DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN CULTURE
ARAB AND MUSLIM AMERICAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Arab and Muslim American Studies
Director's Guide
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The Arab and Muslim American Studies Program (AMAS) Director is appointed by the Chair of American Culture for a two or three year term. This position typically is held by a tenured (associate or full professor) and can be a faculty based in American Culture; however, non-AC faculty also can hold this role. The AMAS Director provides oversight and leadership within the Program and advises the American Culture leadership on matters related to AMAS and the larger department. The AMAS Director is also often called upon by the larger University to consult and collaborate on matters pertaining to Arabs and Muslims on campus and beyond. The director position comes with the choice of a course release or an $8500 stipend and $4,000 in research funds annually. AMAS is given a $10,000 programming budget.

This guide is intended to provide guidance and support to the incoming AMAS director. It is not set in stone as this is a position that can change through the leadership of a new director.

Funding/Budget/Programming
The Director oversees the AMAS budget (currently $10,000/year). AMAS funds can be used for programming, student events, co-sponsoring events organized outside of AMAS, paying program assistants, promotional items, hosting backpacking events, advertising, supporting student attendance at conferences, supporting speakers in AMAS courses, etc. These funds are often supplemented with additional fundraising. Common partner units include Islamic Studies, Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, Near Eastern Studies, Department of Afroamerican and African Studies, Screen Arts and Cultures, Women's Studies, Communication Studies, World Performance Studies, English, etc. AMAS usually invites one speaker/artist/performer per semester as part of the Program's key programming given funding limitations and an abundance of programming on campus. Such events are best when coordinated with classes to ensure a large audience given the campus challenge of event exhaustion. The AMAS director is regularly contacted by other units, including student groups, to co-sponsor events and to collaborate on organizing events. AMAS routinely offers $100-200 to student events $100-500 for events organized by Islamic Studies and other programs for events of particular relevance to AMAS. The AMAS director when organizing events often seeks co-sponsorship from other departments and units to defray costs and also as an advertising tactic.

The American Culture Events Coordintor can assist with programming in terms of making flight arrangements, ground transportation, hotel, reserving a room and A/V equiment for the event, restaurant reservations or catering, creating a flyer, honoraria payment, and other logistics.

Website, Social Media, and Record Keeping

- The AMAS Director should notify the American Culture Events Coordinator and AMAS Program Assistant about items to post to the website and FB page to promote our activities. This includes but is not limited to faculty and student accomplishments, events organize or co-sponsored, job and internship opportunities, course offerings, photographs from AMAS events, etc. AMAS also has a mailchimp listserv that should be used to circulate relevant information on events and other matters.
- The AMAS Director should also revise and update the website as needed, at least once per year.
- The AMAS Director is responsible for writing an end-of-year report at the end of the academic year summarizing the key activities of the year and any plans for the following year. This end-of-year report should be submitted to the American Culture chair, presented on at the end-of-year faculty retreat, and saved to the AMAS Google Drive.
- Currently, all important AMAS documents have been saved to a Google Drive. The AMAS Director should maintain a record of all important activity to the Google Drive. The previous director would meet with the AMAS Program Assistant at the end of the year for a record keeping meeting in which all activities would be uploaded to the Google Drive.

AMAS Program Assistant

The AMAS Director hires an AMAS Program Assistant, paid by AMAS programming funding. The AMAS Program Assistant is usually an undergraduate student who assists the AMAS Director with promoting the minor and events as well as organizing AMAS events. This has often been an important role. In its best form, the Program Assistant ideally is an AMAS minor who is well connected to Arab and/or Muslim student organizations on campus and who can therefore help with promoting the minor to these constituencies. In other words, a student activist is the ideal person for this role.

Undergraduate Advising

The AMAS Director serves as the primary advisor for the AMAS minor. These duties include assisting students in selecting from course offerings each term, providing information on internship opportunities, and helping students track their remaining requirements for graduation. The AC Department Advisor and Associate Chair can provide backup support for advising if the Director is not available. The Director will also actively promote the minor to students and be available when new students wish to declare. Particularities involve:

- Sending an email to AMAS minors with advising times at the beginning of each semester and instructions on how to sign up for advising.
- Taking a brief workshop on how to use the LSA advising system.
- Scheduling one hour of advising every other week with an additional hour during the two backpacking weeks. Students can sign up for a 15-minute slot through the online system.
- Documenting all advising meetings on the LSA advising system

- When an AMAS minor declares, give the form to the AC front desk, give the student paraphernalia, add the student to the AMAS minors listserv on Mcommunity and the AMAS mailchimp listserv.

Outreach/Promoting the Minor

Part of the challenge the AMAS Director faces is promoting the minor. Many students who would be interested in declaring the minor either do not know about it, or end up at Middle East Studies or Islamic Studies. While we are not seeking to poach Middle East Studies or Islamic Studies students, we do want students to find the program that is the best fit for them. Promoting the minor involves the following:

- Writing to students who have taken more than one AMAS course with information on the minor.
- During backpacking, asking faculty who are teaching AMAS courses to talk about the minor, course offerings, and show the AMAS video in their classes. The AMAS Program Assistant can also visit relevant courses to promote the minor.
- Consider having a backpacking event or community building event to promote the minor.
- Ordering promotional materials (swag) to give to minors when they declare and to distribute at backpacking, community building, and other targeted events.
- Attending select student events (e.g. Arab Xpressions) and bringing swag can also be an effective way to promote the minor. The AMAS Program Assistant can take the lead with that.
- We currently have an AMAS video that should be shown in relevant courses to promote the minor.
- The minor can also be promoted beyond campus by advertising in conference program books (e.g. The Arab American Studies Association, Critical Ethnic Studies, etc.).
- The AMAS Director should attend the LSA major/minor expo in March. The American Culture Undergraduate Program Assistant will send an email requesting that faculty sign up for a 30-60 minute slot.
- Opportunites sometimes arise for AMAS to participate in student fairs like MESA-palooza and Festifall. In these occasions, arrange for the AMAS Program Assistant or AMAS minors to attend with promotional materials.
- One easy way to promote the minor is to ask all AMAS instructors to attach a sheet about the AMAS program and minor to their syllabi and Canvas site.
- The director should consider other ways to promote the program and can consult with the AMAS Advisory Board on possibilities.

Internships

AMAS has offered a range of internship opportunities since 2007. The list of placements changes from semester to semester depending on student experiences and turnover at various organizations. Ideally, a dedicated internship coordinator (e.g. a graduate student who is paid hourly) is in charge of the internships with the AMAS director simply overseeing the academic side of the internship program. The AMAS director or internship coordinator should be aware of the following tasks that are essential to recruiting students to participate in the internship program:

- Sending out an email about internship opportunities at the beginning of each term
- Responding to inquiries from students and agencies
- Helping place students at relevant agencies and register for ARABAM 390 (or an AMCULT internship course if available)
- Sending an email to AMAS interns with expectations at the beginning of the semester (that they fulfill their commitment and submit a 5-7 paper at the end of the term explaining what they did and what they learned in relation to the academic side of AMAS)
- Serving as the faculty of record for ARABAM 390
- Checking in with students at mid-term to ensure their internships are going well
- Reading students' papers at the end of the semester and issuing their credit
- Conducting occasional site visits of agencies
- Revising the AMAS list of internship offerings each academic year based on student experiences, organization responsiveness, and staff turnover at organizations
- Organizing and hosting recruiting events for each semester (as part of the backpacking event mentioned above)

Course planning

AMAS seeks to offer 200, 300, and 400-level courses each term, including those taught by faculty associates. Planning usually involves:

- Being in conversation with AMAS faculty to plan course offerings accordingly, especially when the American Culture Associate Chair requests that faculty submit their teaching preferences.
- Work with Associate Chair on course planning to determine AMAS courses for fall/winter
- Oversee curriculum to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness in course offerings
- Oversee course scheduling to ensure that AMAS courses are offered at a variety of times and are not offered at the same time
- Contacting faculty associates to see if they will be teaching any relevant courses, and if so, arranging to have them cross-listed with AMAS.
- Suggesting to the Associate Chair the hiring of AMAS lecturers when needed (e.g. when multiple faculty are on sabbatical or when a critical course in the minor does not have a T-T faculty available to teach it).
- Working with the Undergraduate Program Coordinator to create a list of course offerings each term and circulating them to students. The AMAS Program Assistant could help circulate the list to relevant student groups and AMAS faculty and faculty associates should share the list with their courses. This list is also particularly relevant to any backpacking or community building events.
- Working to provide American Culture graduate students opportunities to be a GSI in AMAS courses whenever possible
- Ensuring that the AMAS minor requirements and course offerings are obtainable and reflective of our program's objectives; revisit and revise the minor as needed

Undergraduate Students

The AMAS Director seeks to connect to and support AMAS students in the following ways:

- Co-sponsoring student events that are relevant to AMAS
- Serving as faculty advisor to student groups
- Sponsoring students in attending relevant local conferences
- Informing students about internship and course opportunities
- Reserve spaces when students need support (e.g. after a racist incident on campus), including space for studying at the end of the semester (if requested)

Graduate Students

While AMAS is currently mostly focused on undergraduate students, the Program does play an important role with American Culture graduate students, especially those with an AMAS focus. These are common ways the AMAS Director participates in graduate education in American Culture:

- Communicate with DGS and/or Graduate Admissions Chair on graduate student admissions related to AMAS. Consult with AMAS faculty and submit the Program's recommendations to the American Culture admissions committee for consideration.
- Attend breakfast with prospective students during Admit Weekend to inform them about AMAS (usually the second Friday in March)
- Attend breakfast with incoming graduate students during orientation (usually a few days before the semester begins in September)
- American Culture provides students with a reading list during the summer after their first year. It includes readings in AMAS. The Director should revise the graduate student reading list every few years in consultation with AMAS faculty.

Mentoring Faculty

The success of our program depends on the success of our AMAS faculty, especially through the tenure process. The AMAS director is often called upon to:

- Serve as mentor to AMAS Assistant Professors
- Serve on third year review committees for AMAS Assistant Professors
- Serve on tenure committees for AMAS Assistant Professors
- Serve on manuscript workshop committees for AMAS Assistant Professors
- Serve on search committees for AMAS

In the future, it is likely that the Director will continue to play an important role in mentoring faculty as they seek promotion from Associate to Full as well.

Meetings

The AMAS Director is responsible for scheduling AMAS staff meetings and advisory board meetings and should be aware of meetings in which he/she/they are expected to attend:

- AMAS Staff Meetings – once per month: The AMAS staff has consisted of AMAS faculty (who are appointed in AC/AMAS), the Internship Coordinator (when there is one), the AMAS Program Assistant (undergraduate), and a graduate student representative.
- AMAS Advisory Board Meetings – once per semester, or as needed: The AMAS Advisory Board consists of the AMAS Staff plus 2-4 faculty associates who are asked to serve for two year terms. The faculty associates are faculty in other departments whose

research or teaching are in Arab American or Muslim American Studies, or relevant in some way to Arab and Muslim American Studies. Faculty Associates are selected by the AMAS director in consultation with AMAS faculty.

- Faculty Associates are faculty in other departments whose research or teaching intersects with AMAS; they should be invited by the Director to serve a 2-3 year term. American Culture follows a process to officially declare someone a faculty associate.
- American Culture's Executive Committee: The AMAS Director serves as an ex-officio member of American Culture's Executive Committee (that meets once per month, on Thursdays 11:30-1)
- American Culture Chair – once per semester: The AMAS Director meets with the American Culture Chair once per semester to report on AMAS activities and to inform the chair of any matters arising.

Campus Climate/National Climate

A key part of this position is being a leader on campus when it comes to climate issues that impact Arab and/or Muslim students. The administration, faculty, and students reach out during times of crisis for advice. The Islamophobia Working Group (IWG) was created by the Director of AMAS to advise the administration. The Director of AMAS does not have to lead the IWG but it can be a resource for the Director in fielding these requests.

Graduation

- Attend American Culture graduation to give out diplomas to AMAS minors
- Send an email to AMAS minors inviting them to graduation (simply forward the invitation from the Associate Chair or UG Program Assistant)
- Order stoles

Islamophobia Working Group

The Islamophobia Working Group was created by Evelyn Alsultany (former AMAS director) and Dahlia Petrus (former AMAS Internship Coordinator). It formed organically out of AMAS. However, it is not the responsibility of the AMAS Director to lead the Islamophobia Working Group. The objective of the group is to strategize on how to create the most inclusive campus environment possible in light of the national and international climate of Islamophobia. The group meets 3-4 times per semester (once per month, usually on a Friday 4-5:30pm) and leads to additional meetings with university administrators. Professor Samer Ali will lead the Islamophobia Working Group starting in fall 2018 and it will move from the purview of AMAS to the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies (CMENAS) and the International Institute (II).

TIMELINE

- August: Examine the AMAS website and request changes, edits, and updates.
- August: Ethnic Studies directors are often asked to write something for American Culture's annual newsletter.
- August: if participating in MESA-palooza, recruit an AMAS minor to represent and an IWG students to represent. Assemble materials for their table.

- August: Prepare posters and logistics for any guest speakers or events in the fall term.
- August (a week before the semester begins): Circulate information about internships.
- August (a week before the semester begins): Attend American Culture's orientation breakfast for graduate students to represent AMAS.
- August (a week before the semester begins): Send AMAS minor info sheet to all AMAS course instructors and ask them to include it on their syllabi and course site.
- September (first week of the semester): Schedule monthly AMAS staff meetings and an AMAS board meeting once per semester.
- September (first week of the semester): Email minors regarding advising hours.
- September (at the first AMAS staff or board meeting): Decide if AMAS will hold a backpacking event. If so, start planning. If not, devise a promotional plan for the backpacking period.
- September (at the first AMAS staff or board meeting): Collect photo rosters from AMAS faculty and share them at the staff meeting to determine which students have taken multiple classes. Contact those students with information about the AMAS minor.
- October: Start planning backpacking or community building event (if there will be one)
- November: During backpacking, ask AMAS faculty to discuss AMAS courses and the minor in their classes, to show the AMAS video, or to allow the AMAS program assistant to visit their class. Also work with the Undergraduate Program Coordinator to create a list of course offerings and circulate them to students
- December: Be in conversation with AMAS faculty and AC Associate Chair to plan course offerings for the next academic year.
- December (a week before the semester begins): Send AMAS minor info sheet to all AMAS course instructors and ask them to include it on their syllabi and course site.
- January (at the first AMAS staff or board meeting): Collect photo rosters from AMAS faculty and share them at the staff meeting to determine which students have taken multiple classes. Contact those students with information about the AMAS minor.
- February: When the graduate admissions committee contacts American Culture faculty with graduate files, contact other AMAS faculty to discuss potential candidates and rank them. Share the ranking with the admissions committee.
- February: Start planning backpacking or community building event (if there will be one)
- March (second week): Attend American Culture's graduate recruitment breakfast to represent AMAS and meet with potential AMAS graduate students.
- March (fourth week): During backpacking, enact promotional plan and/or backpacking event. During backpacking, ask AMAS faculty to discuss AMAS courses and the minor in their classes, to show the AMAS video, or to allow the AMAS program assistant to visit their class.
- April: Draft end-of year report for AMAS and the IWG. Submit it to American Culture and present it at the Faculty Retreat.
- April (last week): Attend American Culture graduation to award AMAS minors with their diplomas.
- May: Work with the AMAS Program Assistant in documenting all activities for the academic year.

- May: Hire an AMAS Program Assistant to begin in September.
- May: Decide on AMAS programming for next academic year and start planning (e.g. send out invitations, decide on dates for events, etc.).