

## **M.A. in Middle Eastern Cultures and Religions**

### **Purpose and Objectives**

The Department of Middle Eastern Cultures and Religions offers students the opportunity to learn about the peoples, societies and cultures of modern Israel and other countries in the Middle East. This interdisciplinary program, which combines studies in religion, language, history and social sciences and provides an opportunity for field education, utilizes the wealth of institutional and personal resources available for study and interaction in Jerusalem.

During the two-year, 49-credit hour program, students have the opportunity to combine classroom learning with a variety of off-campus study opportunities. Outings to historical sites, meetings with diverse segments of the population, and daily life in Jerusalem expose the student to a broad range of educational experiences. Both in and out of the classroom, students encounter a variety of viewpoints regarding the character of the country and the current political process. The rare combination of Israeli and Palestinian scholars, together with Christian faculty members from abroad in a non-denominational Christian institution located in Jerusalem, makes Jerusalem University College a unique meeting place for examining and interacting with these views.

In today's competitive environment, the personal and educational experience of cross-cultural study is considered a major professional advantage. Students interested in political science, history, education or overseas employment, especially in the Middle East, will find the program a valuable contribution to their professional and personal development.

### **Practicum**

Students are required to complete an intensive practicum in ministry course (3 credit hours) which includes 150 contact hours at an approved area ministry, NGO or comparable placement, together with a written component produced by the student. The practicum is designed to provide an opportunity for students to develop and refine practical skills necessary for leadership in the Middle East. It does this by integrating classroom learning with practical field experiences. For this reason, each practicum placement is closely matched to the individual student's academic program and vocational goals.

### **Modern Language Acquisition**

One of the unique opportunities afforded to students in Jerusalem is learning modern Hebrew and/or Arabic. Indeed, a working knowledge of one or both of these languages is essential for understanding developments in the modern Middle East, as well as for preparing for a career in the Middle East or in a Middle East related context. Thus, students in the MA program in Middle Eastern Cultures and Religions are strongly encouraged during their two years of course work to augment their curriculum with a parallel track of either modern Hebrew or Arabic language acquisition. While introductory modern language courses do not count as credit toward the JUC MEQR degree, a student does gain academic credit for all modern language courses taken at an intermediate or higher level. A student's advisor will direct the student to the Hebrew or Arabic courses that best suit each individual situation. At the student's request, the level of proficiency, as gauged by an exam given at the end of their modern language study, will be indicated on the student's official transcript.

# **Curriculum for the M.A. in Middle Eastern Cultures and Religions**

*Survey Courses: 10 hours*

- Introduction to the Modern Middle East (3)
- Historical and Social Settings of Modern Israel (3)
- Physical Settings of the Bible (4)

*History: 9 hours*

- History of the Church in the East (3)
- History of the Jews during the Medieval and Modern Period (3)
- History of the Holy Land from the Rise of Islam to 1948 (3)

*Religious Studies: 6 hours*

- Jewish Thought and Practice (3)
- Islamic Thought and Practice (3)

*Society and Politics: 6 hours*

- Palestinian Society and Politics (3)
- Christian Communities in the Middle East (3)

*Practicum and Seminars 6 hours*

- Practicum in Ministry (3)
- Departmental Seminar (topic to be announced each year) (3)

*Thesis-track degree: 12 hours additional*

- Guided Research on thesis Topic (2)
- Thesis Writing (4)
- Two Electives (6)

*Non-Thesis-track degree: 12 hours additional*

- Four Electives (12)

*Two Bible Content Examinations*

*Two Comprehensive – Integrative Examinations*

*Proficiency Examination in Modern Hebrew or Arabic*

**Total Credit Hours: 49**