Introduction

Despite the upturn in the US stock market, and the return of the King Fahd Endowment to its original level of $20 million, academic year 2003-2004 remained a year of budgetary crisis for the King Fahd Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies. This was mainly due to two factors: (1) the reduction of the percentage of the endowment taken as income from 5.0% to 4.9%, and (2) the fact that the three-year averaging of the endowment balance, on which the King Fahd Center's income is based, has not yet reflected the stock market upturn of 2003. The fourth quarter posting of Center income for FY 03-04 was still $2,000.00 less than the amount of the previous year. This crisis will be exacerbated in the short term, because the salary raises approved for fiscal year 2004-2005 will all come out of Center income rather than from Fulbright College funds. The Center will continue to suffer for some time from the over-commitment to salary subsidies made by previous Fulbright College administrations. Fortunately, the removal of the Associate Director position from twelve-month status and the establishment of compensation for this position at a flat rate of $5,000.00 will allow the Center to absorb the cost of salary raises in fiscal year 2004-2005. To help absorb further shortfalls, and attempt to create a small budgetary cushion for fiscal year 2005-2006, the decision was made to cut 2005-2006 graduate assistantship allotments by a net amount of $50,000.00. Center faculty and chairs of affiliated departments have been apprised of this move, which may result in the net number of new MEST-funded assistantships to be reduced to as little as two assistantships in fiscal year 2005-2006.

However, because of the frugal management of funds and successful applications for federal grants, the King Fahd Center was able to maintain and even increase its level of scholarly activities and program support compared with the previous fiscal year. For example, the Center was able to provide $10,000.00 for the support of the Jordan Archaeological Field School this year, whereas no support for the field school was given in the previous year. This support, combined with increased enrollment from beyond the University of Arkansas, enabled the Field School to run a successful program in summer 2004. In addition, by combining partial and full scholarship grants, the Center was able to send three students for advanced Arabic study at Al-Akhawayn International University in Morocco this summer. The Center also maintained its $20,000.00 commitment to support the purchase of books on the Middle East and Islam for Mullins Library. Most successfully, both project proposals submitted to the U.S. State Department last year were funded, and resulted in a total of $300,000 of project funding through fiscal year 2005-2006. These projects, which are described below, have helped the University of Arkansas
increase its international prominence by developing Public Administration programs for the University of Tunis I in Tunisia, and by applying the Walton School model for undergraduate business education at the University of the Center in Tunisia. Finally, the Center is in the final stages of negotiations, with the probable support of the University of Arkansas School of Law, to transfer the Journal of Islamic Law and Culture from its present home at DePaul University to a new home at the University of Arkansas.

1. Student Affairs

Undergraduates (9 scholarships @ $76,400.00) In academic year 2004-2005 the King Fahd Center will support 9 undergraduate MEST majors on full or partial scholarships totaling $76,400.00. This represents a savings of $47,600.00 compared with the previous year. Over the past three years, MEST has reduced the amount spent on undergraduate support by a total of more than $130,000.00. These savings were not due to any arbitrary reductions in undergraduate support, but rather were the result of making the requirements for winning and retaining a MEST scholarship more rigorous, by limiting scholarship awards for majors with a proven track record to the junior and senior years, and by granting fewer full scholarships and more partial scholarships to deserving majors. Currently, there are 33 MEST double-majors and 5 MEST minors, an increase of 11 majors and minors over the previous academic year. This increased pool of majors will likely raise the number of scholarship recipients for academic year 2005-2006. The average GPA of a MEST major or minor exceeds 3.4. Although this represents a slight drop compared with last year, it is still one of the highest average GPAs for any program in the university. The average GPA of a partial scholarship recipient remains at a level of approximately 3.6. The average GPA of a full scholarship recipient is 3.8. These figures continue to compare favorably with the GPAs of the holders of the most prestigious scholarships at the University of Arkansas. All of the previous scholarship recipients who were not MEST majors, and who were inherited from the former administration, have now graduated and left the university. Now all scholarship recipients are MEST majors, according to the guidelines approved by the King Fahd Center core faculty and implemented by the MEST program.

MEST majors Suze D’Ambreville (IRL-MEST), Shaznene Hussain (PLSC-MEST), and Amanda Manatt (JOUR-MEST) graduated with honors this spring. Suze’s thesis was directed by MEST Director Vincent Cornell and Shaznene and Amanda’s theses were directed by MEST faculty member Najib Ghadbian. Suze and Shaznene were also granted MEST graduate assistantships for MA studies in Public Administration (D’Ambreville) and Political Science (Hussain) at the University of Arkansas. Rising senior Sarah Holland (IRL-MEST) received a Sturgis Study Abroad Scholarship and an Honors Study Abroad Scholarship from the University of Arkansas. She also won a David L. Boren National Security Undergraduate Education scholarship. All three scholarships will help fund her Fall 2004 semester of study at the American University in Cairo. At the end of
May 2004, MEST majors Haunani Verzon, Nadia Akbar, and Meredith Melody received either partial or full scholarship support from the King Fahd Center for advanced Arabic study at Al-Akhawayn University in Morocco. Meredith Melody only completed a four-week program in Morocco because she was also selected as an intern for Arkansas Senator Blanche Lincoln. Nadia Akbar’s summer study in Morocco was partly funded by a Sturgis scholarship.

**Graduate Students (25 Graduate Assistants @ $263,600.00)** In academic year 2004-2005 the King Fahd Center will fund 21 graduate assistants from the primary King Fahd endowment totaling $226,400.00 plus $7,510.00 in benefits. The Center will also support four graduate assistants funded by the Arabic Translation endowment, totaling $37,200.00 and $1,265.00 in benefits. **The total amount of graduate assistantships and benefits will equal $272,375.00. This represents an increase of $44,456.00 over last year’s graduate funding, but is still below the funding level of academic year 2002-2003.**

Because the pool of superior graduate student applicants was so large this year, it was decided to use most of the money saved from undergraduate scholarships to support a greater number of these students. Bringing superior students into Middle East oriented graduate programs has a leavening effect that will set the bar higher for subsequent applicants and increase the academic profile of the departments in which these students are hosted. Two applicants had verbal scores in excess of 700, and virtually all applicants in the pool had grade averages and GRE scores much higher than the normal Graduate School averages. Even with the increased amount budgeted, several well-qualified students had to be turned down for funding. Fortunately, most were able to find alternative sources of funding in their host departments. The King Fahd Center continues to maintain the rigorous standards for graduate student performance established in previous years. Student progress is closely tracked throughout the year and the length of funding strictly follows Graduate School guidelines. As part of this tracking process, seven students were informed that academic year 2004-2005 would be their final year of funding.

As mentioned in the introduction to this report, the number of funded graduate students will be reduced by five in academic year 2005-2006, for a savings of at least $50,000.00. This will be due to normal attrition, as seven graduate students are scheduled to complete their academic programs by the end of spring semester, 2005. Some of the money saved will be used to cover an expected increase in undergraduate scholarships. The rest will be used as a budgetary cushion to provide protection against further drops that might occur in endowment income.

In April 2003, Public Administration graduate student Gaby Jabbour received the Hugh T. Henry Memorial Award for outstanding scholarship in his field. He received his Masters degree in Public Administration in December 2003 and is now a Ph.D. student in Public Policy. Environmental Dynamics Ph.D. student Salem Thawaba has received supplementary funding from the King Fahd Center to conduct field research in Fayetteville, Arkansas. With travel funded in part by
the Center, Thawaba was also an invited speaker at two international conferences (Santa Barbara) this year to discuss his current innovative research using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to analyze urban morphology changes in Palestine and the US. Farid al-Salim, Ph.D. candidate in History, received the Turner Travel Award from the History department for dissertation research in Palestine. Geography and Regional Studies MA student Stephanie Kirkland (a former MEST undergraduate) was funded by the Center this summer to conduct innovative cartography and statistical data analysis on the tourism industry in Tunisia. She is currently in Tunisia working under Professors Nabiha Jerrad and Amor Belhedi, of University of Tunis I as well as Tom Paradise. Stephanie's research is the first done by a University of Arkansas graduate student as part of the King Fahd Center's partnership with the Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education.

**Study Abroad.** As mentioned above, the King Fahd Center was able to provide $10,000.00 in funding support for the summer 2004 Archaeological Field School in Jordan, directed by core faculty member Jerome Rose of Anthropology. In November 2003, the American Schools of Oriental Research Committee on Archaeological Policy (ASOR-CAP) voted to continue ASOR affiliation for Professor Rose's Bioarchaeology of North Jordan (Ya'mun) project, of which the field school is a part. This vote was unanimous. Professor Rose was also appointed to a five-year term as a member of ASOR's Committee on Archaeological Policy. This constitutes important testimony to the high level of respect accorded to Jerry Rose by his peers. A fringe benefit of ASOR affiliation is that students and affiliated faculty of the King Fahd Center are eligible to apply for ASOR fellowships to cover the costs of research in Jordan. The King Fahd Center will continue to support Professor Rose's field school and research to the best of its ability. We are also pleased to note that Yarmouk University and the Jordanian antiquities officials who are partners in this project agreed to reduce costs assessed to the field school as a way of ensuring that the project continues successfully.

The center was also able to provide $10,000.00 of funding for Arabic language study abroad. This allowed the MEST program to support three undergraduate students of advanced Arabic for study at Al-Akhawayn University in Morocco. MEST was able to support this number of students by combining full and partial scholarships. The SINARC program in Lebanon was not an option this year because of a U.S. State Department travel warning issued for that country. At this point, it does not seem likely that the center will be able to support increased funding levels for either the Arabic program or the field school next year. The same amount of $10,000.00 is budgeted for each program in fiscal year 2004-2005. Students interested in Arabic study will continue to have a choice of three programs in which to participate on summer scholarships: Al-Akhawayn University in Morocco, SINARC in Lebanon, and the Bourguiba Institute in Tunisia. Which options will ultimately be available must continue to depend on a variety of factors. In fall 2004, undergraduate major and MEST scholarship
recipient Sarah Holland (IRL-MEST) will study at the American University in Cairo. Sarah will be supported by her MEST scholarship, as well as by supplemental scholarship funds that she won in competition across the university (see above).

Curriculum. Curriculum changes implemented in fiscal year 2002-2003 are now in place and will be added to the 2005-2006 edition of the Catalog of Studies. The new MEST gateway course, MEST 2013 “Gateways to the Middle East,” was approved and offered with great success this year by former MEST Associate Director Joel Gordon. This course has been incorporated as a requirement for all MEST majors entering the program from academic year 2003-2004. An introduction to Islam, MEST 2003 “Islam in History, Practice, and Experience,” was also approved this year and will be added to the 2005-2006 Catalog of Studies. With the submission of these most recent courses, the simplification of the MEST curriculum, long sought by the MEST core faculty, will be complete. Requirements for the MEST major and minor will now be as follows:

Requirements for the MEST Major (30 hours): MEST 2013, Gateways to the Middle East (3 hours) + MEST 4003 (Middle East Studies Colloquium, 3 hours) + 6 hours of Arabic beyond the Fulbright College language requirement (ARAB 2013) + 9 hours in one MEST-related discipline (as listed in the Catalog of Studies) + 9 hours in a second MEST discipline (as listed in the Catalog of Studies)

Requirements for the MEST Minor (18 hours): MEST 4003 (Middle East Studies Colloquium, 3 hours) + 6 hours of Arabic beyond the Fulbright College language requirement (ARAB 20013) + 9 hours of MEST courses in one or more disciplines

2. Center Development Activities

In fall 2003 the University was informed that the King Fahd Center, along with its partners the department of Political Science and the Sam M. Walton School of Business, had won the following grants from the U. S. Department of State:

1. “Development of Graduate Programs in Public Administration and Public Policy for the University of Tunis I,” $190,514.00 for a three-year project ending in spring 2006, PI: Vincent J. Cornell, Co-PIs: Todd Shields, Chair of Political Science, and Donald Kelley, Director of the Fulbright Institute for International Relations.

In an aide-memoire signed on May 1, 2004 by the Principal Investigators and Dr. Abdelwahed Trabelsi, Director of the Institut Supérieur de Gestion (Higher Institute of Management), University of Tunis I, the teams from Political Science and Public Administration committed themselves to the creation of the following programs over three successive years:

b. Masters in E-Government and Information Technology (2005)

c. Development of the existing Association and NGO Management program at the University of Tunis (2006)

In each area, grant-sponsored activities will include the development of the scope and mission of the program, the creation of appropriate curricula and syllabi, the creation of websites that will link Tunis I and University of Arkansas faculty, the development of case studies, a discussion of the legal, cultural, and ethical issues pertaining to the programs, the formation of internship programs, and the organization of workshops and conferences culminating in the publication of relevant research and instructional materials. The grant also provides for the acquisition of relevant library materials for University of Tunis I and the creation of instructional websites and other distance education mechanisms.

During the three-year life of the program, faculty from both universities will exchange short-term and/or full semester visits to consult on the development of these three programs.

2. "Development of Strategic Partnership for the Development and Delivery of Executive Education Programs and Undergraduate Core Curriculum Revisions for the Central University (Université du Centre) of Tunis at Sousse," $100,000.00 for a two-year project ending in spring 2005. This grant was won in partnership with the Walton School of Business, PI: Joseph Ziegler, Chair of Economics and Director of International Programs, Co-PI: Vincent J. Cornell, Director of the King Fahd Center.

In fall 2003, the Walton College launched an "enterprise approach" to business education for its undergraduate students that integrates all relevant disciplines, including accounting, economics, finance, information systems, management, and marketing and logistics. To develop the program, Walton College created new interdisciplinary courses in business foundations, data analysis and interpretation, principles of microeconomics, principles of macroeconomics, markets and consumers, acquiring and managing human resources, production and delivery of goods and services, acquiring and managing financial resources, and business strategy and planning. This new "enterprise approach" to business education will be introduced to the Faculté des Sciences Economiques et de Gestion (Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences) in the Tunisian city of Mahdia. In addition, administrators and instructors in the Executive Education Program of Walton College will introduce their methods to the faculty of Institut Supérieur de Gestion (Higher Institute of Management) in the Tunisian city of Sousse. Both
institutions are branches of the Tunisian University of the Center, which has its administrative headquarters in Sousse.

This spring, three faculty members from the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences at Mahdia visited the University of Arkansas campus for 24 days to begin the development of a pilot integrated undergraduate business core curriculum. Dean Dr. Ali Fredj, Department Chair, Mekki Hajlaoui, and Dr. Zied Farza represented FSEG. The Tunisian team met with many UA faculty members in the Walton College of Business and the King Fahd Center as well as with executives of the Dean’s Business Advisory Board and at Wal-Mart’s world headquarters to get an overview of business education at a modern American university. Most of the time was budgeted for interaction with the faculty course development teams who are in the process of designing and preparing materials for integrated business core courses that will be offered next year, as well as with faculty who are currently teaching the first of the integrated courses this semester—business foundations and data analysis. This summer, a designated faculty member from the Higher Institute of Management at Sousse visited the University to begin coordinating visits of the Executive Education teams.

3. Fulbright Persian Instructor. In fall 2003 Kay Pritchett, Chair of Foreign Languages and KFC director Vincent Cornell collaborated in writing a Fulbright grant application to secure an instructor in the Persian language for academic year 2004-2005. This was a new grant line to provide instruction in strategic, less-commonly-taught languages by bringing to the United States proficient speakers and instructors at the senior graduate student level. The graduate student would teach the language at an American university for 20 hours per week, would be mentored in language pedagogy, and would be mentored in advanced research by faculty members at the host university. The University of Arkansas won the grant, and sought through the King Fahd Center’s partnership with the Faculty of Oriental Studies at St. Petersburg State University in Russia, to obtain the services of Konstantin Vasilitsev, a senior Ph.D. candidate and experienced instructor at SPSU. He would have been mentored in language pedagogy by Research Associate Professor Rkia Cornell and in his Islamic Studies research by Professor Vincent Cornell. Unfortunately, the Fulbright program cancelled the Persian part of the language grant competition at the last minute, so Vasilitsev was unable to come. However, Professor Pritchett, as PI, has been informed that plans are afoot to reprise the program next year, and that the University of Arkansas is first on the list to receive a Persian instructor in academic year 2005-2006.

4. The Journal of Islamic Law and Culture. This journal has been published for several years by De Paul University Press in Chicago, and is
edited by Dr. Aminah Beverly McCloud, Professor of Islamic Studies and Director of the Islamic World Studies Program at De Paul University. It is rapidly gaining a reputation as an important journal in its field. During a visit to the University of Arkansas in fall 2003, Dr. McCloud expressed dissatisfaction with the way De Paul has been handling publication of the journal, and asked whether the King Fahd Center and the University of Arkansas might want to take over publication. Center director Vincent Cornell immediately contacted Associate Professor Stephen Sheppard of the UA School of Law, who is interested in expanding course offerings and opportunities in international law. During a series of informal discussions with Law faculty in the fall and spring, Cornell and Sheppard found a significant interest in this journal, if its publication does not negatively impact the Law School’s budget. As a way of meeting one of Law’s concerns, Cornell committed himself to teach a course on Islamic law for the Law School every second year. In recognition of his service to the Law School, he was named Adjunct Professor of Law for the semesters in which he teaches the course. According to the proposal that will be submitted to the Law faculty in fall 2004 by Sheppard and Cornell, students who have taken Cornell’s Islamic law course will make up the editorial staff of the journal, and will receive LAW credit for their work, much as do students who serve on the Law Review. If space cannot be found in the building that houses the Law Review, the King Fahd Center will provide desk space and equipment for the student editors, either in 105 MAIN or on the third floor of ASUP. In addition, the Center has budgeted $5,000.00 per year to pay any costs of the journal that are not covered by subscriptions. This amount may be raised up to a ceiling of $10,000.00 in case of emergencies. Larry Malley, Director of University of Arkansas Press, has promised Sheppard that UA Press will take on all responsibilities of production and fulfillment once copy-edited content is supplied. Aminah McCloud of De Paul University will retain her position as Editor-in-Chief, with Cornell and Sheppard as Associate Editors. JoAnn D’Alisera, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and member of the King Fahd Center core faculty, has also consented to serve on the editorial board of the journal. At the present time, Professor McCloud is assisting Sheppard and Cornell in preparing the formal proposal to be submitted to the Law School. Plans are to begin producing the journal at the University of Arkansas by spring 2005 if the Law School approves of the proposal. In the unlikely event that the Law School does not approve, Cornell and Sheppard will look into the feasibility of producing the journal through the King Fahd Center alone.

5. **Muslim Networks Consortium.** In fall 2002, the King Fahd Center became a founding member of the Muslim Networks Consortium, a consortium of 15 major U.S. centers and universities with scholars specializing in the study of Muslim networks. First based at Duke University and based next year at the University of North Carolina, Chapel
Hill, the consortium sponsors a publication series with University of North Carolina Press entitled, "Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks." The first published volume of the project, *Muslim Networks: From Hajj to Hip-Hop*, edited by miriam cooke and Bruce Lawrence, will appear in fall 2004. Vincent Cornell, Director of the King Fahd Center, is the author of one of the lead essays in this volume. The second consortium meeting was held at the end of January 2004. Tom Paradise, the new Associate Director of the King Fahd Center, attended the meeting and is now assisting network members on issues relating to geography and cartography. Future projects of the consortium include such subjects as Islam and Secularism (Emory University, 2005), Inter-civilizational Dialogue (American University in Cairo, 2006), and Muslim Ethics (Duke University, 2007). Interested faculty of the King Fahd Center are encouraged to take part in this consortium with a view to hosting a project at the University of Arkansas in the future.

6. **Friends of Nekhen.** Since spring 2003, the King Fahd Center has been the US home of Friends of Nekhen. This organization supports the Hierakonpolis Expedition, an archaeological project that is excavating the largest pre-dynastic site in Egypt. Nekhen is the ancient Egyptian name for Hierakonpolis. The King Fahd Center took over this responsibility from the Milwaukee Public Library at the recommendation of core faculty member Jerome Rose, who received major funding from the National Science Foundation for his participation in the Hierakonpolis project. At no cost to KFC, except for the administrative time involved in maintaining a separate account for subscriptions and donations, the center’s institutional support for this project partners the center—and by extension, the University of Arkansas—with the Egyptian Studies Association, based at the British Museum in London. Friends of Nekhen publishes a newsletter called *Nekhen News*, which is edited by Renée Friedman of the British Museum, who is also the director of the Hierakonpolis Expedition.

7. **The Elijah Interfaith Institute.** In cooperation with the Faculty of Religious Studies at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, the King Fahd Center became a founding partner of the Jerusalem-based Elijah Interfaith Institute at its inaugural meeting of world religious leaders in Seville, Spain, December 14-17, 2003. This institute represents the next step in the evolution of the Elijah School for the Study of Wisdom in World Religions, which was founded by Dr. Rabbi Alon Goshen-Gottstein, the son of the one of the most respected Torah scholars in Israel. The King Fahd Center has been a partner of the Elijah School since fall 2001. The Board of Directors of the Elijah Interfaith Institute comprises more than 40 religious leaders of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. It includes such luminaries as H. H. the Dalai Lama, Dharma Master Hsin-Tao, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold of the U.S. Episcopal Church, Archbishop Carl Gustav Hammer,
Primate of Sweden, Metropolitan Kiril of Smolensk, H. H. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Sefardi Chief Rabbi of Israel Eliyahu Bakshi Doron, Chief Rabbi of Haifa Shear Yashuv Cohen, Mufti of Bosnia Dr. Mustafa Ceric, Sheikh Nazim al-Haqqani and Sheikh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani of the Naqshbandi Sufi order, Dr. Abdurrahman Wahid, former President of the Republic of Indonesia, and W. Deen Muhammad, president of the American Society of Muslims. The December gathering in Seville was the culmination of a two-year think tank project on the subject: "Religion Society and the Other: Hostility, Hospitality, and the Hope of Human Flourishing." King Fahd Center director Vincent Cornell, a member of the Elijah think tank, presented the keynote paper on Islam at this conference. Also in attendance was Research Associate Professor Rkia Cornell, who was also a member of the think tank. From June 29-July 10, 2004 Vincent Cornell participated in the first session of the second Elijah think tank, held in Barcelona Spain, on the subject of "The Crisis of the Holy." On July 8-9, the members of the think tank presided over two major sessions at the 2004 Parliament of the World’s Religions, also held in Barcelona.

Participation in the Elijah Interfaith Institute helps bring international prominence to both the King Fahd Center and the University of Arkansas by putting the university at the center of one of the most important world interfaith projects currently being undertaken. Dr. Othman al-Rawwaf, representative of the Saudi Ministry of Education, expressed strong approval of the KFC-Elijah partnership during a visit to Fayetteville in early December 2003. Although neither permission nor approval is sought from Saudi Arabia for any of the center’s partnerships or activities, it is gratifying to know that our Saudi interlocutors understand the need for such projects. Now that the MEST program and the Religious Studies program at UA are both maintained by the King Fahd Center, one hopes that other faculty members from MEST and RLST will become involved in the current think tank or other projects that arise as part of the KFC-Elijah partnership. The King Fahd Center has offered to host the second meeting of the “Crisis of the Holy” think tank in Fayetteville in April 2005.

8. Religious Studies Program. In January 2004, King Fahd Center director Vincent Cornell was appointed Chair of Studies of the Religious Studies Program by Dean of Fulbright College Donald Bobbitt. Since that date, RLST has operated completely within the King Fahd Center, with its own advisory committee and core faculty, which overlap somewhat with the MEST core faculty. Professor Cornell held an introductory get-together and potluck dinner for the RLST faculty on July 18, 2004. At this meeting, two major goals for the RLST program in academic year 2004-2005 were discussed:

a. The creation of a RLST co-major, along the lines of the present MEST undergraduate co-major. Currently, RLST is a Fulbright College minor program. No campus of the University of
Arkansas system currently offers such a major, which presently can only be found at Hendricks College. According to discussions held between Professor Cornell and members of the press in Little Rock over Christmas break 2003, there is strong interest throughout the state of Arkansas for such a major at the Fayetteville campus, especially after the tragedy of September 11, 2001.

b. Arranging a meeting with Fulbright College development director Dina Woods to discuss raising endowment funds throughout Arkansas to support the Religious Studies program. Royal A. Govain, Executive Director of External Affairs at the Montreal Neurological Institute of McGill University, and former development director of Harvard Divinity School, has volunteered to visit the University of Arkansas at cost to advise on fund raising for Religious Studies. The King Fahd Center hopes to arrange a weekend retreat in academic year 2004-2005 where Dina Woods and Royal Govain, along with a representative from University Development, could discuss fund raising possibilities with the RLST faculty.

For academic year 2004-2005, the King Fahd Center has budgeted $10,000.00 to cover expenses for RLST, including visiting speakers. Center director Cornell is also trying to integrate some of the RLST faculty more closely into projects such as the current Elijah initiative of “The Crisis of the Holy.” Currently, the structural position of RLST is somewhat awkward, in that it is still considered part of the Humanities program, although HUMN no longer provides budgetary or administrative support for RLST. Under these circumstances, it seems advisable to take a new look at Humanities and see whether RLST might be better placed as an undergraduate degree program within the King Fahd Center. The center would then administer two programs, MEST and RLST, which would have considerable overlap, especially because of the King Fahd Center’s partnership with the Elijah Interfaith Institute and involvement in other interfaith initiatives, such as the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Christian-Muslim dialogue. HUMN might then be paired with other relevant programs, such as Comparative Literature, which currently stands alone. In any case, it seems to be time to look into the interrelationships among the various programs and centers within Fulbright College to see if a more rational articulation might be devised.

9. “St. Petersburg: Window on the Russia(s).” In July 2003, King Fahd Center director Vincent Cornell, along with MEST faculty members Rkia Cornell and Tom Paradise spent a month in St. Petersburg to fulfill the requirements of the Office of Education grant entitled, “St. Petersburg: Window on the Russia(s),” won by Cornell and Fulbright Institute of
International Relations director Donald Kelley. Other participating faculty included Richard Sonn, Henry Tsai, Robert Cochran, and Peggy Guccione from the University of Arkansas, and three faculty members from Bard College. During this period, the group attended seminars on St. Petersburg by noted faculty from Smolny College and St. Petersburg State University, and met with administrators of Smolny College to coordinate a summer program in St. Petersburg to be held in summer 2005. Because of its ongoing partnership with the Faculty of Oriental Studies at SPSU, and an interest in the Muslims of Russia, the King Fahd Center will provide financial help to Russian Studies and the Fulbright Institute in advertising and promoting this summer program in fall semester, 2004.

10. Rkia E. Cornell Development Trip to Morocco. At the end of May 2004, Research Associate Professor of Arabic Rkia E. Cornell accompanied three UA-Fayetteville students and one UA-Little Rock student who were to study Arabic at Al-Akhawayn University in Morocco. While there, she met with administrators of Al-Akhawayn and officials of the Moroccan Ministry of Higher Education to discuss the King Fahd Center’s partnership with Al-Akhawayn and agreements with the Ministry of Higher Education. At Al-Akhawayn she met with Provost Driss Ouauoucha and Dean Mohammed Dhahabi. A major focus of discussion was the possibility of partnering in external grant applications (as the center has successfully done with Tunisia) on subjects such as women in Islam, community development, and the US-Morocco free trade agreement. They also discussed the visit of AUI professor Abdellah Chekayri to the University of Arkansas in spring 2005 and the joint advanced Arabic reader project being undertaken by Rkia Cornell of UA and Mohammed Bounajma of Al-Akhawayn. At the Ministry of Higher Education, Rkia Cornell met with Said Belkadi, the Ministry interlocutor with UA, who suggested collaborating in workshops on business policies and global economics. These seem to be good possibilities for grant applications by the King Fahd Center and the Walton School of Business, once the current grant project with Tunisia is completed.

Rkia Cornell also met with professor Saida Benani of Université Hassan II in Casablanca, who studied at the University of Arkansas for more than two years as part of the UA-Moroccan Ministry of Higher Education agreement. She also met with Research Professor Hayat Kara, of Muhammad V University in Rabat, who is currently applying for a research Fulbright to the University of Arkansas in fall 2005. In addition to the UA-Morocco connections maintained by professors Cornell, Professor Tom Paradise of Geosciences has been in regular contact with Moroccan scholars, both at the National Seismic Center in Rabat (Director Ben-Brahim) and at Muhammad V University, in connection with his ongoing research into earthquake preparedness and perception in that country. Last year Michael Frus, a student in geosciences, completed an MA thesis
on earthquake preparedness that was based on research supported by the King Fahd Center in Agadir, Morocco.

11. **Thomas R. Paradise Development trip to Tunisia.** From May 15 to June 2, 2004, King Fahd Center Associate Director Tom Paradise was invited to Tunisia to discuss the possibility of creating a cultural resource management and architectural restoration project that will utilize American and European specialists in collaboration with the Tunisian Ministries of Patrimony and Tourism, and the University of Tunis, University of the Center and University of Tunis El Manar. Academics and government officials who met with Paradise included Professor Houcine Jaidi (University of Tunis 1) Tunisia's leading Roman cultural site expert, and Justin McGuinness (American University of Paris), a renowned regional scholar and author of the North African *Footprints* Guides. Both men were instrumental associates and will become future collaborators. Such a program would integrate the Republic of Tunisia's growing tourism industry with effective archaeological site visitation, conservation and restoration.

12. **Thomas R. Paradise appointed Associate Director.** Effective July 1, 2004, and with the approval of Fulbright College Dean Donald Bobbitt and Associate Dean Charles H. Adams, center director Vincent J. Cornell appointed Professor of Geosciences Tom Paradise to a two-year term as Associate Director of the King Fahd Center. Paradise has been one of the most active and imaginative members of the center core faculty since coming to Arkansas in 2000. A specialist on the Jordanian archaeological site of Petra for more than 20 years, he is now focusing his research on North Africa, particularly Morocco and Tunisia. His disciplinary focus on the physical and social sciences will provide a useful complement to Cornell's focus on the humanities. During his tenure, Paradise will chair the committee for the King Fahd Center website and newsletter and coordinate grant applications and other development initiatives in the social sciences.

3. **The MEST Core Faculty**

The core faculty of the King Fahd Center and MEST program has added three members (underlined):

1. **Charles H. Adams** (Associate Professor of English, Associate Dean of Fulbright College) North Africa in American Literary Culture, North Africa and the Middle East in the Western Imaginary

2. **Jacob Adler** (Associate Professor of Philosophy) Judaic Studies, Ancient Near Eastern Languages (Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic)
3. Jesse Casana (Assistant Professor of Anthropology) Archaeology of Turkey and the Middle East

4. Lynda L. Coon (Associate Professor of History) Early Christianity in the Arab world and Mediterranean basin, Late Roman Empire, sainthood in late antiquity, gender and sexuality

5. Rkia E. Cornell (Research Associate Professor of Arabic Studies) Arabic language pedagogy, Quranic studies, women in Islam, linguistic and cultural aspects of Berber nativism

6. Vincent J. Cornell (Professor of History and Director of the King Fahd Center) Islamic Studies, Religious Studies, history of Islam in North Africa and Iberian peninsula, Islamic Mediterranean and Middle East, Islamic theology and philosophy, Sufism, Islamic law, Islamic modernism in Middle East and Southeast Asia

7. JoAnn D’Alisera (Assistant Professor of Anthropology) Islam in Africa, Anthropology of Religion, Muslim transnational communities

8. Mounir Farah (Professor of Education) Curriculum and development, diplomatic history of the modern Middle East

9. Najib Ghadbian (Assistant Professor of Political Science) Politics of the Arab world, Islamic movements, international politics of the Arabian Gulf

10. Joel Gordon (Associate Professor of History) Modern Middle East, Egypt in the Nasser era, popular culture, Middle East media studies.

11. Hugh T. Halman (MEST Research Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Islam) Religious Studies, Islam, Comparative Religions, Asian Religions

12. Adnan Haydar (Professor of Arabic) Arabic language pedagogy, comparative literature, modern Arabic literature, oral poetics

13. Mohja Kahf (Associate Professor of English) Comparative literature, modern Arabic literature, women’s studies, orientalism

14. Thomas Paradise (Professor of Geosciences and Associate Director of the King Fahd Center) Geomorphology, cultural geography, human and natural impacts on cultural and natural resources, weathering of architectural monuments, geography of Middle East, geological and geographical studies of Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco

15. Margaret Reid (Associate Professor of Political Science) Director of the Middle East Public Administration graduate program
16. Jerome Rose (Professor of Anthropology) Biological Anthropology, bio-archaeology, forensic anthropology, archaeology of Jordan and Egypt

17. Stephen M. Sheppard (Associate Professor of Law) International Law, Laws of War and Conflict, Associate Editor (with Vincent Cornell) and Law Advisor for staff of The Journal of Islamic Law and Culture (in negotiation)

18. Ted Swedenburg (Professor of Anthropology) Cultural anthropology of the Middle East, social and critical theory

19. William F. Tucker (Associate Professor of History) Medieval Middle Eastern history, Shiite Islam, ecological and environmental history of the Islamic world, socioeconomic history of the pre-modern Mediterranean

20. Rembrandt Wolpert (Professor of Music and Director of the Center for the Ethnomusicology of Asian and Middle Eastern Music) Chinese and Silk Road musical traditions

In January 2004, Assistant Professor Saïda Bennani of Hassan II University, Casablanca, Morocco, completed her research project on “Communicating Islam in America.” She was supported by the King Fahd Center as part of an ongoing agreement between the University of Arkansas and the Moroccan Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. She is completing her Doctorat d’Etat in Morocco under the direction of UA Professors Robert Wicks (Communication) and Vincent J. Cornell (History, KFC Director).

In spring 2005, Associate Professor Abdellah Chekayri of Al-Akhawayn University is scheduled to replace Research Associate Professor Rkia E. Cornell, who will be on leave to complete two research projects for publication. This will be the second time that an Arabic professor from Al-Akhawayn University has visited the University of Arkansas as part of our institutional partnership. During her leave, Professor Cornell will make a reciprocal visit to Al-Akhawayn University to complete an Advanced Arabic reader that she and Dr. Mohammed Bounajma had begun during his visit to UA in 2002-2003.

Faculty Grants, Awards, and Major Publications

Lynda Coon was awarded a prestigious National Humanities Center Fellowship for academic year 2004-2005.

Rkia E. Cornell was nominated for the “Best Teacher” award by the Teacher Appreciation Committee of the Student Alumni Board.

Vincent J. Cornell was named Alexander Robertson Fellow for 2005 by the School of Divinity, University of Glasgow, Scotland. In March 2005, he will deliver the Robertson Lecture in Glasgow. Although the Robertson lectureship was originally designated “in defense of the Christian faith,” Cornell will lecture on
"Islam and the Law of Peoples" and hold seminars on Islam and Christian Relations.

JoAnn D’Alisera published her first monograph, *An Imagined Geography: Sierra Leonean Muslims in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), pp. 1-181. This work has received very favorable initial reviews.

Mounir Farah has received a Fulbright Award for work in Jordan and Syria during academic year 2004-2005. Unfortunately, he has not provided details of this award to be included in this report.

Hugh T. Halman received a Fulbright Teaching Award (Senior Scholar) for academic year 2004-2005 at Universitas Islam Negeri (State Islamic University) Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, Indonesia. While in Indonesia, he will advise the administration and faculty of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah on the creation of a program in Comparative Religion.

These and other MEST faculty members also published or had accepted for publication articles in leading journals in Middle East Studies or their respective disciplines. They delivered papers and participated in major international conferences and workshops, and served on the editorial boards of leading journals and the governing boards of leading scholarly organizations.

**Faculty Development Support**

MEST continues to support faculty development. Because of the continuing budget crisis, faculty development accounts for 2004-2005 will remain at the reduced level of $2,000.00. Chairs of committees with heavy time commitments, such as the center Director and Associate Director, or the chair of the Publications and Translation Award committee, may receive a supplementary increase in their development accounts commensurate with the extra time necessary to carry out their duties. In addition, faculty members may apply to the King Fahd Center office for extra funds (if available) to deliver papers at international conferences, depending on availability of funds.

The King Fahd Center will also provide support for graduate students to present papers at regional, national, or international conferences whenever possible.

**Faculty Committees**

As part of their participation in the program, MEST core faculty members will be assigned to serve on at least one committee apiece. Committee assignments will be redistributed in August for academic year 2004-2005. The latest committee assignments are as follows:

1. **Executive Committee**: V. Cornell, Paradise, and Adams

2. **Publications and Translation Award**: Gordon (chair), Kahf, Paradise, Larry Malley (Director of UA Press), and V. Cornell
3. **Outreach:** Ghadbian (chair), Halman, Farah, Swedenburg, Wolpert

4. **Arabic:** V. Cornell (chair), R. Cornell, Paradise, Haydar, Kay Pritchett (Chair of Foreign Languages), Joan Turner (FLAN Associate Chair)

5. **Undergraduate Awards:** V. Cornell (chair), Gordon, Adler, Coon, Haydar

6. **Graduate Awards:** V. Cornell (chair), Tucker, Paradise, D’Alisera, Farah

7. **Web Site and Newsletter:** Paradise (chair), Gordon, R. Cornell, V. Cornell, Suzanne Wall (KFC administrative assistant)

**Faculty Advising**

Center faculty members are assigned as advisers to MEST majors. Whenever possible, they are assigned students who are pursuing second majors in their departments or in related fields. For example, History majors are assigned to MEST faculty in History, Anthropology majors to MEST anthropologists, etc. At present, each faculty member advises approximately four to five MEST majors. They are to meet with their advisees each semester to ensure adequate progress through the major and to help the students devise a coherent course of study. Tracking sheets are now available to help keep the MEST program informed of advising decisions.

**4. Visiting Speakers and Special Events**


2. September 23, 2003— “Omar Bashir, Prince of the Oud,” concert co-sponsored by the King Fahd Center and the Department of Music.


6. October 2, 2003— “Post-War Iraq and the Role of the European Union,” Henry McLeish, Consultant Economist and former First Minister of Scotland. Lecture co-sponsored by the King Fahd Center and the Center for European Studies.
7. October 6, 2003—“Road to Nowhere: Journeys through Palestine,” a Fletcher/Jacobs film, co-sponsored by the King Fahd Center and Lemke Department of Journalism.

8. October 8, 2003—Study Abroad Fair. The King Fahd Center hosted a table with information on study abroad opportunities and scholarships.


12. October 27, 2003—“Appropriate Appropriations? Israeli Star Performs Music by Egypt’s Beloved Diva,” Amy Horowitz, Professor of Ethnomusicology, Ohio State University. Lecture co-sponsored by the King Fahd Center and the Department of Music.


15. January 30, 2004—“Pulp Fiction: Novelists, Cops, and Lawyers during Egypt’s 1920s,” Elliot Colla, Professor of Comparative Literature, Brown University, and Editor of Middle East Report.

16. February 20, 2004—“Muhammadiyah: Reviving the Spirit of Renewal in Indonesia,” Nelly Van Doom-Harder, Associate Professor of World Religions, Valparaiso University, Professor of Religion, Free University of Amsterdam.

17. March 5, 2004—“Peacemaking and Peacemakers,” panel discussion and town hall meeting. Virginia Gray Henry Blakemore, Director, Fons Vitae Publishing; Omid Safi, Assistant Professor of Religion, Colgate University; Vincent J. Cornell, Director of King Fahd Center; Hugh Talat Halman, Research Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies and Religious Studies.

18. March 29, 2004—“Israel, the Quest for Peace,” Dana Kursh, Vice-Consul of Israel.

20. April 1-9, 2004—“From Casablanca to Tokyo,” cultural week co-sponsored by J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences, King Fahd Center, Department of Foreign Languages, Center for the Study of East Asian and Middle Eastern Musics, The Multicultural Center, and University of Arkansas School of Law.

21. April 3, 2004—Arabic Film Series, “Salama fi Khayr (Salama’s All Right),” part of “From Casablanca to Tokyo” week.

22. April 6, 2004—“Poetry and Song,” Mohja Kahf, Associate Professor of English, part of “From Casablanca to Tokyo” week.

23. April 8, 2004—“Women at War” Seminar: “Women’s Jihad after 9/11,” miriam cooke, professor of Asian and African Languages and Literature, Duke University; “Strength and Decency of the Bosom-Women at War: Isabel Allende’s Eva Luna and Anna Segher’s Das Schilfrohr,” Susanne Taylor. Co-sponsored by the King Fahd Center, Center for Latin American Studies, and Department of Foreign Languages. Part of “From Casablanca to Tokyo” week.


25. April 9, 2004—“The Islamic Law of Terrorism,” Sherman Jackson, Associate Professor of Near Eastern Studies and Law, University of Michigan. Part of “From Casablanca to Tokyo” week.

26. April 9, 2004—Third Annual Arabic-Japanese Speech Contests, Cultural Program and Awards Presentation, co-sponsored by J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences, King Fahd Center, Department of Foreign Languages, Center for the Study of East Asian and Middle Eastern Musics, The Multicultural Center, and University of Arkansas School of Law. Part of “From Casablanca to Tokyo” week.

Third Annual University of Arkansas Arabic-Japanese Speech Contest, April 9, 2004. The 2004 Arabic-Japanese speech contest was the most elaborate held to date. It was also the most successful and well attended. An entire week, from April 1-9, 2004, was devoted to the theme, “From Casablanca to Tokyo.” Activities included, voice recitals, a music workshop, a Chinese chamber music concert, an Asian and Middle Eastern film festival, music concerts, a cultural expo, and a series of lectures, detailed above. The week culminated in speech contests and award presentations on April 9, which were attended by Dan Coody, Mayor of Fayetteville, Hitoshi Kawahara, General Consul of Japan in New Orleans, Provost Bob Smith, and Fulbright College Associate Dean Charles Adams. Although the King Fahd Center contributed the majority of funds for speakers, including Maurice Grossman from the University of Arizona, who gave a demonstration tea ceremony and a lecture on Japanese
ceramics, significant support also came from the Department of Foreign Languages, the Department of Music, the Multicultural Center, and the Law School. KFC/FLAN faculty member Rkia E. Cornell and FLAN faculty member Tatsuya Fukushima were primarily responsible for organizing the events and running the speech contests. Along with KFC staff, center director and associate director Vincent Cornell and Tom Paradise also contributed significant help for the Arabic Speech Contest and award presentation.

5. Arkansas Arabic Translation Award

No award was given in calendar year 2003. The outside panel of judges unanimously agreed that the few submissions received in that year did not meet the quality required for the award. Prospects are much better for calendar year 2004. At least five strong submissions were received in late fall 2003 and spring 2004. These appear to be so good that even a second-place submission might be of publishable quality. If an award is made, as expected, the winner will be announced at the November 2004 meeting of the Middle East Studies Association in San Francisco.

The Arkansas Arabic Translation Award carries a $5,000.00 award for the translator, with an additional $5,000.00 also awarded to a living original author. Submissions are solicited for significant works of 19th-21st Century Arabic literature, broadly defined to include fiction, non-fiction works in the literary tradition, and academic works of note.

6. King Fahd Center Web Site

In spring 2004 center director Vincent Cornell hired a professional outside consultant and web designer to produce a new web site for the King Fahd Center. Over a period of approximately three months, and at modest cost, Philadelphia web designer Derrick Von Schlegell designed a very handsome and easy to use web site that met the specifications required by Fulbright College. The Newsletter and Web Site Committee, chaired by Tom Paradise, also provided advice and assistance. This web site can be found at http://www.uark.edu/depts/mesp/. The site contains full information on the center, including lists of faculty and courses, programs of study, requirements for MEST majors and minors, and instructions for those applying for scholarships, assistantships, and graduate programs. There are also links to King Fahd Center institutional partners and library resources, such as the Kenneth Brown Collection. On-line copies of the last two issues of the center newsletter are also available. The site will be updated on a regular basis each academic year.
7. King Fahd Center Newsletter

A third edition of Ilham, the King Fahd Center Newsletter, is nearly complete and will be printed in August 2004. This issue will cover news and events in academic year 2003-2004, plus course offerings for fall 2004. A temporary delay in printing was caused by multiple virus infections in the Dell computer devoted to newsletter layout and design. A digital version of the third newsletter will also be available on the Fahd Center website, while the hard-copy version of the newsletter will be completed once Computer Services cleans the viruses from the hard drive in the machine, which is connected to a dedicated Lexmark color laser printer.

8. King Fahd Center Institutional Memberships

American Institute of Maghrib Studies
American Research Center in Egypt
American Schools of Oriental Research
Middle East Institute
Middle East Outreach Council
Middle East Studies Association
Muslim Networks Consortium
National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations
Palestinian American Research Center (PARC)
Southeast Regional Middle East and Islamic Studies Seminar

9. Outreach.

King Fahd Center core faculty members have continued to maintain strong media relations and other outreach activities at the local, national, and international level. Faculty members gave interviews for local TV network affiliates and newspapers, and have been called upon by national services, as well as international radio and satellite television services. Najib Ghadbian continues to act as a regular analyst for al-Jazeera, while Tom Paradise is regularly contacted by CNN and the Gannett News Service regarding contemporary issues on the Middle East oil crisis, North African natural disasters (Al Hoceima earthquake) and cultural resource issues throughout the region (Baghdad National Museum looting). Two major international magazines had recent cover stories on Paradise’s Jordanian research. Domenica di Corriere (Italy’s leading national weekly magazine) and GeoTimes (Geological Society of America’s monthly
glossy for Earth Science professionals and academics) interviewed Paradise for his decade of research in Petra.

A significant aspect of King Fahd Center outreach is participation in the national Model Arab League, held every spring in Washington, D.C. A report on this year’s meeting by UA delegation member Rom Hashimi follows below:

A Report about National Model Arab League
Washington, DC, March 31-April 3, 2004

The Model Arab League (MAL) is sponsored by the National Council for US-Arab Relations (www.ncusar.org) is a forum for college students to experience the behind-the-scenes politics of multinational bodies. MAL is organized in various committees for which member countries provide delegates. These delegates represent the interests of their countries when dealing with issues and problems facing the Arab world. Such issues include: the status of Arab women, educational and environmental concerns, terrorism, keeping the peace among member states, and a variety of other issues in the name of Arab unity. There is always a lively debate in these committees.

The University of Arkansas King Fahd Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies sponsored the MAL country of Egypt. After intensive preparation under the direction of Dr. Najib Ghadbian the delegates departed for Washington D.C. on March 31, 2004. Below are comments and observations made by the delegates in their mission to the nation’s capital.

Social Affairs Committee, Ashley Welch

The Social Affairs committee was kept very busy by the topics presented at this year’s conference. A bill introduced by the delegates from Libya regarding social welfare and regional access to medical benefits and administration was passed by a large majority. Under the issue of fighting unemployment among youth in the region, three bills were passed, the first of which, sponsored by Qatar, created public works projects both regionally and within individual states (road maintenance and building, maintenance of public spaces, etc). A second bill sponsored in part by Djibouti, Egypt, Libya and a few nations created a regional fund for sending qualified students to trade and technical schools in order to shore up the labor force and give students opportunities to pursue meaningful careers. All of the resolutions that passed through the Social Affairs Committee also passed with large majorities on the floor of the League itself. Overall, I think a lot of progress was made, and the effort that all of the delegates put into creating and amending the resolutions presented was evident in the success of these bills.

Committee of Ministers of the Interior, Dalal Sakaan
The Committee of Ministers of the Interior had a very successful year in MAL. The overall effort of the delegates was positive, although differences arose between delegates from countries in conflict. The majority of the sessions were devoted to the topic of terrorism. Four resolutions were proposed and three of them passed. These resolutions created a program in which the Arab states could voluntarily exchange information in the effort to combat terrorism, a body to analyze this information, and a program in which Arab nations with stronger military capabilities would voluntarily assist nations in need. The third topic on the agenda dealt with the Horn of Africa. Although there was not a great deal of time to focus on this topic, some differences were resolved through the passing of a bill which created a monitoring group to aid Arab nations in the Horn of Africa.

Joint Defense Council, Shane Hughes

I was the delegate for the Joint Defense Council at this year’s MAL. This was my first year, and I was very anxious to find out how well people and countries work together to pass resolutions. I was extremely disappointed by the initial session when everyone tried to establish their influence. Many of the delegates went out of their way to call every single point of order, making progress in the initial stages of the summit very difficult. However, once the delegates settled down, and realized that the only way to make the meeting productive was through cooperation, many positive resolutions were passed. The JDC passed resolutions regarding the conflict between Israeli troops and Palestinians at the Al-Aqsa mosque, reaffirming the Arab World’s desire to eliminate terrorism and money laundering, the desire of the Arab League to bring UN peacekeeping troops to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and support of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 regarding the Al-Qaeda terrorist group. Other resolutions addressed the elimination of WMDs and Israel’s abuse of water rights in the West Bank and Jordan River.

Environmental Affairs Committee, Rom Hashemi

The Environmental Committee was probably the least contentious of all the committees at the MAL. There was an understanding among all of the delegates from the Comoros Islands to Lebanon and Iraq that the environment is the most neglected aspect of national and trans-national policies in the Arab world. Realizing this neglect did not stop the committee from sticking to the agenda and finding innovative solutions to the Arab world’s water shortage problems, raising awareness of the environment through education, revising damming practices and providing incentives for companies to abide by pollution regulations. As the end of the committee sessions came near many resolutions were passed hastily and everyone left on good terms. In fact, I still keep in touch with the delegation from Palestine.
Council of Palestinian Affairs
Kristina Velcikova & Brian Hennelly

The PA Council worked productively according to its agenda, even though the agenda was not completed at the end of the conference. The first resolution emerged from the recent assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin in Gaza. Our delegation, representing Egypt, strongly condemned the assassination and demanded that Israeli stop all aggressive action against the people of Palestine. The other two resolutions dealt with assessing the Road map for Peace and the formulation of an appropriate Arab response to increased Israeli aggression and the construction of the West Bank Barrier. The Committee’s goal was to move beyond paper language to action applicable in real life.

Overall, the MAL experience of the Arkansas team was successful as most of the resolutions sponsored by Egypt were passed. Ms. Ashley Welch was awarded an Honorable Mention for her outstanding work on the Social Affairs Committee. With the help and support of Dr. Najib Ghadbian, Al-Jazeera was on hand to observe the Arkansas delegation and those of the other colleges and universities attending. MAL has been instrumental in providing a learning experience for students interested in Political Science and Middle East Studies. I would highly recommend that the University of Arkansas continue its participation next year.

Al-Jazeera was expected to air a report on the 2004 Model Arab League sometime close to the upcoming Arab summit on May 22, 2004.

On behalf of the UA delegation, Rom Hashemi

Other Outreach activities continue to take King Fahd Center faculty outside Northwest Arkansas. KFC director Vincent Cornell has been heavily involved in major international interfaith forums in the wake of 9/11 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Over the last academic year he participated in the following activities and events:


March 29- April 1, 2004- Participant and discussant for the “Third Building Bridges Seminar: A Meeting of Muslim and Christian Scholars,” convened by The Most Reverend and Right Honorable Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, and hosted by John J. DeGioia, President of Georgetown University, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.


December 14, 2003- “Convivencia Then and Now: Lessons and Limits for Contemporary Interfaith Relations,” keynote address delivered at Elijah Interfaith Academy Meeting of Board of World Religious Leaders, Seville, Spain.


April 7-9, 2003- “Listening to God Through the Qur’an,” keynote lecture and commentaries on Qur’an 2:62, 3:1-7, and 3:113-115, for “Second Building Bridges Seminar,” hosted by His Highness the Amir of the State of Qatar and convened by Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, Doha, Qatar.

Center faculty, in addition to pursuing their ongoing research agendas, also continue to devote scholarly energies to print, on-line publications, and web-sites, including encyclopedias, map projects, and other instructional media designed to reach a broad audience. Two faculty members, Swedenburg and Halman, still take to local airwaves with their KXUA radio shows on world beat and devotional music. Tom Paradise and Vincent Cornell were each interviewed on the National Public Radio program “Todd Talk” with Todd Feinburg. In August 2004 an extended interview with Vincent Cornell will appear on the NPR radio program, “Speaking of Faith.”
Tom Paradise continues his pro bono cartographic work on the Middle East and North Africa for a number of University Presses, and National and International agencies including the U.S. State Department, UNESCO, University of Arkansas Press, and Jordan’s Royal Geographic Center.

10. Library Development

Despite the budget crisis, the King Fahd Center budgeted $20,000.00 to provide books, subscriptions, and other materials for Mullins Library in fiscal year 2003-2004. The same amount will be budgeted for fiscal year 2004-2005. To be as fair as possible for the needs of all KFC core faculty and their disciplinary interests, each faculty member was allotted an $800.00 budget to order library books for the year. The remaining funds were used to cover journal subscriptions and to pay for windfalls that occasionally make their appearance. Special attention is given to the purchase of Arabic works on Islamic Studies and Middle East history when funds are available. A new emphasis has been given since last year to the purchase of books in Judaic Studies outside of Europe and the U.S. Core faculty member Jacob Adler has been particularly helpful in identifying key works of Jewish philosophy and religion.

EPILOGUE

Although the King Fahd Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies has been severely affected by university budgetary restraints, students in and/or supported by the Center continue to excel in their related studies, research and activities, while our core faculty continues to create and teach a creative and germane curriculum, conduct related outreach, and carry out important and relevant research. Moreover, local, regional, national and international visibility continues to grow as our reputation as an up-and-coming Middle East research and informational center matures.