the conference.

## HIGHLIGHTS

A *robust program* of more than **300 sessions** over four days of panels, roundtables, workshops, and special sessions.

*Special events* include a **MESA Reception** following the **Presidential Address and Awards Ceremony on Sunday night**, scheduled **coffee breaks** in the Book Exhibit for networking, and the **Dance Party on Monday night**.

A packed **Book Exhibit** where you find the latest in Middle East studies, and meet the editors from presses as well as other organizations and programs.

## Tentative Schedule of Events

### Saturday, November 22

| | |
|---|---|
| 3:30-5:30pm | Panel session I |
| 6:00-8:00pm | Panel session II |

### Sunday, November 23

| | |
|---|---|
| 1:00-6:00pm | Book exhibit |
| 8:30-10:30am | Panel session III |
| 11:00am-1:00pm | Panel session IV |
| 1:30-3:30pm | Panel session V |
| 4:00-6:00pm | Panel session VI |
| 6:30-9:00pm | Presidential address & awards ceremony |
| 9:00-10:30pm | Reception |

### Monday, November 24

| | |
|---|---|
| 9:00am-6:00pm | Book exhibit |
| 8:30-10:30am | Panel session VII |
| 11:00am-1:00pm | Panel session VIII |
| 1:30-3:30pm | Panel session IX |
| 4:00-6:00pm | Panel session X |
| 6:15-7:45pm | Members meeting |
| 9:00pm-1:00am | Dance party |

### Tuesday, November 25

| | |
|---|---|
| 8:00am-12:00pm | Book exhibit |
| 8:30-10:30am | Panel session XI |
| 11:00am-1:00pm | Panel session XII |
| 1:30-3:30pm | Panel session XIII |

AAUP-01127

# Conference Registration

## Pre-register by October 24

### Panelists must register by May 15

Register by October 24 to receive an additional $50 discount on registration over onsite registration prices. Be reminded that panelists are required to register by May 15 to appear on the program. On-site registration opens on Saturday, November 22.

Members are encouraged to register through their myMESA accounts or send a check to the MESA office..

mesana.org/annual-meeting/registration

| Category | By Oct 24 | On-site |
|---|---|---|
| Full/associate | $185* | $235 |
| Student/retired member | $85 | $135 |
| Student non-member | $150 | $200 |
| Other non-members | $310 | $360 |

* hardship rate available for members with income <$50k

# Hotel Reservations

## Cut-off date: October 30



Westin Washington, DC Downtown
999 9th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001

**BOOK HOTEL at $209 RATE**

Book your stay at the Westin Washington, DC Downtown at the discounted room rate of $209 (before taxes) which is good from November 19-28, 2025. The hotel is conveniently located near Metro and bus stops, and to many DC attractions.

More information on the hotel and a link to make your reseservation, go to mesana.org/annual-meeting/hotel.

# MESA 2025 Travel Grants

**Applications will open July 15 and close September 15**

MESA's Board has established two categories of travel grants for MESA members presenting a paper or participating on a roundtable. Each grant is $500 and given at the annual meeting. The number of grants will be determined by the amount in the fund.

Donate

**Graduate Students**

Must be a current MESA member and enrolled in a program to qualify. From the student applicant pool, two students traveling from the Middle East to present papers will be awarded the Suad Joseph Travel Grant.

**Contingent Faculty & Un/Underemployed**

For contingent faculty as well as un/underemployed MESA members with doctorates who are presenting on the program at the MESA annual meeting.

For more information, mesana.org/annual-meeting

# Programs and Services For Attendees

## Child Care Subsidy

Registered MESA attendees who hire a local service to care for children during the Annual Meeting may be reimbursed up to US$200. We support working parents, and we thank our members for their generous contributions to the MESA Annual Meeting Child Care fund, which permits us to subsidize the cost of childcare for attendees. For further information, see mesana.org/annual-meeting/childcare.

## Nursing Mothers Room

Private space for nursing infants will be available to registered attendees.

## Prayer/Meditation Room

Designated space for prayer and meditation will be available during the days of the conference.

# Resources for International Travelers

As we plan for the 2025 Annual Meeting, MESA recognizes the increasing difficulties of travel to the U.S. under the Trump administration and our members' legitimate safety concerns. Visa holders and green card holders are facing increasing surveillance when traveling internationally as well as within the U.S. We are committed to supporting our members as they make their plans to attend this fall's Annual Meeting, but cannot guarantee entry into the United States. While we cannot provide legal advice, we offer the following practical tips as a guideline for your travel plans.

1. It is best practice to **carry the following documents** with you when you are traveling to and within the US. While digital copies can be stored on your phone, it is strongly recommended to carry hard copies of these documents. Digital documentation is not always accepted, and presenting your digital copies on a device to a U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent makes that device subject to search.
   - A valid passport
   - Your current U.S. visa
   - If you are a student, your I-20 form with a valid signature
   - Your MESA confirmation email showing that you are participating in the Annual Meeting
   - Proof of your hotel confirmation and ability to financially support yourself while in the United States (such as a letter from your current employer or bank account statement).
2. Prior to travel, keep in mind that immigration officers may inspect your phone, laptop, or other electronic devices for information that could potentially make you excludable from the United States. Please see this information on digital privacy at the U.S. border from the Electronic Frontier Foundation; for your convenience, we include both a long version and a short version.
3. When **interacting with immigration officers** at airports and other points of entry, it is best practice to do the following:
   - Be honest and transparent in your responses.
   - Clearly explain the purpose of your visit and the duration of your stay.
   - Remain respectful and courteous at all times.
   - Remember that immigration officers have the right to inspect your phone, laptop, or other electronic devices for information.

## Additional Resources

- Information on international travel rights and responsibilities in the U.S. from CUNY CLEAR, a free legal assistance program: Flying While Muslim/Black/Immigrant.
- ACLU's Border Zone Rights Guide.
- For LGBT2QIA+ travelers, in particular, gender-nonconforming and trans travelers, resources on flying to and in the U.S. from Advocates 4 Trans Equality.

## U.S. Border Patrol and Customs Information

- Top Ten Travel Tips.
- Search Authority.
- Information on the search of electronic devices at the border.



AAUP-01129

# Participation Opportunities

## Chair a Panel

Volunteers are invited to chair non-preorganized panels at the MESA 2025 Annual Meeting. A listing of available panels will be posted around July 1 once the searchable program is posted. MESA only assigns chairs to panels assembled of individual paper proposals. There are many such panels on the program. Contact the MESA staff at meeting@mesana.org if you have any questions.

*Please note that MESA membership and annual meeting pre-registration are required of all meeting participants on the program, including volunteer panel chairs.*

## Be a Part of the Book Exhibit

We invite presses, organizations, vendors, and authors to be a part of MESA 2025. Consider exhibiting in MESA's book exhibit, conference sponsorship, advertising, or including a book or item in MESA's Cooperative Book Display. More information is at https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/book-exhibit.

## Submit Your Film to the FilmFest

The MESA FilmFest is a wonderful part of the MESA Annual Meeting, and we are excited to be offering a virtual FilmFest for the fifth year now. The call for submissions is open and we hope that you will be interested in submitting your films! Accepted films will be streamed to MESA Annual Meeting registered attendees. See https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/film-festival to submit a film by June 15, 2025.

## Undergraduate Research Workshop

The Committee on Undergraduate Middle East Studies (CUMES) is sponsoring the undergraduate research workshop to be held in Washington, DC on November 22, 2025. This workshop will be valuable for students planning graduate work in Middle East studies.

**Eligibility:** Students pursuing a bachelor's program *or recent graduates who have not yet begun a graduate degree* are eligible. All fields and disciplines are welcome.

**Format:** The workshop has 3 components: 1) small panel presentation (15-20 minutes) and discussion; 2) professional development session; 3) digital poster session. The small panel presentation will require you submit a 10-12 page paper (or excerpt of a larger work) by no later than November 1.

**Deadlines:** The early acceptance deadline is August 15, 2025, with a second round of acceptances (pending availability) due September 15, 2025.

For more information, please see the listing on the MESA website or contact Dr. Victoria Hightower (victoria.hightower@ung.edu).

# Submissions: Process and Statistics

The annual meeting program chair, selected by MESA's Board of Directors, recommends and invites people to serve on the program committee in order to cover the broadest swath of topics relevant to MESA. To the extent possible, reviewers are matched by discipline and geographic focus, as well as research themes. Each proposal is read "blind" and rated by two committee members according to how, in a maximum of 400 words, the paper or panel will contribute to scholarship or to the field. The purpose of the program committee is to read and evaluate submissions, place high-rated ones on the program, and to assemble papers into cohesive panels.

## Acceptance/Rejection Rates, Recent Meetings

| | 2022 (Denver) | | 2023 (Montreal) | | 2024 (Virtual) | | 2025 (Washington, DC) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Submission Type | Proposed | Accepted* Rejected | Proposed | Accepted Rejected | Proposed | Accepted** Rejected | Proposed | Accepted Rejected |
| Individual Papers | 441 | 363 (82%) 78 (18%) | 645 | 616 (95%) 29 (5%) | 443 | 413 (93%) 30 (7%) | 717 | 588 (82%) 129 (18%) |
| Pre-organized Panels | 114 | 112 (98%) 2 (2%) | 214 | 199 (93%) 15 (7%) | 84 | 82 (93%) 2 (7%) | 159 | 155 (97%) 4 (3%) |
| Roundtables | 30 | 30 (100%) | 67 | 61 (91%) 6 (9%) | 21 | 21 (100%) | 69 | 57 (83%) 12 (17%) |

*Does not include MESA 2021 deferred submissions of 25 panels, 5 roundtables, 1 special session, 61 individual papers
**Does not include MESA 2023 deferred submissions of 4 panels, 1 roundtable, 5 individual papers

## Abstract Submissions by Geographical Location

We use mailing address country to identify location; some have left this blank, which is why the total is less than the total number of paper submissions.

**Total = 1325**

North America = 972
- 98 Canada
- 1 Mexico
- 873 United States

Australasia = 3
- 3 Australia

Asia (excluding MENA/SWANA) = 14
- 3 China
- 2 India
- 1 Indonesia
- 5 Japan
- 2 South Korea
- 1 Taiwan

Africa (excluding MENA/SWANA) = 1
- 1 Kenya

Middle East/Southwest Asia = 151
- 3 Algeria
- 2 Bahrain
- 19 Egypt
- 2 Iran
- 13 Israel
- 4 Jordan
- 6 Kuwait
- 13 Lebanon
- 10 Morocco
- 5 Oman
- 2 Pakistan
- 1 Palestinian Territories
- 11 Qatar
- 3 Saudi Arabia
- 2 Tunisia
- 46 Turkey
- 9 United Arab Emirates

Europe = 184
- 8 Austria
- 2 Belgium
- 1 Cyprus
- 3 Denmark
- 2 Finland
- 13 France
- 1 Georgia
- 38 Germany
- 3 Greece
- 1 Hungary
- 5 Ireland
- 19 Italy
- 9 Netherlands
- 3 Norway
- 2 Portugal
- 7 Spain
- 1 Sweden
- 6 Switzerland
- 60 United Kingdom

## Abstract Submissions by Type

Total = 1372

Members: 1302
- 830 Fellows
- 26 Associates
- 446 Students

Exemptions: 70

## Disciplinary Breakdown of Papers

Based upon the number of papers accepted to be on the program for which we have the necessary data. We do not have relative data for 2023 because the discipline field allowed multiple selections.

| | 2020 (Washington[1]) | | 2021 (Montreal[1]) | | 2022 (Denver) | | 2025 (Washington) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| History | 486 | 34.69 | 366 | 31.99 | 319 | 31.93 | 378 | 29.69 |
| Anthropology | 153 | 10.92 | 113 | 9.88 | 84 | 8.40 | 184 | 14.45 |
| Pol Sci/Int'l Affrs | 252 | 17.99 | 187 | 16.45 | 183 | 18.30 | 150 | 11.78 |
| Literature | 131 | 9.35 | 119 | 10.40 | 120 | 12.00 | 146 | 11.47 |
| Art/Art History | 36 | 2.57 | 40 | 3.50 | 23 | 2.30 | 47 | 3.69 |
| Religious Stds/Theo | 43 | 3.07 | 42 | 3.67 | 36 | 3.60 | 37 | 2.91 |
| Sociology | 92 | 6.57 | 70 | 6.12 | 56 | 5.60 | 35 | 2.75 |
| Media Arts | 38 | 2.71 | 39 | 3.41 | 45 | 4.50 | 28 | 2.20 |
| Language/Linguistics | 37 | 2.64 | 21 | 1.84 | 20 | 2.00 | 24 | 1.88 |
| Law | 18 | 1.28 | 21 | 1.84 | 8 | 0.80 | 22 | 1.73 |
| Communication | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 0.79 | 7 | 0.70 | 18 | 1.41 |
| Philosophy | 12 | 0.86 | 19 | 1.66 | 9 | 0.90 | 13 | 1.02 |
| Geography | 18 | 1.28 | 17 | 1.49 | 4 | 0.40 | 12 | 0.94 |
| Archit/Urban Plng | 15 | 1.07 | 18 | 1.57 | 14 | 1.40 | 11 | 0.86 |
| Education | 14 | 1.00 | 6 | 0.52 | 16 | 1.60 | 9 | 0.71 |
| Archaeology | 4 | 0.29 | 1 | 0.09 | 3 | 0.30 | 8 | 0.63 |
| Economics | 9 | 0.64 | 7 | 0.61 | 8 | 0.80 | 8 | 0.63 |
| Psychology | 2 | 0.14 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 0.31 |
| Medicine/Health | 3 | 0.21 | 4 | 0.35 | 4 | 0.40 | 3 | 0.24 |
| Journalism | 3 | 0.21 | 2 | 0.17 | 1 | 0.10 | 2 | 0.16 |
| Library Science | 3 | 0.21 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 0.10 | 1 | 0.08 |
| Business/ Public Admin | 8 | 0.57 | 1 | 0.09 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Interdisciplinary | n/a | | n/a | | n/a | | 116 | 9.11 |
| Unknown* | 24 | 1.71 | 42 | 3.67 | 38 | 3.80 | 17 | 1.34 |
| | 1401 | 99.98** | 1144 | 100.11** | 999 | 99.93** | 1273 | 99.99 |

[1]meeting held virually
*reflects people in departments/programs that do not fit within the standard list of disciplines
**due to rounding, figure is not 100%

## Sessions Accepted or Assembled

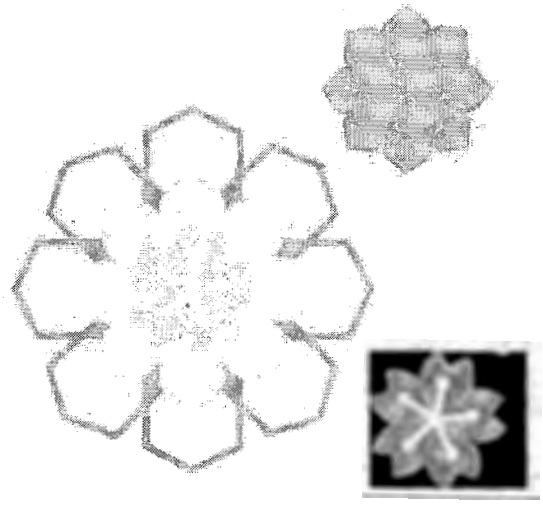
Total = 322

- 155 preorganized panels
- 98 assembled panels
- 57 roundtables
- 6 special sessions
- 6 workshops

## Paper Abstracts Accepted

Total = 1273

- 588 individual abstracts
- 685 abstracts on preorganized panels



## MESA Elections

The 2025 MESA Board election will take place later this summer via MESA's website. All voting-eligible members will receive an email from the Secretariat, as well as subsequent reminder messages, when the election is live. The Nominating Committee is given the task of choosing the candidates for the three Board Members who will take office after the 2025 annual meeting. We thank the **2025 Nominating Committee** for their service.

Lisa Bhungalia, University of Wisconsin, Madison
Brahim El Guabli, Johns Hopkins University
Esmat Elhalaby, University of Toronto
Bassam Haddad, George Mason University
Lily Hindy (Student), UCLA
Choon Hwee Koh, UCLA

## Nominating Committee Election Statistics, 2018–2025

| Year | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| # of Full Candidates | 9 | 13 | 15 | 15 | 16 | 12 | 13 | 13 |
| # of Student Candidates | 6 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| Total Membership at Election | 2032 | 2505 | 2445 | 2443 | 2168 | 2379 | 1461 | 2186 |
| Eligible Members (F & S) | 1955 | 2417 | 2394 | 2375 | 2117 | 2309 | 1371 | 2072 |
| Valid ballots | 321 | 357 | 388 | 430 | 957 | 448 | 293 | 307 |
| % of voting membership | 16.41 | 14.77 | 16.20 | 18.10 | 45.20 | 19.40 | 21.37 | 14.82 |

## MESA Welcomes New Staff Members



**Ceren Abi**

Dr. Ceren Abi is excited to support the MESA Global Academy as its program manager, building on her professional background helping students and scholars. Dr. Abi is from Istanbul and received her doctorate in History from UCLA. Her research interests include the history of cultural heritage and war in the Middle East.

Dr. Janan Shouhayib has joined MESA as the coordinator of the new Academic Freedom Initiative, which will create and host public resources and research on the contemporary campus climate. Dr. Shouhayib is from Washington DC, and holds a doctorate in Critical Social/Personality Psychology from the Graduate Center at CUNY.



**Janan Shouhayib**

# Contributions

For the period December 1, 2024, – May 15, 2025, a total of $24,678 in contributions from individuals was received for MESA funds. *We gratefully thank th*

## Discretionary Funds

### MESA General Fund

McGuire Gibson ■
Steven Heydemann ●
Robert D. Lee ■
Kenneth Perkins ★
Abdul H. Raoof ◆
Jeffrey Reger
Marianna Shreve Simpson
In honor of Badar Khan Suri ★
Janice Terry ●
Anonymous ●

### Presidents

Dina Rizk Khoury ★

## Advocacy Funds

### Academic Freedom

Chibli Mallat ★

### Global Academy

Nancy Gallagher ★

### Global Academy-Emergency

Adey Almohsen ●
Lois A. Aroian ●
Aslı Bâli ★
Charles E. Butterworth ●
Ahmad S. Dallal ★
Lara Deeb ●
Omnia ElShakry ■
Nancy Gallagher ★
Jens Hanssen ◆
S. Rao Jammalamadaka ●
Ilham Khuri-Makdisi ●
Ken Levy-Church ✸
Rose Marie Kuhn
Nada Matta
Karim Mattar ★
Jane Murphy
Christiana Parreira ★
Nahid Siamdoust
Connie Sjodian
Borgan Smarandache ■
Andrea Stanton ★
Howard Winant

## Call for Donations

### MESA 2025 Travel Grants for Graduate Students and Contingent/Precariously Employed

**The Board is issuing a challenge to members to raise funds in solidarity with precarious labor as well as students in our field.**

MESA's Travel Grant Program awards $500 grants to students and to precariously employed or contingent faculty who have no other institutional financial support to attend the conference. We will be conducting lotteries for travel grants in September and the amount in the fund at that time (including MESA's contribution) will determine the final number of 2025 travel grants. We anticipate receiving over 100 applications.

**The preferred way to make a donation is through your myMESA account.**

Alternatively, you can use the form located at mesana.org. Payment options include a credit or debit card or PayPal account. Be sure to select "Student and Precarity Travel Grants Fund" when specifying what to "Use this donation for."

## Annual Meeting Support Funds

### Student and Precarity Travel Grants Contribution

Anne H. Betteridge ●

### Child Care Contribution

Joseph E. Lowry ◦
Sherry Vattar
Aileen Alexander Wyse ●

- ◦ *at least $100*
- ■ *at least $250*
- ◆ *at least $500*
- ★ *at least $1000*
- ✸ *at least $5000*

## Awards Funds

### MESA Mentoring Award

Nancy Gallagher ★

### Fatema Mernissi Book award

Nancy Gallagher ◆

### Nikkie Keddie Book Award

Rudi Matthee ●

### Malcolm H. Kerr Dissertation Award

Anne H. Betteridge ●
Joseph E. Lowry ●

# 2024 Survey Regarding Future Virtual Annual Meetings

The survey was conducted after the MESA 2024 Annual Meeting ended on November 16, and remained open through December 2024. The survey was therefore initiated a few weeks after the U.S. presidential election results were known.

Recent MESA members and conference attendees from 2019 to 2024 were invited to respond, so it was not restricted to only current members (past members were also welcome to participate).

We received **273** responses (128 faculty, 23 students, 8 adjunct/precarity, 7 independent, 7 exhibitors/filmmakers, 19 others; 81 did not identify).

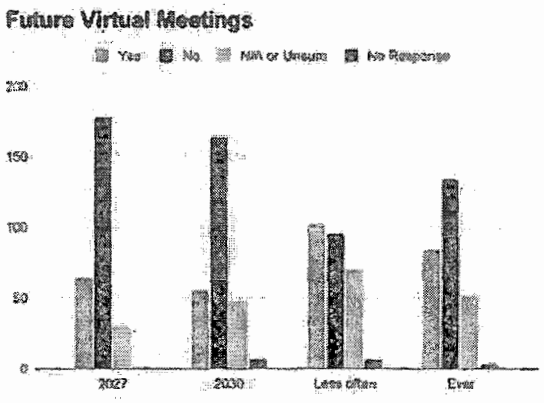
Respondents reported their attendance history at recent meetings by year:

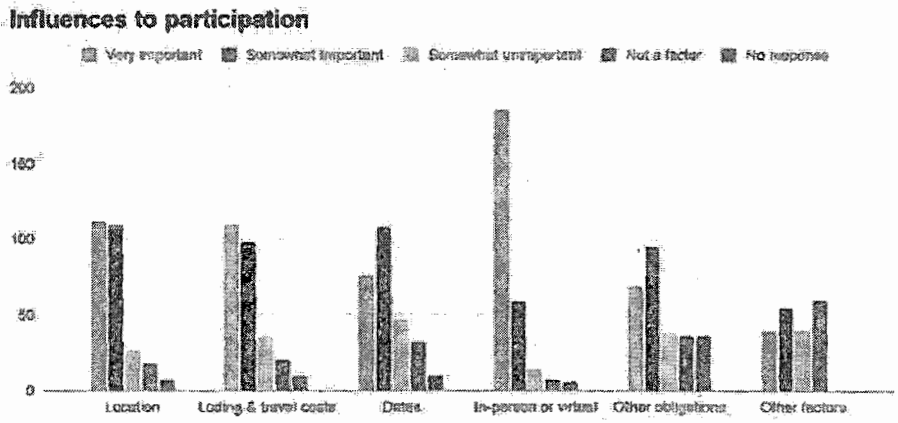
- 2024 (virtual) 130 attended, 15 registered & didn't attend
- 2023 (Montreal) 139 attended, 24 registered & didn't attend
- 2022 (Denver) 129 attended, 7 registered & didn't attend
- 2021 (virtual) 100 attended, 8 registered & didn't attend
- 2020 (virtual) 84 attended, 10 registered & didn't attend
- 2019 (New Orleans) 114 attended, 5 registered & didn't attend

In summary, respondents were more likely to have attended the three most recent meetings.

On the basis of the quantitative responses (graphed below), as well as qualitative comments, MESA is proceeding to contract for a 2027 in-person meeting.

We will conduct the survey again this year following the 2025 annual meeting, in order to begin to decide the format and pattern of the annual meeting after 2030.

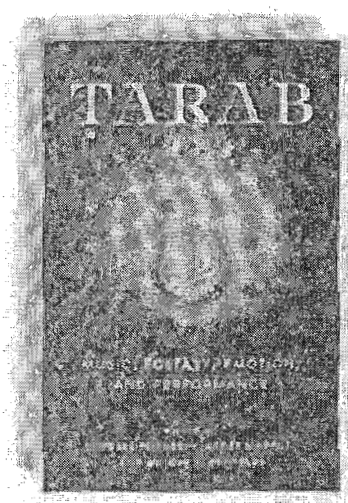


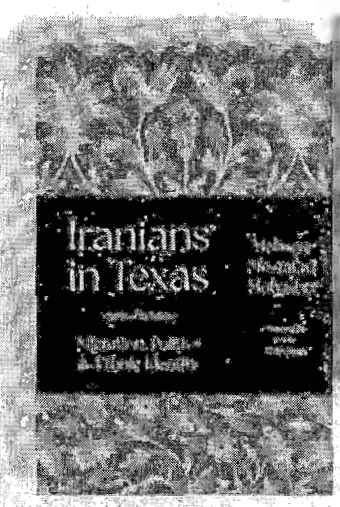



# MESA's Institutional Members

We recognize the following organizations as institutional members of MESA. Our institutional members share with MESA a commitment to recognizing excellence in the field, encouraging the growth and vibrancy of all the different disciplines within Middle East studies, and defending the rights of scholars and academics around the world.

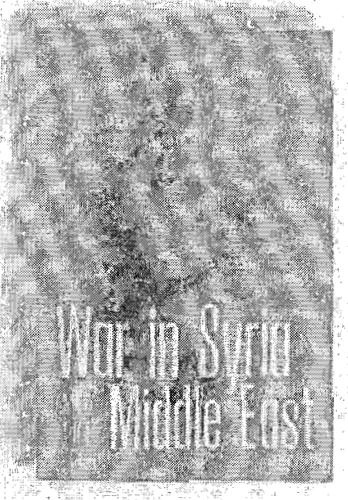
Aga Khan University, Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations
American University in Cairo
American University of Beirut, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs
Arab Center Washington DC (ACW)
Arab Council for the Social Sciences
Boston College
Brown University, Center for Middle East Studies
Columbia University, Middle East Institute
Council of American Overseas Research Centers
George Washington University, Institue for Middle East Studies
Georgetown University, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies
Georgetown University, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies
Georgetown University, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding
Harvard University, Center for Middle Eastern Studies
ILEX Foundation
McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies
New York University, Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies
North Carolina Consortium for Middle East Studies
Northwestern University, Program of Middle East and North African Studies
Ohio State University, Middle East Studies Center
Penn State University, Department of History
Portland State University, Middle East Studies Center
Princeton University, Department of Near Eastern Studies
Simon Fraser University
Stanford University, Sohaib and Sara Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies
Syracuse University, Middle Eastern Studies Program
University of Arizona, Center for Middle Eastern Studies
University of Arkansas, King Fahd Center for Middle East Studies
University of California, Berkeley, Center for Middle Eastern Studies
University of California, Los Angeles, Center for Near Eastern Studies
University of California, Santa Barbara, Center for Middle East Studies
University of Houston, Arab-American Educational Foundation Center for Arab Studies
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
University of Maryland, Roshan Institute for Persian Studies
University of Massachusetts Amherst
University of Michigan, Center for Middle Eastern & North African Studies
University of Pennsylvania, Middle East Center
University of Southern California, Department of Middle East Studies
University of Texas at Austin, Center for Middle Eastern Studies
University of Toronto, Department of Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations
University of Utah, Middle East Center
University of Virginia, Department of Middle Eastern & South Asian Languages & Cultures
University of Wisconsin, Madison, Middle East Studies Program
Vanderbilt University
Yale University, Council on Middle East Studies

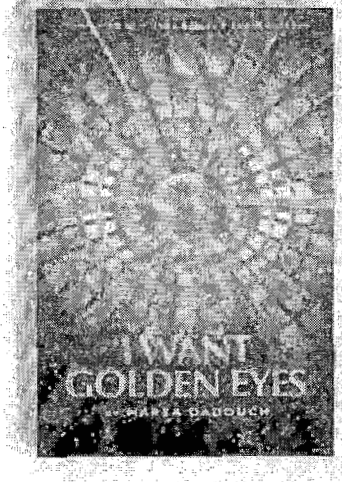


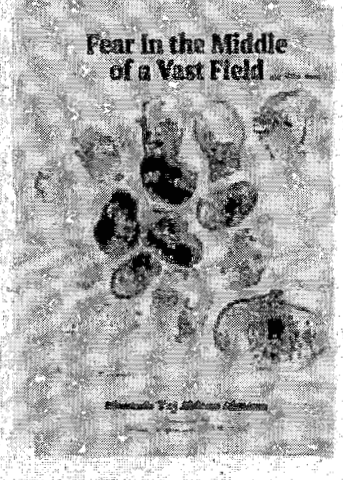










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# 2025 MESA Awards Competitions and Call for Nominations

Please see details on each award and the procedures for submissions and nominations on MESA's website.

**Jere L. Bacharach Service Award** June 1, 2025
This award honors extraordinary service to *MESA* or the field. The winner receives $1000.

**MESA Mentoring Award** June 1, 2025
This award honors contributions of a retired individual as mentor/teacher.

**Malcolm H. Kerr Dissertation Awards** July 1, 2025
For students completing their dissertations between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024, nominations should be from the author's sponsor or advisor. Winners in each category - Humanities and Social Sciences - receive $1000.

**Undergraduate Education Award** August 1, 2025
To recognize outstanding scholarship on teaching or other material contributions to undergraduate education in Middle East studies. Winner receives $250

**Graduate Student Paper Prize** August 15, 2025
For graduate students whose research papers consider any aspect of post 600 CE Middle East studies. The author of the winning paper receives $250 and the paper will be submitted for publication to *RoMES*.

EXHIBIT 97

View this email in your browser

# Advisory on Recent Trump Administration Policies & Media Reports of Pending Policies

Dear Members:

We are writing in the context of ongoing and rapid changes to the higher education and immigration landscapes. **MESA's Task Force on Civil and Human Rights is issuing this advisory to alert our membership to the probable consequences of recent Trump Administration policies (as of March 10, 2025) and to recommend appropriate steps for individuals and affiliates to take in response to these measures.** We will continue to monitor, assess, and respond to these changes in support of MESA's organizational mission and its membership.

**We begin by condemning any new measures that will further restrict travel to the United States or affect current visa holders already inside the United States on the basis of national origin.** MESA joined with partners and colleagues in bringing a legal challenge against the Muslim Travel Ban imposed in 2017 and will continue to protest and resist any such measures today. We equally condemn any actions taken against individual valid visa holders based on their expressive or associational activity. The U.S. Constitution should never be interpreted to allow viewpoint based discrimination by the government, let alone direct targeting of individuals for enforcement actions based on their holding views disfavored by a particular administration.

While the Task Force cannot and will not issue legal advice, our recommendations are based on past experience, media reports, shifting federal policies, and in consultation with civil liberties organizations.

Recent news reports indicate that the Trump Administration has begun revoking visas and/or detaining individuals in the United States who are on nonimmigrant visas or are permanent residents (green card holders) on the basis of their protected speech and associational activities.

- These actions are subject to legal challenge, and such challenges have already begun in the instances that we are aware of to date.
- It is unlikely that the Trump Administration currently has the resources to engage in individualized actions against large numbers of valid visa holders, but we consider it prudent at this time to recommend that non-citizen members currently in the United States identify competent immigration lawyers in their communities who might be willing to assist in their defense as needed.
- Many campuses may have resources, including legal clinics and chapters of the National Lawyers Guild present as part of the academic community. In other instances, local pro bono legal services providers may be willing to offer advice and referrals.

Recent news reports also suggest that the Trump Administration may implement a new travel ban (primarily targeting Muslim-majority countries, but possibly including other countries) as early as this week.

- We believe that any MESA member currently employed or studying in the U.S. who is a national of a Muslim-majority country likely to be included in a new travel ban (e.g., Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Palestine, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and others) should consider canceling any upcoming international travel.
- We also recommend that non-citizen MESA members employed in the U.S. and currently traveling outside of the country should consider returning to the United States as soon as possible.
- U.S. citizens have the right to enter the country, but the vetting process may be chaotic and unpredictable. Non-U.S. citizens may under some circumstances be denied re-entry, and currently pending policies might make the entry process more difficult.

We would like to remind members of the following resources available through the MESA website:

1. **MESA Advocacy Resource Center:**
   https://mesana.org/advocacy/task-force-on-civil-and-human-rights/2025/02/07/mesa-advocacy-resource-center
2. **Traveling Across Borders: Short Guide to Rights:**
   https://mesana.org/advocacy/task-force-on-civil-and-human-rights/2020/01/28/traveling-across-borders-short-guides-to-rights
3. **Reporting Form for Documenting Shifts in Campus Climate in North America:**
   https://mesana.org/advocacy/task-force-on-civil-and-human-rights/2024/02/15/documenting-shifts-in-campus-climate-in-north-america
4. **Interventions by MESA's Committee on Academic Freedom:**
   https://mesana.org/advocacy/committee-on-academic-freedom
5. **Letters and Statements from MESA's Board of Directors:**
   https://mesana.org/advocacy/letters-from-the-board

We will continue to closely follow shifting policies and provide updated information and guidance as they become available.

**MESA's Task Force Travel Advisory**

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EXHIBIT 98

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# MESA Board Statement on the repression of academic freedom in the United States

**March 13, 2025**—The second Trump administration has ushered in an existential threat to academic freedom and higher education in the United States. The current campaign targeting universities is an extension of earlier right-wing efforts to attack and defund teaching about race, gender, and sexuality at the state level, but it is a significant escalation and one at the federal level. In the midst of Israel's genocidal war in the Gaza Strip of the last sixteen months and the fragile ceasefire in place as of this writing, Palestine solidarity protest activity on university and college campuses became a target of attacks that sought to undermine criticisms of Israel while simultaneously extending a pre-existing far-right war on higher education. The consequence has been, above all else, a censorious climate of repression to stifle voices in support of Palestinian self-determination and human rights and to secure ongoing, unconditional support to Israel. In the process, Palestine-related scholarship and advocacy have now become focal points of a frontal assault on universities as centers of critical thinking and knowledge production in a battle to destroy the autonomy of institutions of higher education in the US.

The groundwork for this moment was unfortunately laid through the demonization and criminalization of campus anti-war protests in 2023 and 2024, including statements by the Biden administration and lawmakers across the aisle, as well as the bi-partisan congressional hearings investigating US universities. The Trump administration is now engaged in a multi-agency attack on institutions of higher education and is working in concert with a highly mobilized and organized set of private actors, including lobby groups, non-profits, social media personalities, and extremist right-wing organizations, to

target universities and campus communities directly. The federal government is doing so primarily by cynically deploying a broad, vague, and flawed definition of antisemitism to chill constitutionally protected free speech rights and produce a chilling effect on teaching about, and public discussion of, Israeli policies toward Palestinians on college and university campuses.

On January 29, President Trump issued an Executive Order on "Additional Measures to Combat Anti-Semitism," demanding action from every executive department or agency. Accordingly, a multi-agency "Task Force to Combat Anti-Semitism" was established on February 3, whose "first priority will be to root out anti-Semitic harassment in schools and on college campuses." The Task Force is led by the Department of Justice's Office of Civil Rights and includes elements of the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, as well as the General Services Administration and other agencies not yet announced. Little else is known at this moment about the Task Force's exact composition, scope of authority, or manner of operation.

In a matter of weeks, the Task Force has spearheaded the government's weaponization of spurious antisemitism charges against higher education. It has announced a Department of Justice (DoJ) investigation into the University of California (UC) to assess whether the UC has allowed "an Antisemitic hostile work environment to exist on its campuses." The Task Force has announced plans to visit at least 10 university campuses to consider "remedial action" action against them. In what appears to be the most egregious instance of government overreach against, and undermining of established due process for, higher education institutions, the Task Force announced the suspension of $400 million in federal funding to Columbia University without any clear legal basis.

The Task Force's suspension of federal funding to Columbia merits particular attention because it underscores the existential threat posed by the Trump administration to higher education. Only days after initiating an investigation of Columbia for alleged violations, the Task Force announced the suspension of funding as a punitive measure. It has been long-established practice that a university under Department of Education (DoE) investigation is given an opportunity to present evidence and afforded the option of a "resolution," that is a voluntary agreement with the DoE to take certain corrective steps. Only after the conclusion of an investigation, the issuance of findings and a resolution process would the DoE ever reach the point of instituting measures against a university. Even then, the long-established practice has been that any

compulsory measures be tailored to address specific findings of violation. In other words, general funding cuts as a punitive measure are outside of the bounds of ordinary DoE practices. Instead of following these established procedures, the Task Force, rather than DoE, announced the suspension of federal funding without providing Columbia University an opportunity to respond to the allegations underlying the nascent investigation. The public record suggests that the Task Force neither provided an explanation of the specific basis for its action, nor did it identify particular corrective measures to be undertaken. Moreover, the suspension of the $400 million was not tailored to any specific, alleged violation. Days later, the DoE announced that it had sent letters to 60 other universities under investigation, creating the appearance of a decision to make an example of Columbia University and thereby intimidate other institutions of higher education into taking preemptive measures to avoid similarly punitive cuts.

In addition to these threats to universities and their institutional funding, the government has also taken steps to target individuals on campuses for immigration enforcement actions specifically on the basis of their speech and associational activity. This includes the use of AI to scan social media accounts to identify statements and activities the government disagrees with, and the subsequent use of social media posts as the basis for arrest, detention, and deportation. The most prominent example has been the arrest and detention, using ICE officers, of Mahmoud Khalil, who holds a green card. Khalil was apparently detained for having served as an organizer of protests at Columbia, where he was a graduate student last year. President Trump has made clear on social media that this case "is the first arrest of many to come," explicitly threatening that his administration will go after additional students at Columbia and other universities. Whatever specific legal pretext the government uses as the basis for this arrest and attempted green card revocation (or in other cases against targeted individuals), the intention is clearly to use the threat of deportation to deter all non-citizens from speaking out in support of views disfavored by the Trump administration.

Moreover, additional grounds to go after universities and their funding seem to be proliferating daily. The recent action pausing federal funding from the Department of Agriculture to the University of Maine over allegations that the university is allowing transgender athletes to compete in sports, makes clear that the Trump administration's determination to go after university funding is in no way limited to claims related to alleged antisemitism.

Beyond the actions targeting universities and individuals, there remains in the background potential legislation that would strip universities, scholarly associations and philanthropic foundations of their nonprofit status on the basis of unilateral determinations by executive officials that they have allegedly engaged in vaguely defined forms of support to groups on terrorism blacklists, including through speech or other associational activity. Passed by the House of Representatives in the waning weeks of the Biden administration, the reintroduction of such a measure in a Congress continues to loom over higher education as a whole.

These and other recent policy initiatives represent an attempt to focus repression against university administrators to enlist them in efforts to monitor protest activity on their campuses as part of a campaign of intimidation. In this context, and in a continuation of the campus repression that began last year, some universities have, prior to any federal case or investigation, begun implementing measures in line with the Trump administration's preferences, communications, and executive orders. Multiple institutions have begun defunding or dismantling various DEI initiatives, scrubbing or retooling language about valuing diversity and inclusion, and even threatening to decrease funding for longstanding gender studies and ethnic studies academic departments and programs. School administrators have instituted ad-hoc changes to campus policies to further limit opportunities for expressive and associational activities. Disciplinary proceedings against students, faculty, and staff who have participated in pro-Palestine protests have intensified. Some universities have gone so far as to expel students for protest activity. Such anticipatory obedience threatens to radically scale up the government's repressive agenda. Further, as recent developments demonstrate, such compliance does not in fact protect institutions from federal threats.

The example of Columbia is again instructive. Repeated efforts by university leadership to anticipate and comply with demands by hawkish government actors—including multiple crackdowns on student protestors with police and draconian disciplinary measures, as well as the disciplining of faculty and staff via administrative leaves, suspensions, and threats of termination—have only exposed the university to even more extreme forms of sanction. Succumbing to intimidation has failed to assuage the university's antagonists; indeed it seems only to have emboldened the government to intensify its attacks. The government's announcement of massive funding cuts to Columbia University within days of announcing its investigation against the university is an extraordinary punitive measure no other university has experienced to date.

In the current national climate, as institutions of higher education and their mission of critical inquiry face unprecedented attack, MESA unequivocally supports efforts to stand up for freedom of expression, academic freedom, and institutional autonomy. Rather than facilitating or acting in the interests of government repression, we must all take a collective stance to defend higher education in the United States.

First and foremost, the MESA Board of Directors demands that the government immediately end its repressive campaign against American colleges and universities. We call on all branches of the federal government as well as elected officials and civil servants working at all levels to reject this brazen undermining of fundamental protections enshrined in the Constitution, including due process.

The MESA Board of Directors also calls on lawmakers to recognize the threat these policies represent to higher education in general, and to the specific campuses based in their constituencies in particular. Lawmakers have a critical role to play in ensuring transparency, accountability, and the constitutionality of any and all policies.

The MESA Board of Directors urges university and college administrations to affirmatively defend the autonomy of higher education and the rights of all members of their campus to engage in lawful, First Amendment-protected activity. We also call on university and college administrators to protect and support vulnerable members of our campus communities. Leaders in higher education must recognize that voluntary cooperation — beyond what is legally compulsory — with repressive efforts targeting individual members of our campuses or those abrogating the autonomy of higher education will compromise the safety of campus communities and render all universities more vulnerable to governmental overreach and censorship. Anticipatory obedience is neither a defense against repression nor a viable strategy to avert risk. Rather, it is an invitation to greater repression that endangers students, faculty, and staff, and compromises the integrity of institutions of higher education in a democratic society.

Lastly, we recognize that all of these events, and the climate of fear they have produced, are deeply traumatic to our members. The MESA Board of Directors is determined to face this new threat level and act as a resource in solidarity with our membership in defense of freedom of speech, academic freedom, and

institutional autonomy. We will support our members in their efforts to mobilize their own campus communities.

Statement

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EXHIBIT 99

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# A Message from MESA and the Task Force on Civil and Human Rights

**March 21, 2025**—In the past month, the Trump Administration has continued to roll back academic freedoms on campuses across the country, including policies that defund schools, threaten Middle Eastern Studies departments, promote surveillance of students and faculty, detain individuals, and seek to revoke visas for international students. Moreover, new executive actions dismantling the Department of Education—together with announced funding freezes and cuts—affect all of higher education. In recent days, threats of deportations and a new travel ban have also been reported.

These changes have deeply unsettled our community across the globe, since we are affected personally and professionally by these threats and attacks. All of these developments have also reaffirmed for us the importance of advocacy that forcefully challenges such initiatives, as the MESA Board noted in its March 13 statement.

Along with our support for the study and scholarship of the Middle East, defending academic freedom remains a core focus in our work. As we adjust to these rapidly changing circumstances, MESA is firmly dedicated to defending academic freedom and providing comprehensive support and anticipatory resources for our membership and community at large as we face these challenges.

Over the last month, we have continued to work within the MESA Task Force on Civil and Human Rights to develop academic freedom defense resources for our membership. The Task Force is currently building out our newly launched academic freedom initiative, leading data collection on campus climate and

academic repression, and continuing to add to the MESA Advocacy Resource Center. Additionally, we have launched working groups with several partner organizations to coordinate our advocacy work. The four working groups focus respectively on data collection and mapping, resource development, media and communications, and legal support. In partnership with the AAUP, we are developing a campus toolkit that we hope will give our members the ability to plan how best to respond to this threatening environment on their own campuses.

Since February, MESA's Committee on Academic Freedom has issued three letters regarding academic repression on specific campuses in North America. As the threats to political and educational landscapes continue to develop daily, we are committed to continuing our advocacy work on multiple fronts, including addressing the ways in which university leadership is, in some instances, engaging in forms of anticipatory obedience that adversely affects our members and that we oppose.

On April 1, MESA will host a closed ***Know Your Rights*** Webinar at 12:00noon EDT. (All current members will be registered with their myMESA email, to ensure security. Please see your email for further information as the date approaches.)

As we continue to prepare for our Annual Meeting, we know how imperative it is for our community to come together, build support, and strategically plan for the continued waves of attacks on our work. We invite our members to consider gathering with us in November and to consider renewing your memberships to help support this work.

We thank you once again for your support and look forward to building together.

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EXHIBIT 100

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# Trump's Immigration Actions: What to Know

## Webinar Tomorrow

## Cosponsored by AAUP and MESA

Please join us Thursday, March 27, at 6:00 pm Eastern (3:00 pm Pacific), for a webinar about Trump administration immigration actions and people's legal rights.

Speakers will include deportation law specialist Marc Van Der Hout, who will share information about current immigration actions and the overall political landscape.

Participants will learn about the rights of legal permanent residents (green card holders), visa holders, and US citizens, and be empowered to advocate and protect both themselves and coworkers.

**This webinar is cosponsored by the American Association of University Professors and the Middle East Studies Association.**

## Register for AAUP-MESA webinar

**In addition, next week, MESA will also host a closed webinar for current members only.**

**April 1, *MESA Members: Know Your Rights* Webinar at 12:00noon EDT.**

Current (2025) members have been automatically registered. Please see your myMESA email for the link to join.

### In case you missed it

MESA, AAUP, and the Knight institute file lawsuit over Trump policy of arresting and threatening deportation for lawful speechfile lawsuit over Trump policy of arresting and threatening deportation for lawful speech

The Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) yesterday filed a lawsuit seeking to block the Trump administration from carrying out large-scale arrests, detentions, and deportations of noncitizen students and faculty members who participate in pro-Palestinian protests and other protected First Amendment activities.

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EXHIBIT 101

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# *MESA Members: Know Your Rights*
## Webinar
## April 1, 2025 at 12noon EDT

MESA will host a closed ***Know Your Rights*** Webinar at 12:00noon EDT on April 1.

This is available only to current MESA members, and will not be recorded.

For this webinar, we have preregistered 2025 members with the email from your myMESA account to ensure security.

Please see the email sent to your email with the login link if you would like to attend.

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EXHIBIT 102

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# *Know Your Rights: Citizen and Non-Citizen Travelers*

## KYR While Traveling

## Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 7:00 PM EDT

The CLEAR Project is sponsoring a webinar, ***Know Your Rights While Traveling***, on next Wednesday, April 9, 2025. Registration is open to anyone interested in attending.

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EXHIBIT 103

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# MESA Board Joint Statement with the TFCHR regarding deportations

**April 11, 2025**—The MESA Board of Directors and the MESA Task Force on Civil and Human Rights condemn in the strongest terms the Trump administration's targeting of noncitizen students and researchers for their constitutionally protected speech and advocacy. As part of an expansive anti-immigrant agenda, President Donald Trump has revoked visas and ordered the detention and deportation of non-citizens, including lawful permanent residents, for their advocacy of Palestinian rights and human dignity. The pretextual use of federal laws and executive orders to penalize political advocacy, speech, and protest is a direct assault on the foundations of democracy. It is a brazen attempt to deter individuals and institutions from expressing and hearing dissenting viewpoints. It is also a direct attack on the academic freedom of US universities, threatening the viability of these institutions as sites of free research, debate, and knowledge production.

On January 20, 2025, President Trump issued Executive Order No. 14,161 stating that it is the policy of the United States to protect its citizens from noncitizens "who espouse hateful ideology," directing the Secretary of State and other cabinet officials to "vet and screen" all noncitizens who are already in the United States "to the maximum degree possible." On January 29, 2025, the president issued Executive Order No. 14,188 stating that it is the policy of the United States "to combat anti-Semitism vigorously, using all available and appropriate legal tools, to prosecute, remove, or otherwise hold to account the perpetrators of unlawful anti-Semitic harassment and violence." The White House released a fact sheet about the order vowing "to investigate and punish

anti-Jewish racism in leftist, anti-American colleges and universities." The fact sheet characterizes the order as demanding "the removal of resident aliens who violate our laws."

The Executive Orders laid the groundwork for a disturbing series of arrests and deportation proceedings of noncitizen academics who participated in pro-Palestine protests or other related expression and association. MESA and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) have challenged in court this "ideological deportation policy" as patently unconstitutional. In March 2025 alone, the following arrests were carried out or attempted by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency:

- On March 8, ICE agents arrested Mahmoud Khalil, a recent Columbia University graduate and U.S. permanent resident. The agents ambushed Khalil in the lobby of his university-owned apartment building, separating him from his wife (a U.S. citizen) and whisking him away to an ICE facility in Louisiana.
- On the same day, ICE signed a detention order for Yunseo Chung, a Columbia University student and permanent resident who has lived in the United States since she was seven. A federal judge temporarily stopped ICE from detaining Chung while attorneys litigate the case.
- On March 11, Ranjani Srinivasan, an Indian national and doctoral student at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, fled the United States for Canada after receiving notice that her visa had been revoked, and experiencing two warrantless visits from ICE agents at her Columbia University-owned housing.
- On March 13, Rasha Alawieh, a Lebanese citizen on an H-1B visa, was detained for 36 hours at Boston's Logan Airport and then deported back to Lebanon. A kidney transplant specialist who was to start a position at Brown University's medical school, Dr. Alawieh was deported despite a court order temporarily blocking her expulsion.
- On March 17, ICE arrested Badar Khan Suri, an Indian national and postdoctoral fellow at the Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. Suri was surrounded by masked agents, separated from his wife (a U.S. citizen) and three children, told that his visa was revoked, and detained in an ICE facility in Louisiana.
- On March 21, the Justice Department wrote to attorneys for Momodou Taal, a British-Gambian national and doctoral student in Africana Studies at Cornell University, requesting that Taal voluntarily "surrender to ICE custody." Taal had filed a preemptive lawsuit to block his detention, but

the court has denied his motion seeking a halt to the administration's deportation efforts.

- On March 25, masked ICE agents surrounded Rumeysa Ozturk, a Turkish national and doctoral student in Child Study and Human Development at Tufts University, outside her home and transported her to a facility in Louisiana. In his defense of the arrest, Secretary of State Marco Rubio told reporters, "We gave you a visa to come and study and get a degree, not to become a social activist that tears up our university campus. We've given you a visa and you decide to do that we're going to take it away." Rubio did not specify what actions led to Ozturk's arrest, beyond her co-authoring of an Op-Ed urging Tufts to divest from companies with ties to Israel.

As the ostensible legal basis of the arrests, the government has invoked a little-used provision that was introduced into the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1990 that empowers the government to deport noncitizens if the secretary of state determines that their activities "would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States." This provision, which purports to vest extraordinary discretion in a single government official, is of dubious validity. It was ruled as unconstitutionally vague by a federal judge – the sister of President Trump, no less – in 1996, although the decision was overturned on unrelated procedural grounds.

The arrests evince a clear pattern of penalizing Palestine solidarity, by redefining it as hateful, anti-Semitic terrorism, with universities as alleged incubators. President Trump reinforced this framing in a post on Truth Social on March 10, after Mahmoud Khalil's arrest: "This is the first arrest of many to come. We know there are more students at Columbia and other universities across the Country who have engaged in pro-terrorist, anti-Semitic, anti-American activity, and the Trump Administration will not tolerate it. Many are not students, they are paid agitators. We will find, apprehend, and deport these terrorist sympathizers from our country—never to return again."

In addition to these arrests, hundreds of international undergraduate and graduate student visas have been revoked without notice. The government has also taken the unprecedented step of terminating hundreds of individuals' records in the federal database regulating the stay of international students, threatening them with potential deportation proceedings. We do not yet know how many of these moves have been prompted by Palestine-related political alignments and/or impact members of the MESA community but they have created a climate of fear among international students and faculty, and, when

related to advocacy, are a clear infringement of first amendment rights. The administration's attempt to stigmatize noncitizens and punish them for their protected speech flies in the face of a broad legal consensus that the First Amendment applies to all persons residing in the U.S., regardless of citizenship status.

As the MESA Board emphasized on March 13, "Palestine-related scholarship and advocacy have now become focal points of a frontal assault on universities as centers of critical thinking and knowledge production in a battle to destroy the autonomy of institutions of higher education in the US."

The MESA Board of Directors and Task Force on Civil and Human Rights demand first and foremost that the U.S. government desist from actions designed to repress pro-Palestine speech and expressive conduct and to punish those who have engaged in such constitutionally-protected speech and conduct, especially noncitizens who are being threatened with the pretextual and punitive use of immigration laws for expressing views with which the government disagrees.

At a time when the government is abusing immigration laws in this way, and also possibly threatening to expand repression of speech to citizens through criminal laws, universities and colleges owe heightened protections to members of their campus communities, particularly noncitizens. There are a series of minimal steps that universities and colleges should take to ensure they are protecting their campus communities. The MESA Board of Directors and Task Force on Civil and Human Rights call on our members and colleagues to ask their university and college administrations to:

1. Refuse to turn over personal student information in response to Title VI investigations;
2. Make a clear commitment to avoid voluntary cooperation or information sharing with Immigration and Customs Enforcement or other federal agencies charged with facilitating deportation or other forms of immigration enforcement;
3. Make a clear commitment to not comply with Section 3 of the expanded Executive Order 13899, which calls for universities to "monitor for and report activities by alien students and staff relevant to those grounds and for ensuring that such reports about aliens lead, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law, to investigations and, if warranted, actions to remove such aliens;"

4. Maintain the enrollment of international students in the event of visa revocation, legal status termination, detention, and/or deportation;
5. Allow impacted international students and scholars to continue their studies and research remotely, if necessary;
6. Ensure that graduate students and workers whose enrollment is contingent upon funding through graduate teaching appointments or fellowships can continue their coursework, research, and teaching appointments;
7. Communicate reliable, timely information to international students and scholars, including immediate notification of changes in their legal status;
8. Provide and pay for legal counsel for those students and scholars whose visas have been revoked;
9. Work swiftly and affirmatively—through lawsuits, if necessary—to stop the termination of legal status of students and scholars without any due process.

Finally, in this climate of escalating fear, we reiterate our commitment to our membership to continue to act as a resource in their defense, and in defense of freedom of speech, academic freedom, and constitutional rights.

Full statement web version

One-page PDF version

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EXHIBIT 104

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# MESA Board Joint Statement with the TFCHR regarding visa revocations

**April 28, 2025**—The MESA Board of Directors and the MESA Task Force on Civil and Human Rights call on all U.S. universities and colleges to heed the Trump administration's reversal of the unlawful mass visa revocations that have terrorized international students and scholars in recent weeks. **We urge campus administrations to immediately inform their communities and recent alumni that international students and scholars remain legally entitled to stay in the United States.**

On April 25, following more than 100 lawsuits against the administration, the Department of Justice announced it would reverse course. This reversal was no doubt a response to the fact that courts across multiple jurisdictions issued restraining orders finding the administration's actions likely unlawful, citing arbitrary practices, violations of existing legal requirements and the failure to afford basic procedural protections.

The lesson is clear: the administration's strategy of shock and awe aims to destabilize through unlawful overreach, forcing affected individuals and institutions to expend enormous resources to assert their rights. The legality of actions is almost irrelevant if fear induces voluntary compliance.

Complying with lawless demands amounts to a voluntary forfeiture of legal and constitutional rights and risks irreversible damage that might otherwise have been avoided. **We warn university and college administrators against the self-inflicted harm that comes from failing to challenge unprecedented**

**actions by the government in the context of its chaotic immigration policies and its broader attack on higher education.** Instead, universities must assert constitutional rights, reinforce legal constraints on executive action, and, where necessary, pursue defensive litigation.

Over the past month, the Trump administration revoked the visas of thousands of foreign students and scholars. As of April 28, MESA recorded 1,674 revocations among current students and recent alumni on temporary (Optional Practical Training) employment—undoubtedly an undercount, as this figure relies on open-source data from university statements, campus newspapers, local journalism, and lawsuits. MESA's data show that visa revocations affected over 200 schools in 44 states, spanning public and private institutions. Impacted students come from at least 24 countries.

The administration's method of communicating visa revocations was shrouded in secrecy: rather than notifying students directly, it deleted their records in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), the government database regulating student visa holders, forcing universities to convey this change to students often without a clear understanding of its implications. Since students cannot access SEVIS directly, this maneuver conscripted colleges into the administration's campaign of intimidation. Most were informed of their revoked visas without explanation. Some were allegedly flagged through "criminal records checks" for minor, dismissed, or even dropped charges.

Crucially, **termination of a SEVIS record does not affect a student's lawful status inside the U.S.**, a fact the government has now acknowledged in court filings. Yet government communications blurred this distinction, misleading students and institutions into conflating SEVIS terminations with loss of legal status. It must be emphasized: a visa grants entry into the U.S., but lawful status once inside is separate. Termination of a SEVIS record or visa revocation does not require immediate departure; it only necessitates obtaining a new visa if one leaves and seeks reentry.

**The revocations triggered mass panic on campuses, often exacerbated by inaccurate university communications**. Examples include:

- Johns Hopkins University barred affected students from "non-public areas of University property", presumably including dormitories, stating DHS had instructed them to leave the country.
- Duke University asserted students with SEVIS terminations could no longer study or work legally in the U.S.

- Virginia Tech urged immediate departure after nine students had SEVIS terminations.
- The University at Buffalo (SUNY) told impacted students and alumni that departure was "required."

We know that some students "self-deported" due to misinformation and fear, and actual numbers are likely far higher than what has been reported to date. While it may be too late to undo all the harm for those who have left, **universities must immediately cease any adverse actions based on SEVIS terminations and support students in completing their education whenever possible**.

Even as the visa revocations have been reversed and new visa policies are under review, the damage is lasting. International students are now less likely to apply to U.S. institutions. Universities have been warned they risk punitive exclusion from the government program that allows them to admit students on visas, as exemplified by threats against Harvard. Students, advocates, and institutions have borne enormous costs defending basic legal rights—and a new, troubling baseline has been set.

In response to these acute harms, the MESA Board of Directors and Task Force on Civil and Human Rights call on the U.S. government to cease manipulating the student visa system. We further demand that any visa policy reviews prioritize the original purpose of these programs: facilitating the lawful admission of foreign students, scholars, and visitors to the United States.

At a time when the government has made clear its willingness to abuse immigration laws, we remind universities and colleges that they owe heightened protections to members of their campus communities. The MESA Board of Directors and Task Force on Civil and Human Rights reiterates its **demand that university and college administrations take the following basic steps to protect community members from arbitrary government action**:

1. Refuse to turn over personal student information in response to Title VI investigations;
2. Make a clear commitment to avoid voluntary cooperation or information sharing with Immigration and Customs Enforcement or other federal agencies charged with facilitating deportation or immigration enforcement;
3. Reject compliance with Section 3 of Executive Order 13899, which calls for universities to voluntarily "monitor for and report activities by alien students and staff;"

4. Maintain the enrollment of international students in the event of visa revocation, legal status termination, detention, and/or deportation;
5. Allow impacted international students and scholars to continue their studies and research remotely, when necessary;
6. Ensure that graduate students and workers whose enrollment is contingent upon funding through graduate teaching appointments or fellowships can continue their coursework, research, and teaching appointments;
7. Communicate reliable, timely information to international students and scholars, including immediate notification of changes in their SEVIS status;
8. Provide and pay for legal counsel for those students and scholars whose visas have been revoked;
9. Work swiftly and affirmatively—through lawsuits, if necessary—to stop the termination of legal status of students and scholars without any due process and to defend students and scholars from their campus who have been detained.

Finally, in this climate of escalating fear, we reaffirm our commitment to our membership to continue to act as a resource in their defense, and in defense of freedom of speech, academic freedom, and constitutional rights.

See statement

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EXHIBIT 105

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# Launching MESA's Academic Freedom Initiative

**May 13, 2025**—Over the last few months, MESA has been building out the Academic Freedom Initiative (AFI), a project funded by the Mellon Foundation to identify and track trends regarding academic freedom and repression on campuses across North America. Since starting the initiative in February, our research priorities have been to document recent mass immigration enforcement and incidents of employment retaliation on campuses, with upcoming projects focused on tracking litigation among other efforts.

**Tracking Higher Education Immigration Enforcement**

We have built a database to track the Trump administration's recent campaign to revoke the visas and terminate the immigration records of thousands of students and scholars across the U.S. Although the Department of Justice announced its intention to reverse these moves on April 25, these measures, along with the numerous cases of individuals currently detained or deported, have created a lasting sense of fear across campuses in recent weeks. It is not yet clear that the government has indeed changed course, or that there have been reversals in all cases where visas were already revoked. Moreover, universities' inability to properly protect or inform their communities has exacerbated this panic.

We have therefore continued to track all visa revocations and immigration record terminations, entry denials, deportations, and detentions of university students, faculty, and staff to comprehensively record and analyze such changes on campuses. Sourcing from open-access data such as court filings and media reports, we have also collaborated with individuals at allied organizations to corroborate our data for accuracy and completion. To date, we have identified 1,708 total cases.

More than half of the affected individuals were current students (975 out of 1,708), while 250 were recent alumni on temporary employment status.

In 478 cases, we have been able to identify affected individuals by name, citizenship, or immigration status.

From this data, we have identified multiple patterns.

Out of more than 200 universities and colleges with reported cases, over 65 percent of cases were reported from public institutions.

We have also identified a demonstrated national origin pattern across the dataset. Out of the cases where citizenship is known, the affected individuals held citizenship from more than 25 countries. Yet, less than 2 percent of these cases involved European citizenship. The overwhelming majority—over 98 percent of cases for which country of citizenship is known—are nationals of countries in the Global South.

We also have reason to believe the reversals are a prelude to further targeting of vulnerable individuals.

**Academic Freedom and Employment Retaliation Database**

In addition to higher education immigration, we have created a database that tracks all adverse employment outcomes for university employees who have advocated for Palestine since October 2023.

Thus far, we have identified the following incidents of employment retaliation:

| **Incidents of Retaliation** | |
|---|---|
| Suspensions | 27 |
| Terminations | 13 |
| Forced resignations | 3 |
| Rescinded offers | 2 |
| Removals from service positions | 2 |
| Miscellaneous | 14 |
| **Total # of incidents of retaliation** | **61** |

| **Individual Data** | |
|---|---|
| Tenured faculty | 24 |
| Tenure-track faculty | 9 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Non-tenure track faculty | 22 |
| Staff | 4 |
| **Total # of individuals affected** | **59** |

| **Institutional Data** | |
|---|---|
| Public universities | 16 |
| Private universities | 21 |
| **Total # of universities** | **37** |

**Future Research Directions**

As new policies continue to emerge, our next area of research will focus on legal actions and lawsuits brought under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to track major cases of lawfare concerning Palestinian advocacy within academia. We will build out a new database to capture Title VI litigation since October 2023, to be launched over the summer.

Across the country, universities and colleges remain under attack. Threats to immigration status, funding opportunities and employment, and to First Amendment protections including academic freedom continue to grow.

MESA will continue to develop our research initiative to address these concerns. Our research will be centralized on a publicly accessible website to be launched before the end of the year. In doing so, we will ensure our data is available to our membership and to the public. In addition to our findings, the new standalone website will house resources that are currently located in the MESA Advocacy Resource Center.

As we face continual threats of censorship, and repression, MESA is committed to defending academic freedom and free speech tenaciously, to document the range of experiences affecting our membership and our field, to encourage campuses to protect their communities, and to provide anticipatory support to all affected.

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EXHIBIT 106

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# *Know Your Rights Town Hall*

## Pre-summer webinar focused on immigration law, ideological detentions, and travel safety

## Tuesday, May 27, 2025
## 6:00-7:30 p.m. ET / 3:00-4:30 p.m. PT

We are holding a pre-summer webinar for our members focused on immigration law, ideological detentions, and travel safety. Join MESA, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), and immigration attorneys Marc Van Der Hout and Johnny Sinodis on **Tuesday, May 27, at 6–7:30 p.m. ET (3–4:30 p.m. PT)**. We will be discussing updates in the detentions and attempted deportations of noncitizen students and scholars, best practices with respect to travel, and answers to the questions and concerns of international faculty.

Register here, and please submit your questions in advance using this form.

**Register for the webinar**

As the Trump administration continues its onslaught on immigrants and foreign nationals, MESA is working with allies on several fronts:

**In the courts**—Together with AAUP National and several AAUP chapters, we filed suit seeking to block the Trump administration from carrying out large-scale arrests, detentions, and deportations of noncitizen students and faculty members for ideological reasons (typically because of pro-Palestinian speech).

AAUP-00308

We overcame the government's motion to dismiss and anticipate going to trial this summer.

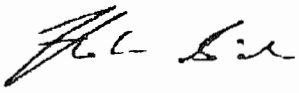
**Developing resources**—We have developed and assembled resources that are collected in our Advocacy Resource Center.

MESA members joining the webinar may be specifically interested in accessing the following materials highlighted in the Advocacy Resource Center, some of which we worked jointly with AAUP in developing:

- AAUP letter to college and university legal offices: Institutions Should Not Provide Student and Faculty Info to Enable Deportations
- AAUP letter to college and university legal offices: Institutions Should Support Students Under Visa Threats with Legal Aid and Housing
- Fact sheet on dealing with ICE on your campus (AAUP General Counsel)
- Fact sheet on rights and risks for workers who are in the United States on visas (AFT)
- Issue brief on immigration-related campus concerns (American Council on Education)
- Know Your Rights flyers (AFL-CIO)
- Family preparedness plan template (Immigrant Legal Resource Center)
- Immigration legal and digital security resources (AAUP Center for the Defense of Academic Freedom)

Finally, stay tuned for another virtual session that we will be organizing in late summer ahead of international students' and faculty's return to campus.

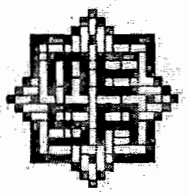
In solidarity,



Aslı Bâli
President



Jeff Reger
Executive Director



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EXHIBIT 107

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# Advisory on Travel Ban and Annual Meeting Accommodations from the MESA Board of Directors and the Task Force on Civil and Human Rights

**June 16, 2025**—We write in the wake of the latest iteration of the Trump administration's travel ban announced on June 4, 2025. The new policy restricts entry into the United States (with various exceptions and to varying extents) by nationals of Afghanistan, Burundi, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Haiti, Iran, Laos, Libya, Myanmar, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Turkmenistan, Venezuela, and Yemen.

MESA condemns this measure, and the manner in which it restricts travel to the United States on the basis of national origin. MESA, along with partners and colleagues, filed a legal challenge against the 2017 Muslim Travel Ban, and is currently exploring options for legal action against this one.

MESA is committed to supporting our members and annual meeting attendees prohibited by the new Trump administration travel ban from attending the MESA 2025 Annual Meeting.

To that end, MESA will facilitate the participation of conference presenters from the countries included in the travel ban by allowing them to participate remotely. The MESA Secretariat will be in touch soon with affected presenters to make all necessary accommodations.

We understand that in-person meetings may present obstacles to participation for additional members outside the U.S. as well, and we will continue to think creatively about how MESA can facilitate participation. We will be providing

international travel guidance for participants attending from countries that are not included in the ban. Presenters who are ultimately unable to obtain a visa to attend the conference, due to circumstances outside of their control, should contact meeting@mesana.org.

Fully hybrid meetings regrettably are unaffordable due to the exorbitant rates charged for labor and technology to create the necessary audio-visual capacity at our scale. Because MESA annual meetings are planned several years in advance and involve a substantial financial obligation to the meeting venue in the form of a legally binding contract, we also cannot switch from an in-person to a virtual format. The success of an in-person meeting depends on meeting in person to the greatest extent possible.

We are, in addition, planning to experiment with a new model for hosting a mid-year virtual research forum. This forum would provide an additional opportunity for MESA members to present their scholarship and join roundtable discussions from around the globe.

Finally, we have looked to venues outside the U.S. as we plan for our next open meeting year, which is 2027.

**We are pleased to announce that the 2027 Annual Meeting will take place in Toronto, Canada.**

As always, the MESA Board of Directors and TFCHR reaffirm our commitment to our membership, to continue to act as a resource in their defense, and to do all that we can to facilitate the exchange of ideas and knowledge production in our field.

See web version

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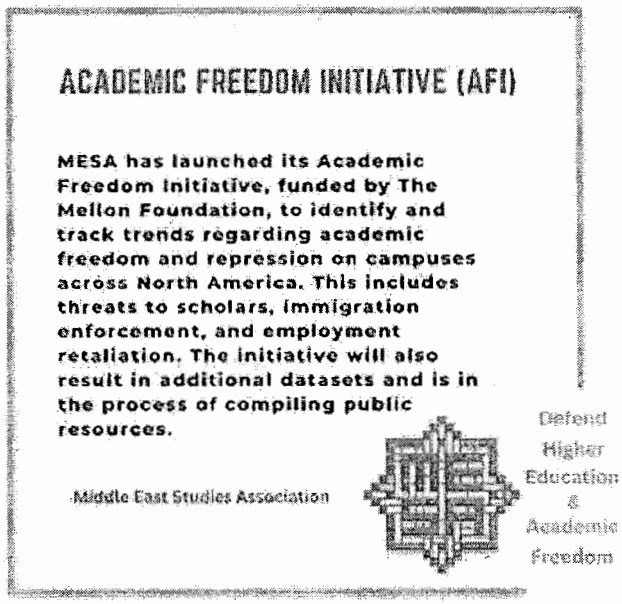


EXHIBIT
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MESA_1966
Posts
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15
mesa_1966 MESA condemns the new travel ban. We remain committed to defending academic freedom and ensuring inclusive scholarly exchange. Read the full statement and the steps that we are taking response: https://mesana.org/advocacy/letters-from-the-board/2025/06/16/advisory-on-travel-ban-and-annual-meeting-accommodations-from-the-mesa-board-of-directors-and-the-task-force-on-civil-and-human-rights
June 16

EXHIBIT
109

mesa_1966 ..




43 9

mesa_1966 MESA's new initiative ... identify trends regarding academic freedom and repression on campuses, with two initial projects on immigration actions affecting higher ed and adverse employment outcomes. Learn more and join the fight to defend academic freedom here: https://mesana.org/advocacy/task-force-on-civil-and-human-rights/2025/05/13/launching-mesas-academic-freedom-initiative

EXHIBIT
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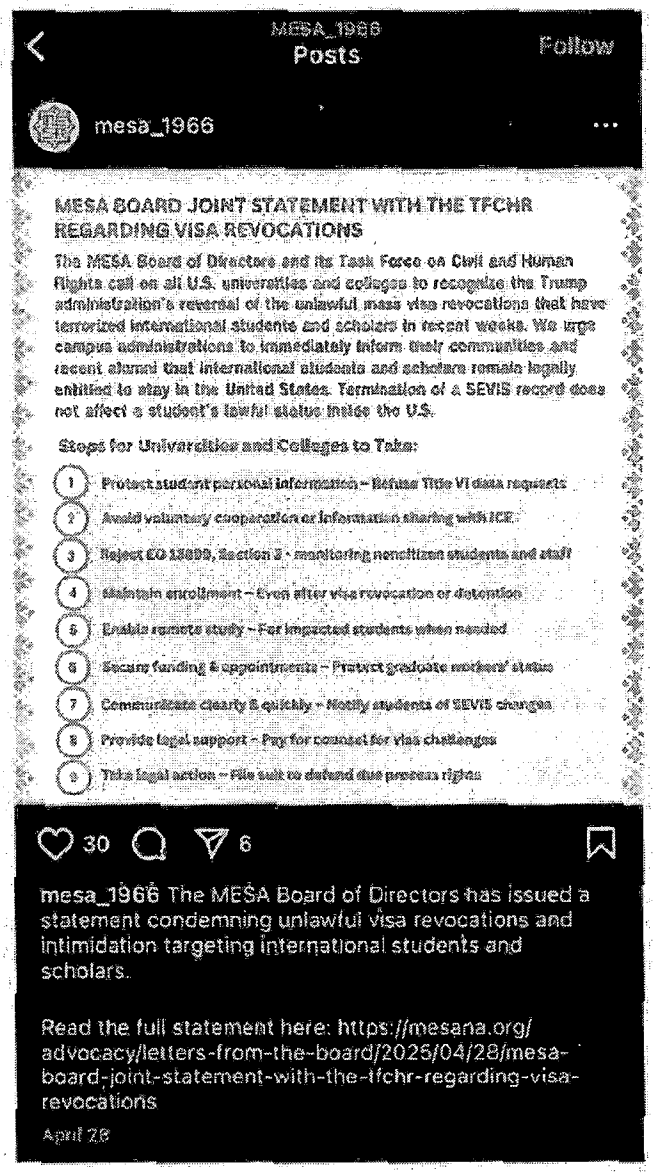

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MESA BOARD JOINT STATEMENT WITH THE TFCHR REGARDING VISA REVOCATIONS
The MESA Board of Directors and its Task Force on Civil and Human Rights call on all U.S. universities and colleges to recognize the Trump administration's reversal of the unlawful mass visa revocations that have terrorized international students and scholars in recent weeks. We urge campus administrations to immediately inform their communities and recent alumni that international students and scholars remain legally entitled to stay in the United States. Termination of a SEVIS record does not affect a student's lawful status inside the U.S.
Steps for Universities and Colleges to Take:
1 Protect student personal information – Refuse Title VI data requests
2 Avoid voluntary cooperation or information sharing with ICE
3 Reject EO 13899, Section 3 - monitoring noncitizen students and staff
4 Maintain enrollment – Even after visa revocation or detention
5 Enable remote study – For impacted students when needed
6 Secure funding & appointments – Protect graduate workers' status
7 Communicate clearly & quickly – Notify students of SEVIS changes
8 Provide legal support – Pay for counsel for visa challenges
9 Take legal action – File suit to defend due process rights
30
6
mesa_1966 The MESA Board of Directors has issued a statement condemning unlawful visa revocations and intimidation targeting international students and scholars.
Read the full statement here: https://mesana.org/advocacy/letters-from-the-board/2025/04/28/mesa-board-joint-statement-with-the-tfchr-regarding-visa-revocations
April 28

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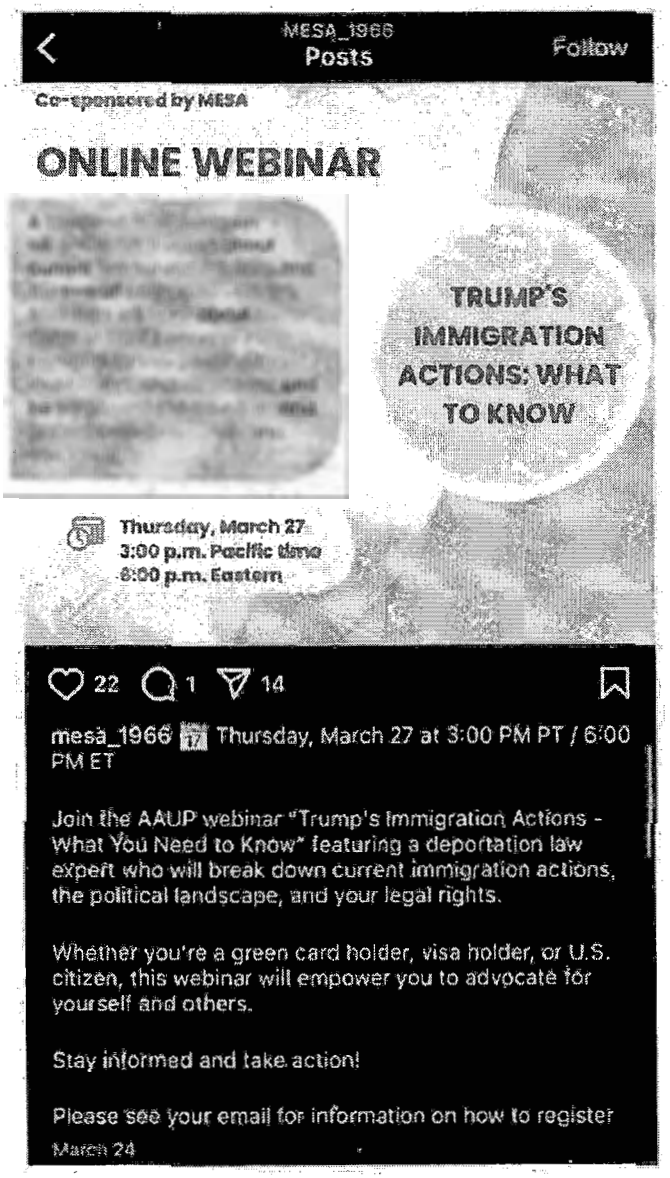
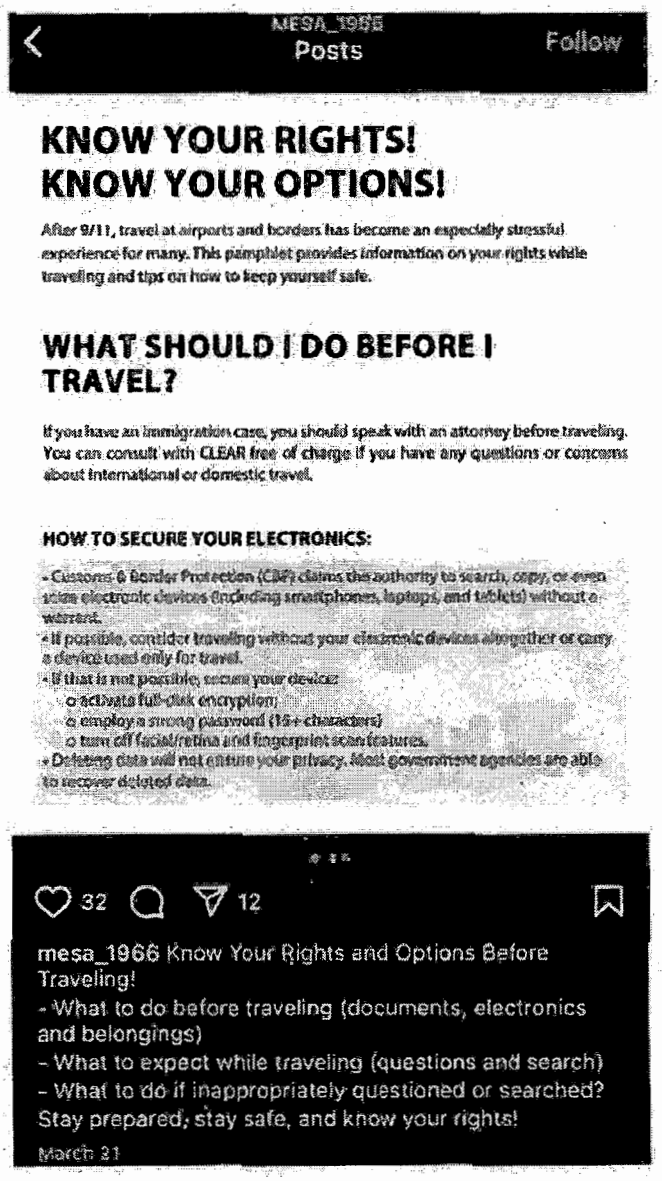

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Co-sponsored by MESA
ONLINE WEBINAR
TRUMP'S IMMIGRATION ACTIONS: WHAT TO KNOW
Thursday, March 27
3:00 p.m. Pacific time
6:00 p.m. Eastern
22
1
14
mesa_1966 Thursday, March 27 at 3:00 PM PT / 6:00 PM ET
Join the AAUP webinar "Trump's Immigration Actions - What You Need to Know" featuring a deportation law expert who will break down current immigration actions, the political landscape, and your legal rights.
Whether you're a green card holder, visa holder, or U.S. citizen, this webinar will empower you to advocate for yourself and others.
Stay informed and take action!
Please see your email for information on how to register
March 24

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112



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# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!
# KNOW YOUR OPTIONS!

After 9/11, travel at airports and borders has become an especially stressful experience for many. This pamphlet provides information on your rights while traveling and tips on how to keep yourself safe.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO BEFORE I TRAVEL?

If you have an immigration case, you should speak with an attorney before traveling. You can consult with CLEAR free of charge if you have any questions or concerns about international or domestic travel.

### HOW TO SECURE YOUR ELECTRONICS:

- Customs & Border Protection (CBP) claims the authority to search, copy, or even seize electronic devices (including smartphones, laptops, and tablets) without a warrant.
- If possible, consider traveling without your electronic devices altogether or carry a device used only for travel.
- If that is not possible, secure your device:
  - o activate full-disk encryption;
  - o employ a strong password (12+ characters)
  - o turn off facial/retina and fingerprint scan features.
- Deleting data will not ensure your privacy. Most government agencies are able to recover deleted data.

32 12

mesa_1966 Know Your Rights and Options Before Traveling!
- What to do before traveling (documents, electronics and belongings)
- What to expect while traveling (questions and search)
- What to do if inappropriately questioned or searched?
Stay prepared, stay safe, and know your rights!

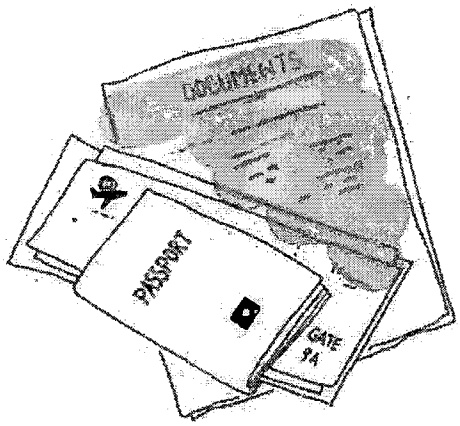
March 31

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**DOCUMENTS TO BRING WITH YOU:**

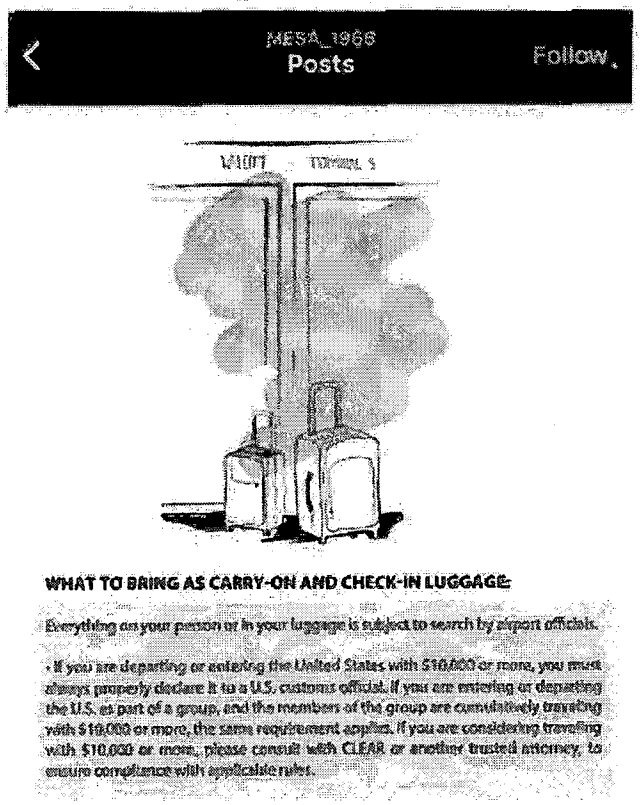
- To fly domestically, travelers must show an accepted government-issued ID. An Enhanced or REAL ID, or a valid passport, will be accepted.
- To fly **internationally**, travelers must show a valid passport. Many countries require more than six months validity on a passport to allow entry.
- Non-citizens should carry their Green Card, visa, as well as any other relevant documents, such as an I-94 or I-20.
- We also recommend carrying a printout of your flight itinerary and your emergency contact information.

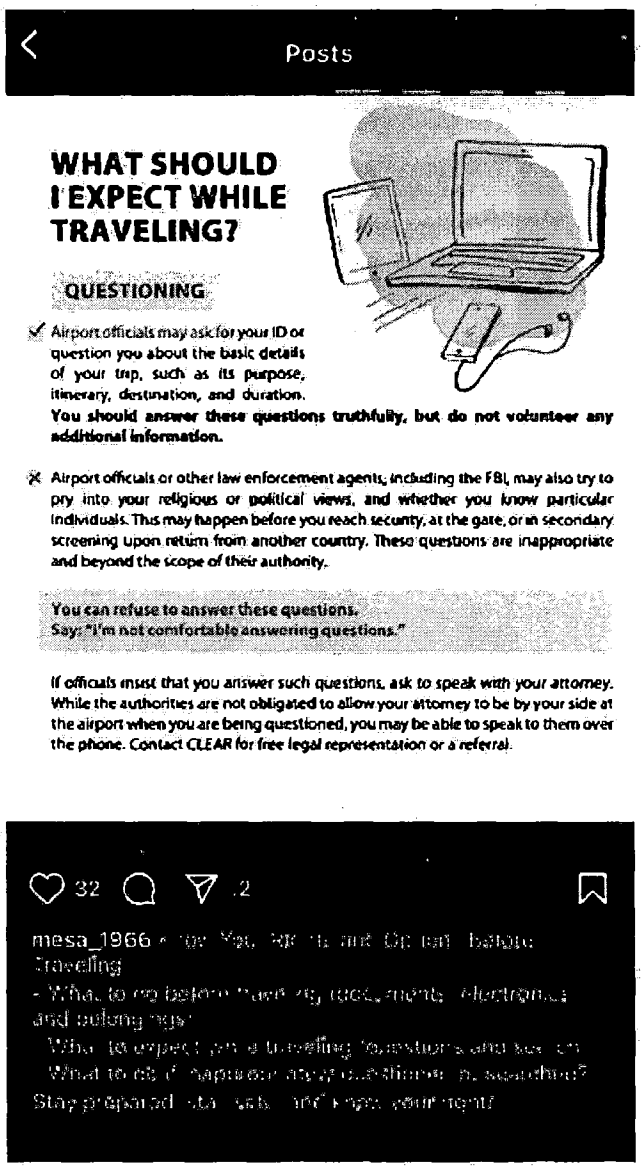



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mesa_1966 Know Your Rights and Options Before Traveling!
- What to do before traveling (documents, electronics and belongings)
- What to expect while traveling (questions and search)
- What to do if inappropriately questioned or searched?
Stay prepared, stay safe, and know your rights!

March 21


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WHAT TO BRING AS CARRY-ON AND CHECK-IN LUGGAGE:
Everything on your person or in your luggage is subject to search by airport officials.
• If you are departing or entering the United States with $10,000 or more, you must always properly declare it to a U.S. customs official. If you are entering or departing the U.S. as part of a group, and the members of the group are cumulatively traveling with $10,000 or more, the same requirement applies. If you are considering traveling with $10,000 or more, please consult with CLEAR or another trusted attorney, to ensure compliance with applicable rules.
32
12
mesa_1966 Know Your Rights and Options Before Traveling!
- What to do before traveling (documents, electronics and belongings)
- What to expect while traveling (questions and search)
- What to do if inappropriately questioned or searched?
Stay prepared, stay safe, and know your rights!
March 21


Posts
WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT WHILE TRAVELING?
QUESTIONING
✓ Airport officials may ask for your ID or question you about the basic details of your trip, such as its purpose, itinerary, destination, and duration. You should answer these questions truthfully, but do not volunteer any additional information.
✗ Airport officials or other law enforcement agents, including the FBI, may also try to pry into your religious or political views, and whether you know particular individuals. This may happen before you reach security, at the gate, or in secondary screening upon return from another country. These questions are inappropriate and beyond the scope of their authority.
You can refuse to answer these questions.
Say: "I'm not comfortable answering questions."
If officials insist that you answer such questions, ask to speak with your attorney. While the authorities are not obligated to allow your attorney to be by your side at the airport when you are being questioned, you may be able to speak to them over the phone. Contact CLEAR for free legal representation or a referral.
32
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Traveling
and

Posts

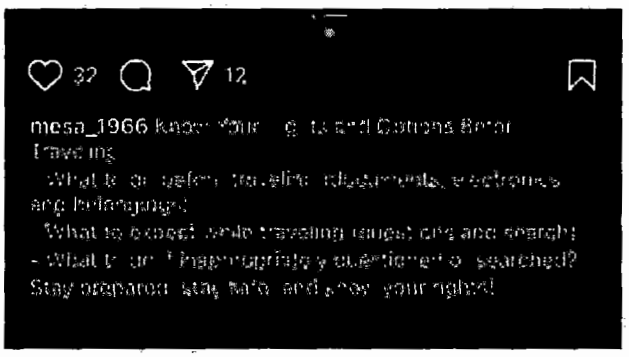
Airport officials may insinuate or even threaten that they will arrest you or hold you longer unless you answer their inappropriate questions. They cannot lawfully arrest you solely based on your refusal to answer.

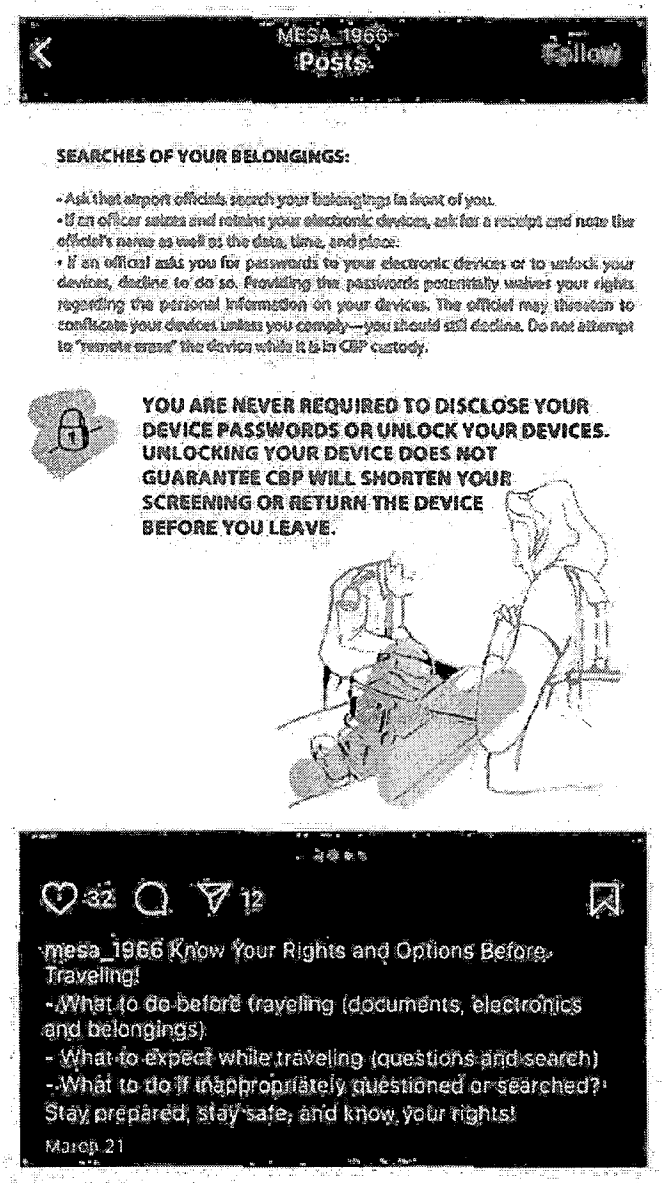


**SEARCHES**

When officials are searching your belongings or your person, do not volunteer any information. Take careful note of the official conducting the search, and if any items are taken out of your field of vision. Ask for the official's full name, agency, badge number, and identification and write down that information.

For international flights, Customs & Border Protection (CBP) claims the authority to search, copy, or even seize electronic devices, including smartphones, laptops, and tablets, without a warrant.




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SEARCHES OF YOUR BELONGINGS:
• Ask that airport officials search your belongings in front of you.
• If an officer seizes and retains your electronic devices, ask for a receipt and note the officer's name as well as the date, time, and place.
• If an official asks you for passwords to your electronic devices or to unlock your devices, decline to do so. Providing the passwords potentially waives your rights regarding the personal information on your devices. The officer may threaten to confiscate your devices unless you comply—you should still decline. Do not attempt to "remote wipe" the device while it is in CBP custody.
YOU ARE NEVER REQUIRED TO DISCLOSE YOUR DEVICE PASSWORDS OR UNLOCK YOUR DEVICES. UNLOCKING YOUR DEVICE DOES NOT GUARANTEE CBP WILL SHORTEN YOUR SCREENING OR RETURN THE DEVICE BEFORE YOU LEAVE.
32
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mesa_1966 Know Your Rights and Options Before Traveling!
- What to do before traveling (documents, electronics and belongings)
- What to expect while traveling (questions and search)
- What to do if inappropriately questioned or searched?
Stay prepared, stay safe, and know your rights!
March 21

Posts



**SEARCHES OF YOUR PERSON:**

- All passengers must undergo a routine security search. You may be selected for an additional search.
- If the airport has full body scanners, you can choose between the scan or a pat-down by an agent of the same gender. You have the right to ask for that pat-down to be conducted in a private area. If you consent to the scan, you have the right to ask for an officer of the same gender to view your scan image.
- If you wish to be searched in a private area, you can ask that you be allowed to bring a family member or friend.
- If an official asks you to remove religious clothing, such as a hijab, you can ask the officer to use a wand over that area instead. If they still insist that you remove your hijab, you have the right to remove it only in a private area in front of an agent of the same gender.
- Officials may not conduct a strip search as a routine part of airport security.

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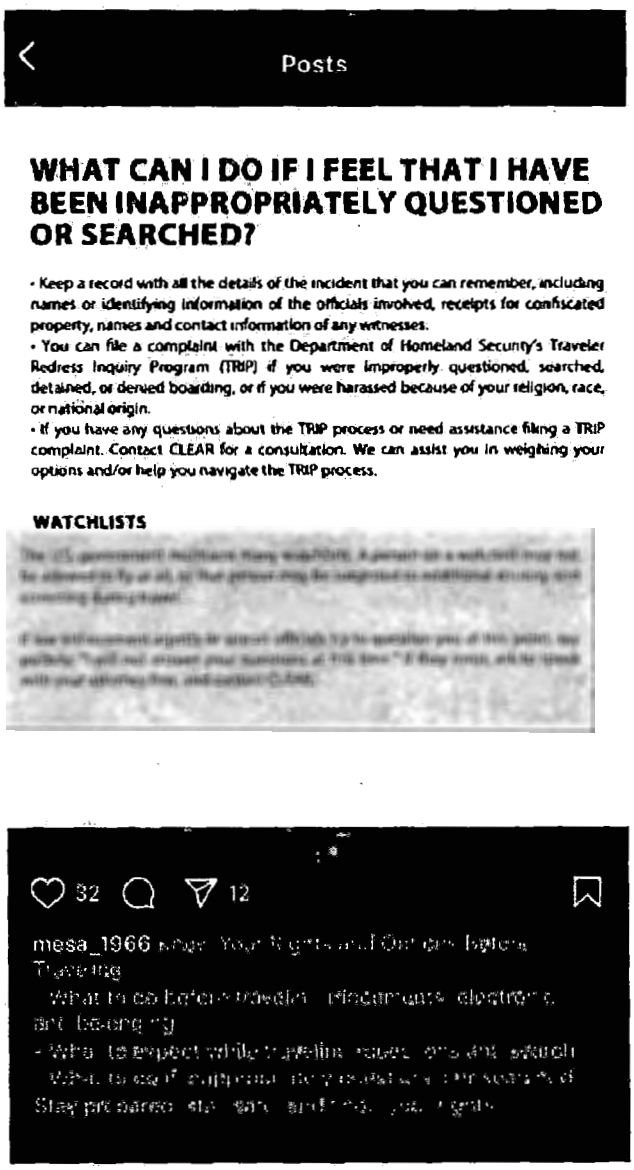
mesa_1966 Know Your Rights and Options Before Traveling

What to do before traveling documents, electronics and belongings

What to expect as a traveling [illegible] and searches

What to do if [illegible] any questions or searched?

Stay prepared, stay safe and know your rights



Posts

## WHAT CAN I DO IF I FEEL THAT I HAVE BEEN INAPPROPRIATELY QUESTIONED OR SEARCHED?

- Keep a record with all the details of the incident that you can remember, including names or identifying information of the officials involved, receipts for confiscated property, names and contact information of any witnesses.
- You can file a complaint with the Department of Homeland Security's Traveler Redress Inquiry Program (TRIP) if you were improperly questioned, searched, detained, or denied boarding, or if you were harassed because of your religion, race, or national origin.
- If you have any questions about the TRIP process or need assistance filing a TRIP complaint. Contact CLEAR for a consultation. We can assist you in weighing your options and/or help you navigate the TRIP process.

**WATCHLISTS**

[redacted]

32 12

mesa_1966 Know Your Rights and Our Borders
Traveling
What to do before traveling [redacted]
Bring
- What to expect while traveling [redacted]
What to do if [redacted]
Stay prepared [redacted]

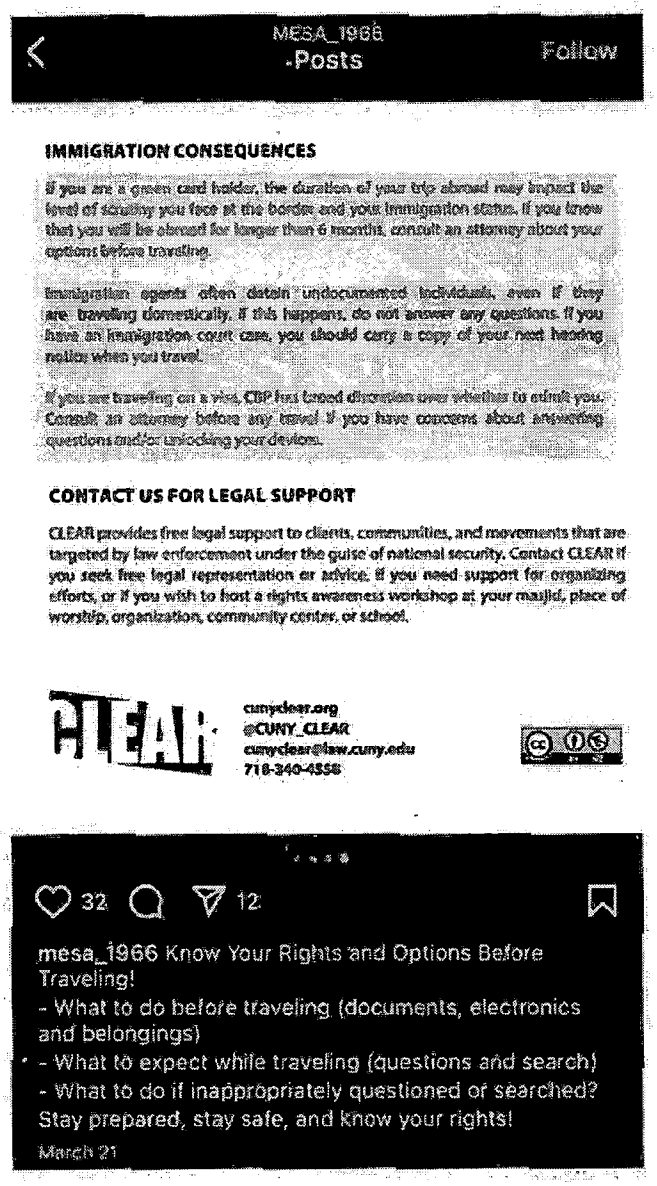

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IMMIGRATION CONSEQUENCES
If you are a green card holder, the duration of your trip abroad may impact the level of scrutiny you face at the border and your immigration status. If you know that you will be abroad for longer than 6 months, consult an attorney about your options before traveling.
Immigration agents often detain undocumented individuals, even if they are traveling domestically. If this happens, do not answer any questions. If you have an immigration court case, you should carry a copy of your next hearing notice when you travel.
If you are traveling on a visa, CBP has broad discretion over whether to admit you. Consult an attorney before any travel if you have concerns about answering questions and/or unlocking your devices.
CONTACT US FOR LEGAL SUPPORT
CLEAR provides free legal support to clients, communities, and movements that are targeted by law enforcement under the guise of national security. Contact CLEAR if you seek free legal representation or advice. If you need support for organizing efforts, or if you wish to host a rights awareness workshop at your masjid, place of worship, organization, community center, or school.
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@CUNY_CLEAR
cunyclear@law.cuny.edu
718-340-4558
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- What to do before traveling (documents, electronics and belongings)
- What to expect while traveling (questions and search)
- What to do if inappropriately questioned or searched?
Stay prepared, stay safe, and know your rights!
March 21

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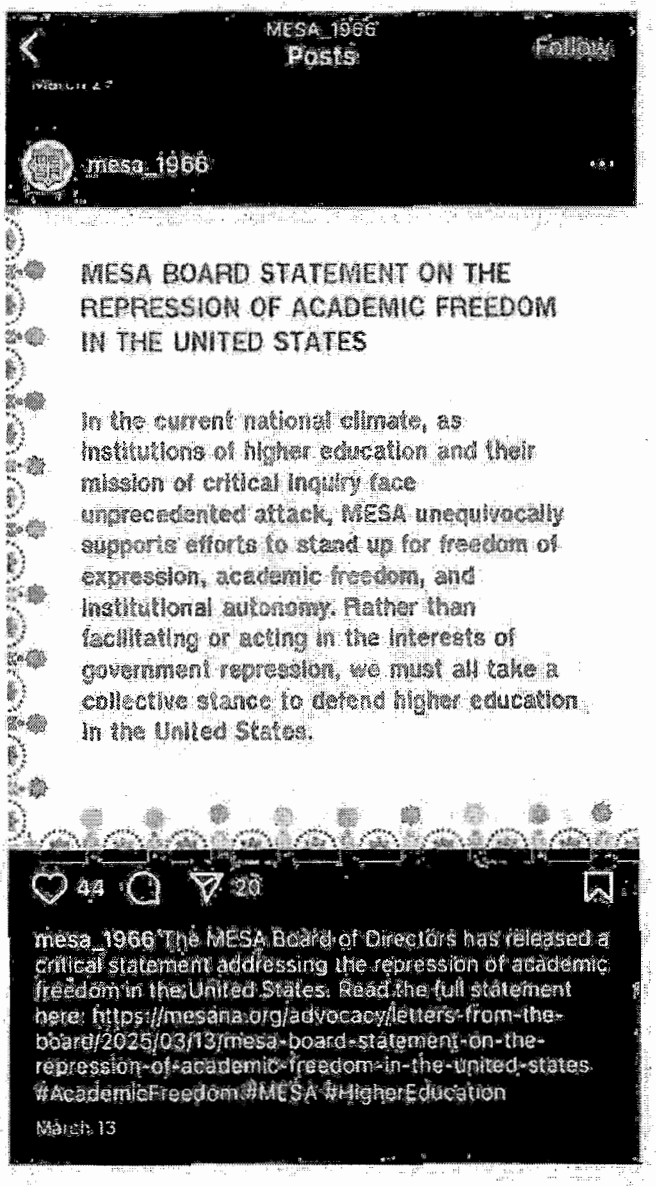

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MESA BOARD STATEMENT ON THE REPRESSION OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN THE UNITED STATES
In the current national climate, as institutions of higher education and their mission of critical inquiry face unprecedented attack, MESA unequivocally supports efforts to stand up for freedom of expression, academic freedom, and institutional autonomy. Rather than facilitating or acting in the interests of government repression, we must all take a collective stance to defend higher education in the United States.
44
20
mesa_1966 The MESA Board of Directors has released a critical statement addressing the repression of academic freedom in the United States. Read the full statement here: https://mesana.org/advocacy/letters-from-the-board/2025/03/13/mesa-board-statement-on-the-repression-of-academic-freedom-in-the-united-states #AcademicFreedom #MESA #HigherEducation
March 13

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MESA MEMBERSHIP
Why become a member?
Benefits of Membership
Individual Membership Categories:
Full Member (Voting): Fellow and Student
Associate Member (Not voting)
Retired Membership
Joint Membership (Partners)
How do I join MESA, renew my membership, or update my information?
Become a member today!
9
1
1
mesa_1966 Be part of MESA's inspiring work and strengthen our scholarly community! Become a MESA member to stay connected, informed, and engaged. Enjoy access to publications, present your work, vote, and benefit from discounted fees and other benefits! Join or renew at https://my-mesa.org/
March 6

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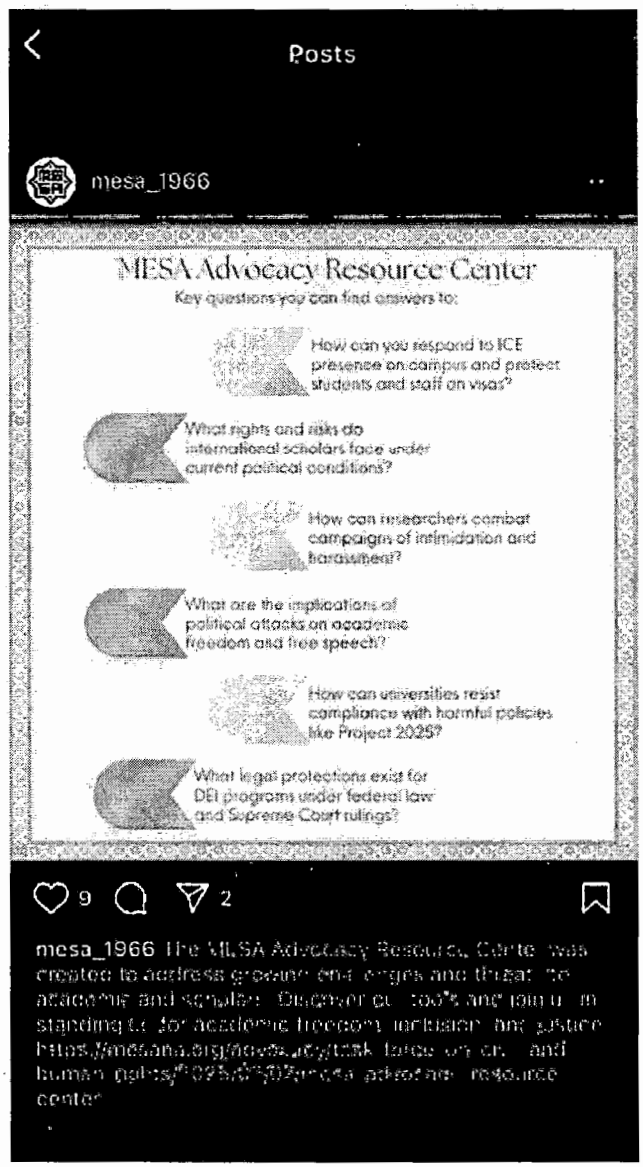

Posts
mesa_1966
MESA Advocacy Resource Center
Key questions you can find answers to:
How can you respond to ICE presence on campus and protect students and staff on visas?
What rights and risks do international scholars face under current political conditions?
How can researchers combat campaigns of intimidation and harassment?
What are the implications of political attacks on academic freedom and free speech?
How can universities resist compliance with harmful policies like Project 2025?
What legal protections exist for DEI programs under federal law and Supreme Court rulings?
9
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As a MESA member, you strengthen our community. Together, we are working to:
1 Preserve academic freedom
2 Promote cutting edge-scholarship in Middle East studies
3 Defend our colleagues
4 Advocate for the civil and human rights of our community
5 Honor the work and contributions of our fellow scholars
6 Advocate for funding for the field
7 Support the next generation of graduate students and early-career scholars
14
2
mesa_1966 In these challenging times, when higher education is under attack, being a MESA member means you're part of a movement that stands up to protect academia, educators, and students. Together, we can make a difference and push back against these rising threats.
Become a MESA member today! https://mesana.org/membership/become-a-member
February 27

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Deadline Extended
MESA/ACSS/GIB
Summer 2025
Workshop
mesa_1966 Attention doctoral students based in North America! Don't miss your chance to apply for the Why Location Matters Doctoral Research Workshop in the Arab World, hosted at AUC in summer 2025—Apply by February 27, 2025! Read details & apply: https://mesana.org/resources-and-opportunities/2025/01/09/call-for-applications-mesa-acss-gib-summer-2025-workshop

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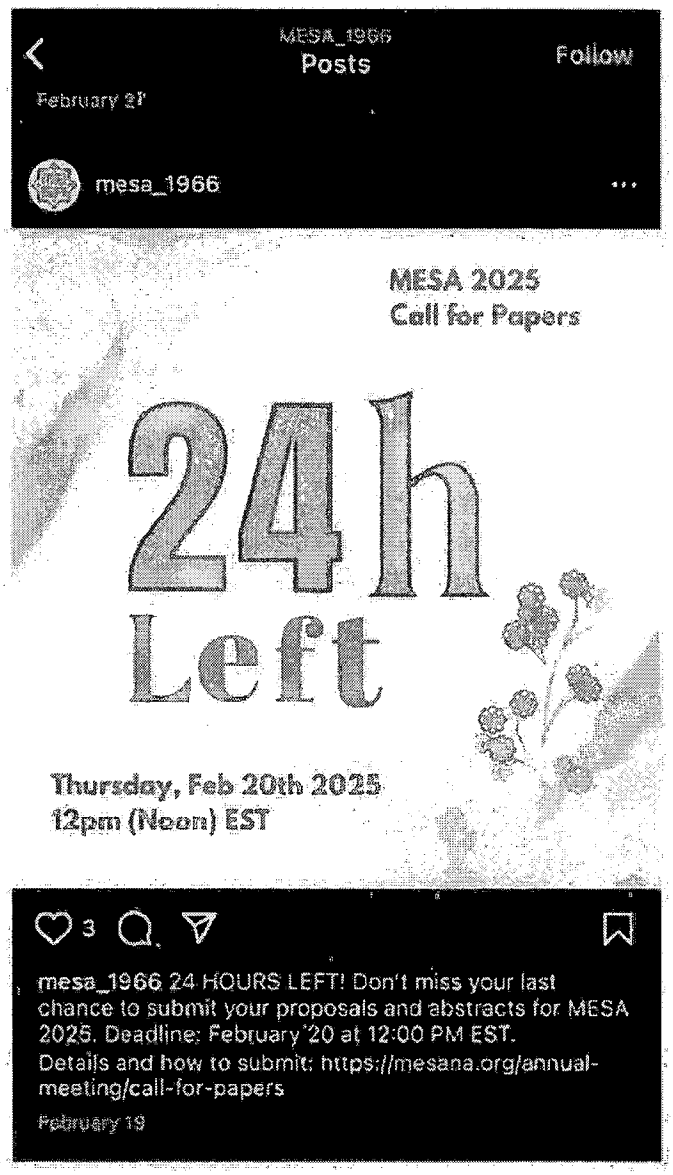

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February 21
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MESA 2025
Call for Papers
24h
Left
Thursday, Feb 20th 2025
12pm (Noon) EST
3
mesa_1966 24 HOURS LEFT! Don't miss your last chance to submit your proposals and abstracts for MESA 2025. Deadline: February 20 at 12:00 PM EST.
Details and how to submit: https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers
February 19

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CALL FOR PAPERS
12
2
mesa_1966 Only 2 days left to submit your abstracts and proposals for MESA 2025 in DC. Don't miss this chance to share your research and reconnect with our Middle East studies community. Deadline: 12:00 PM EST, February 20: https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers
February 18

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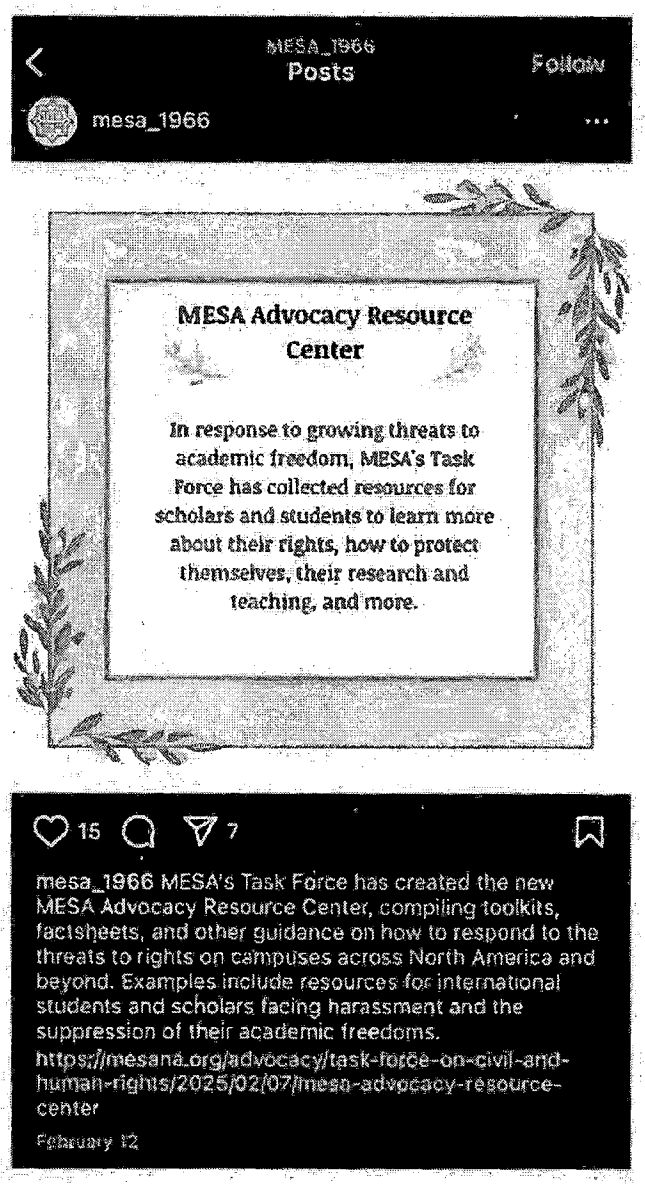

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MESA Advocacy Resource Center
In response to growing threats to academic freedom, MESA's Task Force has collected resources for scholars and students to learn more about their rights, how to protect themselves, their research and teaching, and more.
15
7
mesa_1966 MESA's Task Force has created the new MESA Advocacy Resource Center, compiling toolkits, factsheets, and other guidance on how to respond to the threats to rights on campuses across North America and beyond. Examples include resources for international students and scholars facing harassment and the suppression of their academic freedoms.
https://mesana.org/advocacy/task-force-on-civil-and-human-rights/2025/02/07/mesa-advocacy-resource-center
February 12

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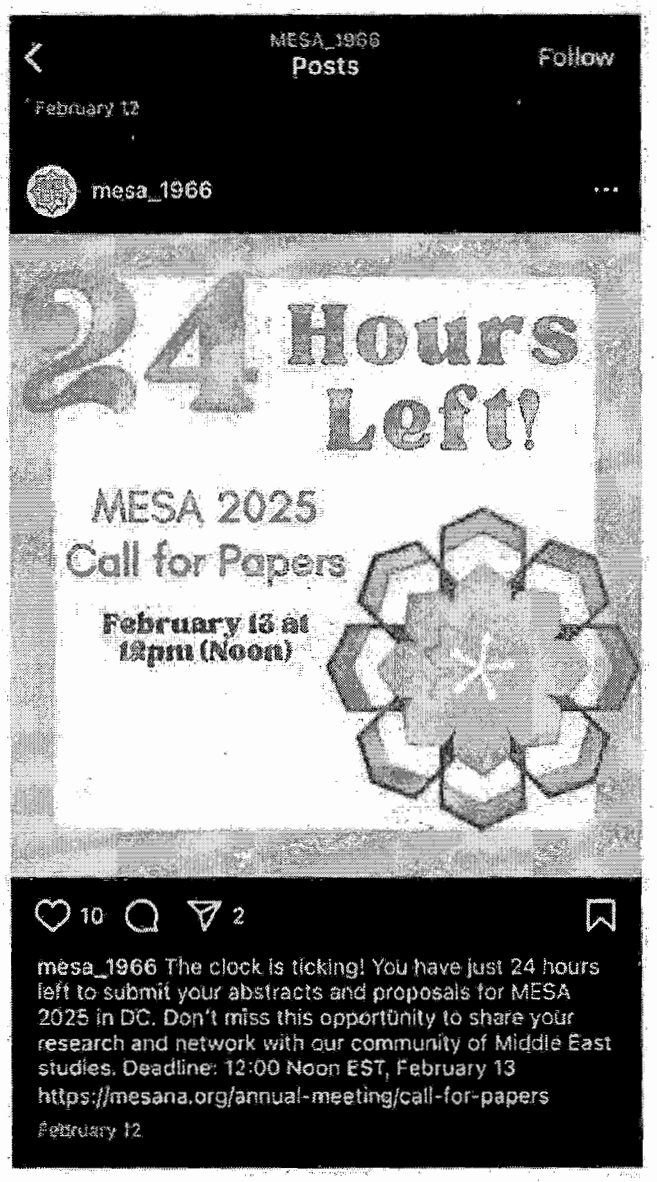
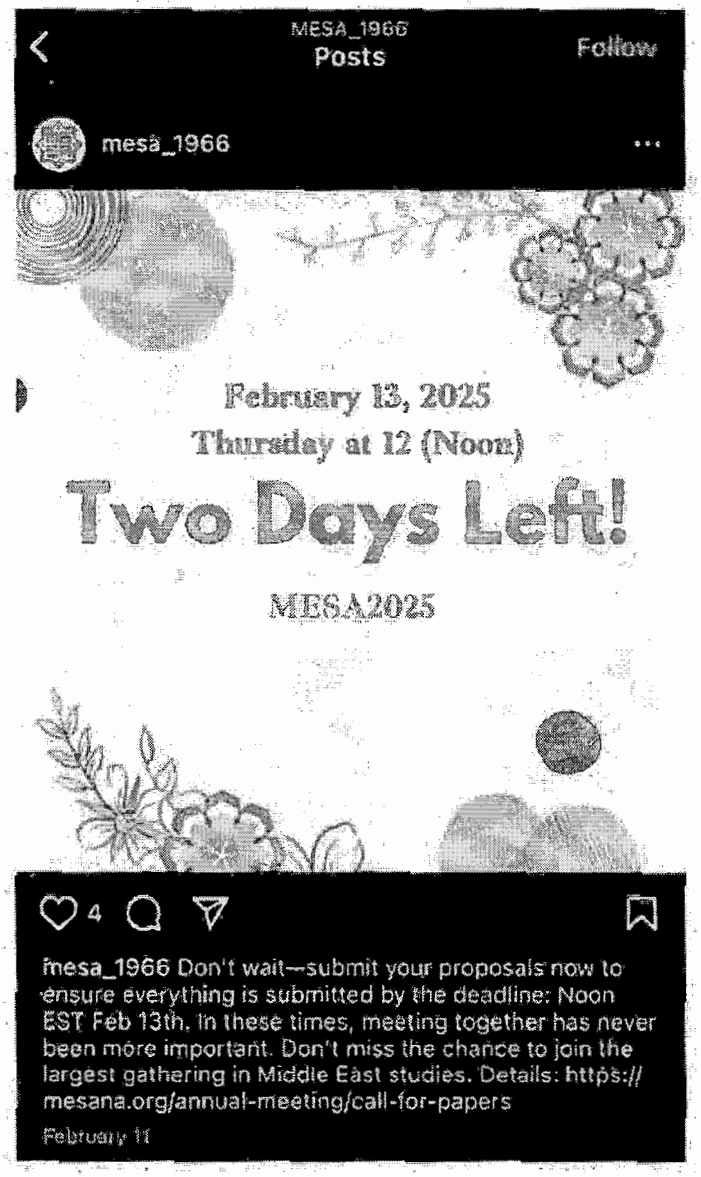

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24 Hours Left!
MESA 2025
Call for Papers
February 13 at
12pm (Noon)
10
2
mesa_1966 The clock is ticking! You have just 24 hours left to submit your abstracts and proposals for MESA 2025 in DC. Don't miss this opportunity to share your research and network with our community of Middle East studies. Deadline: 12:00 Noon EST, February 13
https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers
February 12

EXHIBIT
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February 13, 2025
Thursday at 12 (Noon)
Two Days Left!
MESA2025
4
mesa_1966 Don't wait—submit your proposals now to ensure everything is submitted by the deadline: Noon EST Feb 13th. In these times, meeting together has never been more important. Don't miss the chance to join the largest gathering in Middle East studies. Details: https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers
February 11

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28 1 6

mesa_1966 Only one week left to submit your abstracts for our upcoming conference in Washington, DC!

Don't miss this incredible opportunity to join our community in solidarity, present your research, and network with leading scholars and professionals in this field. https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers

February 6

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124



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125


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February 13, 2025
41
12
mesa_1966 Four weeks left to submit your paper or session proposals for MESA's 59th Annual Meeting, happening on November 22-25, 2025 in Washington DC! The deadline to submit is 11:59 AM Eastern Time February 13, 2025.
January 16

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127




Questions can be directed to secretariat@mesana.org

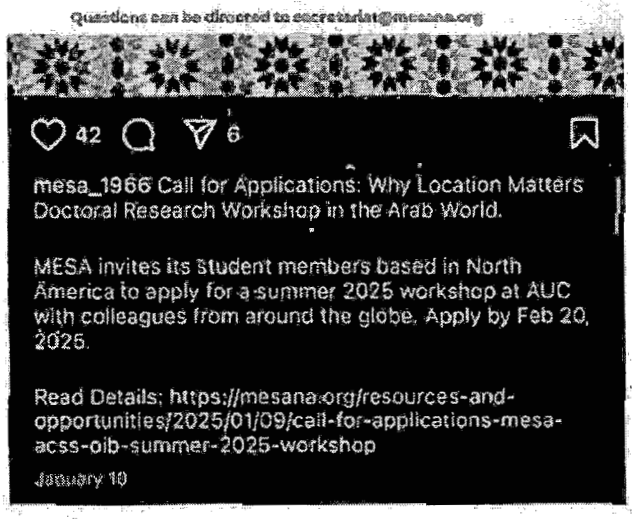


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Calls for Participation Are Open
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5
mesa_1966 If you are organizing a panel for MESA 2025 and you would like to issue an open call for additional participants, you may now submit an open call on MESA's website.
Final proposals by session organizers are due on Thursday, February 13 at 11:59AM (Boston) Eastern Standard Time.
Read More: [https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-participation]
If you have any questions, please email us at: meeting@mesana.org
January 9

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129

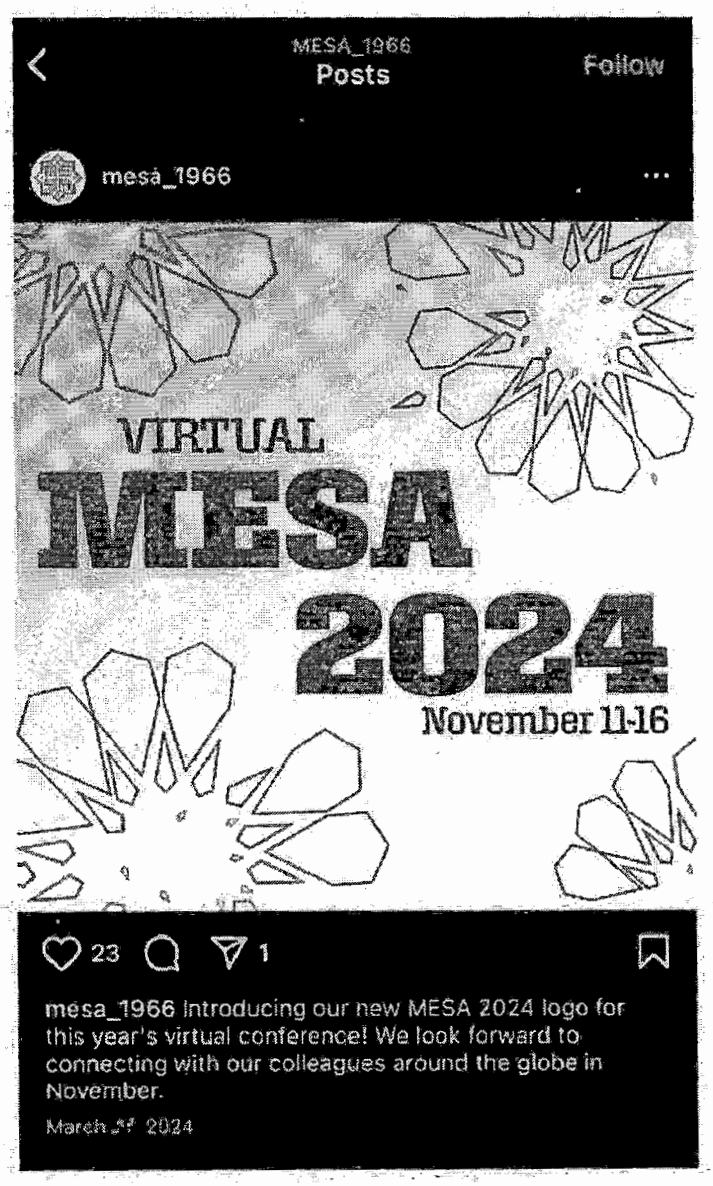

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November 11-16
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March 5th 2024

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130

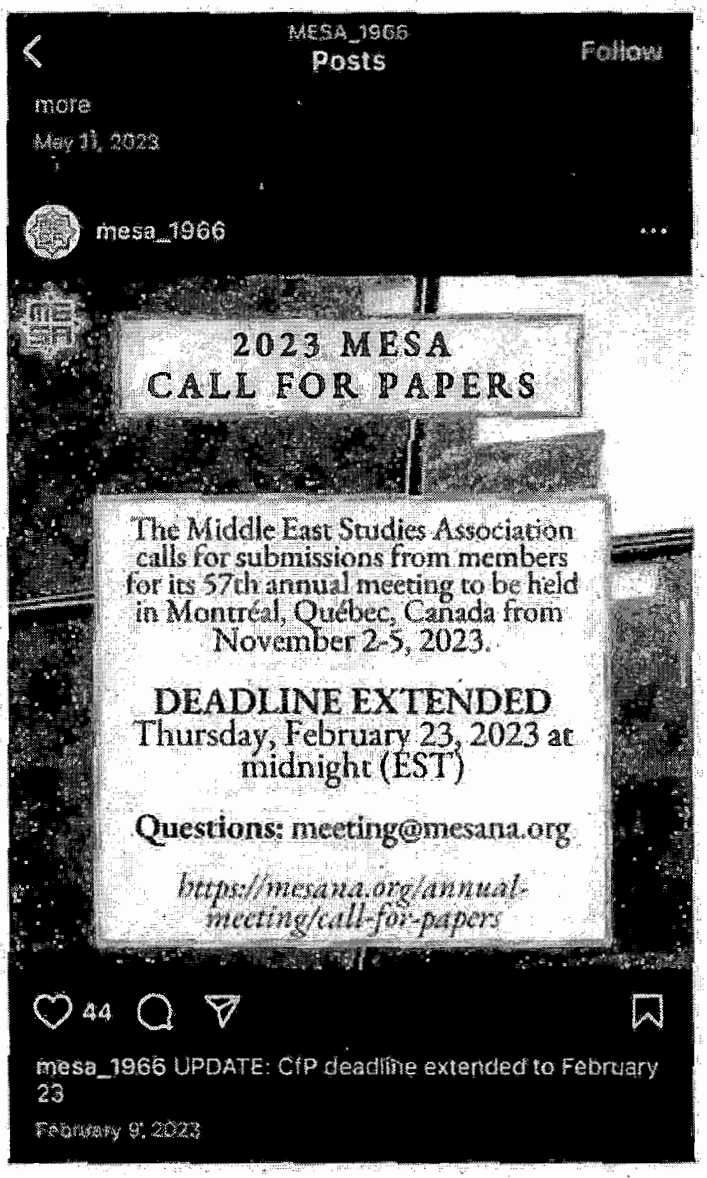

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2023 MESA
CALL FOR PAPERS
The Middle East Studies Association calls for submissions from members for its 57th annual meeting to be held in Montréal, Québec, Canada from November 2-5, 2023.
DEADLINE EXTENDED
Thursday, February 23, 2023 at midnight (EST)
Questions: meeting@mesana.org
https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers
44
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February 9, 2023

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131


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January 12, 2023
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2023 MESA
CALL FOR PAPERS
The Middle East Studies Association calls for submissions from members for its 57th annual meeting to be held in Montréal, Québec, Canada from November 2-5, 2023.
Deadline: Thursday, February 16, 2023 at midnight (EST)
Questions: meeting@mesana.org
https://mesana.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers
64
1
mesa_1966 The Middle East Studies Association calls for submissions from members for its 57th annual meeting to be held in Montréal, Québec, Canada from November 2-5, 2023 at the Palais des congrès de Montréal.
January 12, 2023

EXHIBIT
132


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Have you registered for the
MESA Conference?