# COLUMBIA GLOBAL CENTERS | MIDDLE EAST

# Annual Report





#### **Letter from the Director**

November 2010

Dear members of the CUMERC community,

Since its launch in March 2009, the Columbia University Middle East Research Center (CUMERC) has embarked on a myriad of initiatives and activities, and has sought to generate the participation of a range of Columbia schools to create opportunities for faculty to engage in onsite research and for students to experience the Middle East firsthand. This endeavor would have never been imaginable if it were not for two individuals with incredible visions for education and the evolving role of academia in today's global society: Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah and Columbia President Lee Bollinger.

I am honored to share our first Annual Report, which describes the foundation that has been built over the past year and a half, and illustrates the Center's key initiatives to date.

Looking ahead, our priorities are to intensify our research programs through the establishment of institutes in several fields, become more regional in our scope, and explore joint programming with our sister centers in Paris, Beijing, Mumbai, and others as they materialize.

We are deeply indebted to our hosts, donors and partners.

I invite you to read through our Annual Report, and look forward to the Center's further growth and impact with your support.

Sincerely,

Professor Safwan M. Masri

Director

Columbia University Middle East Research Center

#### **HISTORY AND CONTEXT**

The Columbia University Middle East Research Center (CUMERC) was established in March 2009 as one of the first Columbia Global Centers—a major initiative launched by the University to expand Columbia's international presence. The Center was launched under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah and was created because of the realization of President Lee Bollinger and a number of other University leaders that Columbia needed to learn more about the world around it and engage more fully with global partners.

With its headquarters in Amman, the Center serves as a hub for programs and educational initiatives throughout the Middle East. These activities serve mutually beneficial ends: the Center offers Columbia students and faculty opportunities to expand scholarship, and its work contributes to knowledge exchange and skill development with academics, experts and practitioners throughout the region.

#### The Global University

The last half-century of technological innovation and increased global trade has dramatically changed the context in which institutions of higher education operate. However, the structure of the university has not kept pace with globalization or technological changes, and many institutions are still relying on a 20<sup>th</sup> century infrastructure to tackle 21<sup>st</sup> century realities. Leaders at Columbia began asking what the university should look like in 2050, in 2070, and this line of questioning inspired the realization that new structures needed to be put in place to leverage the opportunities and tackle the challenges that will face future generations.

Columbia University, founded in 1754, has been an international institution for nearly all of its history. Columbia scholars have engaged in formal Chinese study since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, for example. For more than 60 years, it has operated the School of International and Public Affairs and research institutes focusing on Eurasia and on Southeast Asia. It formalized Middle Eastern Studies in the 1950s and became a world leader in the field in the 1970s, with the scholarship of Edward Said and others. Today, international students comprise 21% of University enrollment, and Columbia's international population—including students, interns, faculty, visiting scholars, and accompanying family members—consists of more than 10,000 individuals from 150 countries.¹ To maintain the University's status as one of the world's leading institutions of higher education in the years ahead, it is necessary to establish a deliberate approach regarding international engagement.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "International Student and Scholar Population: Fall 2009," produced by the International Students and Scholars Office, Columbia University Office of the Provost. (Most recent available)

A number of universities have come to this same conclusion and have adopted a specific strategy in response: the *branch* campus. This model of internationalization calls for establishing an outpost of the home university in a foreign country, re-creating the school's academic infrastructure, soliciting student enrollment, and often generating significant revenue. The creation of this parallel, "franchise," institution has become a popular trend in recent years. Last year, there were over 150 such branch campuses around the world.

While the long-term success of these educational experiments remains to be seen, several compelling critiques have emerged. First, the need to recreate entire campuses is expensive to sustain and can drain resources of the home university. Second, the academic standards of the home university are difficult to manage in an international context, and some students report concern that the "brand" of their degree from a branch campus will not hold as much weight as from the home institution. Third, branch campuses are typically grafted onto foreign locations with little reflection of the culture or characteristics of the new environment. This mode of academic exportation risks bearing resemblance to educational colonialism and fails to take advantage of the learning opportunities inherent to operating in new, international contexts. Finally, branch campuses can create strains on an additional, finite resource: faculty time. In order for these overseas institutions to have academic vitality and attract high-caliber students, it is necessary to retain a critical mass of faculty, but creating such density on a branch campus can siphon talent away from the original campus.

Rather than follow in this trajectory, Columbia University chose to create an entirely new model: the Global Centers. President Bollinger, in particular, had the vision and remarkable foresight to realize a new model of global education was needed, leading him to spearhead an innovative model that no university has tried before. He entrusted Professor Kenneth Prewitt with the leadership of this initiative as Vice President of Columbia's Global Centers, and drew on the experience and expertise of Professor Safwan Masri to help realize this vision.

The Centers are nimble hubs that provide a foundation for students, faculty, affiliates, and alumni to explore academic opportunities. Because the Centers do not have the structural rigidity of the branch campus, they allow the University to increase its global scope and enrich diversity of academic experience, while maintaining strong connections with the home campus. Perhaps more importantly, the Centers also represent multi-directional learning: Columbia is not simply thrusting education onto a new environment; instead, through the Global Centers, it becomes a partner in its international contexts. The experience of opening and operating the Centers allows members of the Columbia community the opportunity not only to impart knowledge and expertise, but to learn.

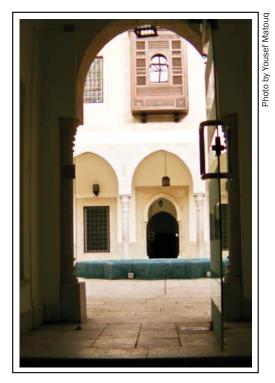
#### **Location: Middle East**

From the outset, there was little question that the Middle East was ripe with opportunities—and needs—for implementing this global strategy. From renewable energy to nuclear proliferation, some of the most important global issues are rooted in the region. Establishing a foundation in the region is essential in terms of understanding recent geopolitical trends, improving East-West understandings, and promoting religious and cultural tolerance. Likewise, the Middle East needs a great deal of investment and innovation in education. By the year 2050, 44 million people in the region will need jobs. Some estimates have indicated that providing economic opportunities to satisfy the youth population in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region will require creating 100 million new jobs in the coming years. One of the greatest challenges facing the Middle East involves creating social and educational infrastructures that can handle its young population. In Jordan, 37% of the population is under the age of 15; in Iraq, that number is 41%, as compared to 20% in the United States.2 And though the region once boasted the world's first libraries and impressive educational traditions in engineering, medicine, and literature, the legacy of scholarship in the Middle East has suffered from neglect and insufficient funding for centuries.

#### **Columbia Global Centers**

There are currently four Columbia Global Centers operating in Amman, Beijing, Mumbai, and Paris, which cover the regions of the Middle East, East Asia, South Asia, and Europe respectively. Following the launch of the first two Centers in Amman and Beijing in 2009, Columbia opened Global Centers in Paris and Mumbai this year.

The European Center, opened in March 2010, is located at Columbia's historic Reid Hall, which has welcomed students, scholars, and faculty since it was bequeathed to the university in 1964. Victoria de Grazia, Professor of History, is serving as Acting Director of the Columbia Global Centers | Europe, until a search for a permanent director is initiated. The Center for South Asia, also launched in March 2010, serves as a hub for the region and is directed by Dr. Nirupam Bajpai, Senior Development Advisor at Columbia's Earth Institute. The East Asia Center was launched with the Middle East Center in 2009, and is directed by Geng Xiao, who most recently served as the Founding Director of the Brookings-Tsinghua Center for Public Policy at the School of Public Policy and Management of Tsinghua University. The Center has initiated major projects in genomics, architecture, and public policy. Additional Centers in Central Asia, Africa, and South America are planned for the next few years. The University is also exploring with its friends in Turkey the possibility of a establishing a Global Center in Istanbul. For more information on the Global Centers, please visit http://globalcenters.columbia.edu/.

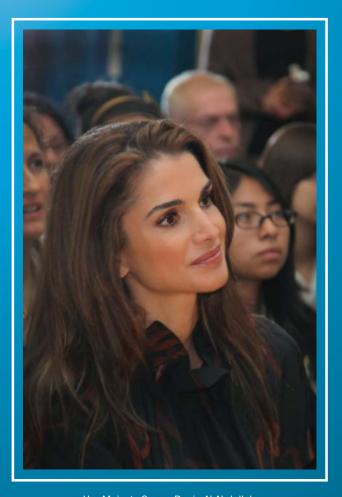


View of the Center's courtyard

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> http://www.globalhealthfacts.org/topic.jsp?i=82#table

A number of choices exist in terms of locating a center in the MENA region—from Marrakech to Muscat. The choice of locating the Center in Amman was determined primarily on the basis of one influence: Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah. Her Majesty has been a tireless champion of education and progressive reform for the nation, and for the region as a whole. Under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II and Her Majesty Queen Rania, Jordan has become a model for reform in areas such as ensuring the welfare of families, women, and children; advancing education; and initiating processes of rigorous, systemic reform. Her Majesty made the facilities for the Center available, which created more freedom for Columbia to focus resources on academics.

President Bollinger's commitment and efforts in advancing education globally meant that he already recognized the vast potential Jordan had to offer. In the assessment of Columbia's leadership, the positioning in Amman offered both the flexibility and proximity to develop relationships across the region, from North Africa to the Gulf, as well as the opportunity for more engaged study of troubled areas that claim considerable global attention such as Iraq and Palestine. Its headquarters in Jordan affords the Center a wide network of contacts and opportunities for expanding operations and forging new partnerships, and the regional experience and connections of the Center's Director, Professor Safwan Masri, offer an additional base of strength and support.



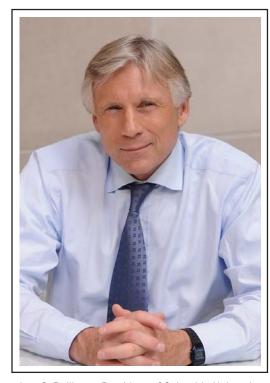
Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah

### **PHILOSOPHY & VISION**

When Lee C. Bollinger became President of Columbia University in 2002, he immediately began instituting programs, drawing up plans and hiring faculty and deans that are making the University thrive. Advocating for a larger institutional commitment to broadening the University's global perspective, he was determined to find a way to give students and faculty a way not just to learn, but to get out in the world, and *engage*. This marked the inception of a network of Global Centers strong enough to enact this vision.

One of the hallmark features of the Global Centers model is that it utilizes a partnership mode to establish and expand activities. Because of Her Majesty's support, the Center launched with a strong foundation of connections within Jordan, from government ministries to development-oriented Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). In addition, Her Majesty's initiatives to improve educational opportunities and promote reform are already aligned with the goals of the Center. Therefore, mutually beneficial partnerships were abundant at the outset.

Strengthening relationships with local and regional stakeholders, from government ministries to UN agencies to local universities, requires discussions among constituents and members of the Columbia community to identify needs and opportunities. This process of



Lee C. Bollinger, President of Columbia University

relationship building offers few ready-made solutions. But the philosophical decision to cultivate partnerships has a strong upside: the programs and research that arise from such a context are customized and responsive to the local community, which in turn provides better learning opportunities for students and scholars.

# **Regional Expansion**

The vision for the Center involved establishing a strong foothold in Amman and using this base to expand regionally. This process allowed Center staff members to build in-house expertise in program development and regional customization. The Center's staff has helped build and expand partnerships throughout the Middle East with institutions such as the American University in Cairo (AUC), the King Abdullah Economic City in Saudi Arabia, regional chapters of the Young Presidents' Organization, Birzeit University in the West Bank, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, and the American University of Sharjah.

In addition, the Center has developed strong linkages with local institutions such as the University of Jordan and Jordan University of Science and Technology. This local and regional engagement involves two-way exchanges: the Center's leadership and staff connect with leaders of these institutions on both formal and informal bases. Formally, the Center makes a concerted effort to build its network of partners through conferences and speaking engagements. These relationships are also pursued through site visits, one-on-one meetings, and online exchanges. In addition, the Center also works to bring in regional experts and leaders to host lectures and conferences as well as conduct more informal visits to the Center. These connections provide a foundation of shared understandings on which a number of partnerships are being pursued.

On the basis of this strong foundation, the Center is continuing to widen its circle of activities throughout the region by formalizing existing partnerships, such as launching research in conjunction with AUC, and by building trust with a broader set of partners. In the coming months, the Center's goals include expanding regionally to increase the university's presence and activities throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Partnerships have already been developed in Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Turkey, and the UAE, among other locations, and the Center expects several announcements regarding pan-regional activities in the coming months. Furthermore, the Center's involvement in the Global Soil Mapping Initiative showcases a project that will draw from 25 countries across the region.

# **Discipline-Specific Depth**

Staff members are focusing on deepening expertise in several core subjects in collaboration with Columbia faculty. Each senior staff member maintains a portfolio that includes a set of schools and subject areas. This structure allows continuity in relationships between the Columbia Global Centers | Middle East and New York, and it also helps Center staff cultivate a set of contacts in relevant disciplines in the region.

In addition, the Center is focused on developing capacity and programming depth in several specific disciplines such that, within a couple of years, master's degree programs will be available via the Center, in partnership with Columbia schools. To support this disciplinary focus, the Center has also recognized the need to establish several formalized institutes in fields such as public health, education, and sustainable development practice. These institutes would potentially support advanced degree programs, as well as extend the expertise the Center can offer to its partners in government, academia, and the private sector. In the first year of operation, two such institutes have already been established: the **Institute for Scholars** and the **Amman Lab**. The success of these entities suggests both the need and opportunity to expand into additional disciplines that are priorities in the Middle East.

#### **Engaging the Columbia Community**

Part of the vision of the Global Centers is to create a set of Columbia outposts that will serve the University's undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty. One of the main areas of activity for the Center has been to raise awareness that members of the Columbia community have a new home in the Middle East. In the initial year of operation, much work was devoted to introducing deans, student groups, and other constituencies to the concept of the Global Centers. The Center invited faculty to visit Amman, give lectures, and participate in meetings with regional leaders in their respective disciplines. These faculty members and deans gained new insight not only about the type of activities they could initiate in the region, but also about the diversity of applications of their disciplines. These visits frequently established a basis for future programming. For example, visits by Teachers College President Susan Fuhrman helped spark an ongoing collaboration that has trained over 1,000 school teachers in Jordan. Meetings conducted by

Columbia University School of Social Work (CUSSW) Dean Jeanette Takamura established a foundation for a comprehensive training program, series of research initiatives, and an advising role for CUSSW in the region.

This method has proven to be an incredibly successful means of strengthening partnerships and building programs, and the Center has been active in continuing to promote this work. Both Dean Mark Wigley from the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (GSAPP) and Dean Carol Becker from the School of the Arts have visited Amman on a number of occasions to encourage programming, and their visits inspired trips by many other faculty for research and teaching purposes. In the coming months, Center staff will focus on expanding the regional base of contacts and working with faculty in law, medicine, and journalism in particular to increase the range of schools represented.



Dean Mark Wigley accompanies Her Majesty Queen Rania and President Lee Bollinger on a tour of the newly-launched Columbia Global Centers | Middle East in March 2009

The Center will also focus on outreach activities that increase undergraduates' awareness and participation with the Center's activities. This summer, the Center offered its first Arabic Language Program to undergraduate students from Columbia and other institutions. Further, in the summer of 2011, the Center will offer a five-week Summer Ecosystem Experiences for Undergraduates Program, in conjunction with the Earth Institute's Center for Environmental Research and Conservation. To mobilize undergraduate participation in the future, Center staff plan to work with student groups and enrich internship connections, in addition to expanding the number and variety of summer courses and programs offered at the Center. Because of the broad range of disciplines represented, the Center can engage a large number of students, rather than exclusively target those who are specializing in Arabic language or Middle Eastern Studies.

#### **Engaging Local and Regional Communities**

In addition to serving students and faculty of Columbia, the Center also strives to contribute to its national and regional communities. With its strong foundation in Amman, many of its activities are aligned with Her Majesty's development goals and educational priorities. For example, staff members are conducting background research, drafting convening papers, and recently organized a major conference to strengthen higher education in Jordan. Dean Jeanette Takamura and CUSSW faculty are serving as advisors to a government commission creating Jordan's first-ever code of ethics for the profession of social work. GSAPP faculty and students have researched, conducted site documentation, and are planning a preservation initiative to convert a historic home in downtown Amman into a cultural center and "Columbia House." Regionally, Teachers College has forged relationships with academics in the region, and signed an agreement with an organization in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the purpose of supporting the establishment of a teacher academy and the development of its activities and teacher training programs. The Center's research roundtable series is likely to be extended within the Levant, and its architecture programs have engaged students from Jerusalem to the Gulf. These projects offer just a sampling of the concrete connections the Center helps to forge between academics and regional opportunities—for the benefit of Columbia and for the region.



Her Majesty Queen Rania pays a visit to JSWEEP course, "Advanced Social Work Perspectives on Family Violence," in February 2010

### **Global Centers Linkages**

The unique approach of the Global Centers model affords an additional, emergent set of opportunities as the Centers begin to interact and coordinate programming. With the linkages in New York, Beijing, and now Paris and Mumbai, the range of possible programs expands to an even greater degree. The technological resources of Columbia's Global Classrooms and the Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning provide meaningful ways to launch collaborative courses and examine global problems in a range of concrete, applied settings. Because this approach has never been tested before, it is hard to know in advance what kind of educational opportunities and developments could arise. However, Columbia has chosen to explore this trajectory, and the Columbia Global Centers | Middle East strives to be a leader in collaborative programming and serve as a vibrant partner in this process of exploration. Conversations are already underway with the Global Center for South Asia about joint activities related to water and education.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

#### The Facility

The Center's physical campus is a stately, 45,000 square-foot building in the Dabouq region of Amman. The building contains an auditorium that seats approximately 140 guests, multiple conference rooms, nearly a half-dozen classrooms, and staff offices. The Columbia schools that have been most active in Amman have been dedicated office space on the second floor of the facility that overlooks an interior courtyard. GSAPP has held at least five studio courses and involved at least a half-dozen faculty in the Center's activities, so to support these offerings, part of an upstairs wing has been dedicated to GSAPP's **Amman Lab**. The **Amman Lab**—which includes a studio, conference room, and faculty office—is connected to GSAPP's global network of *Studio-X* facilities, which promote research, education, and experimentation about the built environment.

The Center also has videoconferencing capabilities that can be configured to classrooms, conference rooms, or the auditorium depending on program needs. In addition, the grounds include an adjoining teaching annex, which has several lecture halls that hold roughly 40 people each, in addition to a set of breakout rooms. Through an agreement with *Ahya'a* Amman, a local developer, CUMERC has access to various accommodation facilities for visiting professors and students. The first is the Qubaisi house, an old home located in Jabal Amman just off the first circle. CUMERC usually offers this accommodation option to visiting students, and occasionally to faculty who visit Amman on university-related business. The Qubaisi house can host up to 12 individuals comfortably and is within walking distance from numerous bars and restaurants. The Center also has access to the Heritage Residence, an apartment hotel located in the

#### Studio-X

Studio-X is an innovative GSAPP program that aims to create a set of laboratories devoted to studying the future of the built environment. These studios are designed to become incubators of energetic thinking in the city and an interface for direct interaction with colleagues from around the world. According to GSAPP Dean Mark Wigley:

The vision of the Studio-X global network is to establish a unique exchange of ideas and people between key regional leadership cities around the rapidly evolving globe, including Beijing, New York, Moscow, Amman, Sao Paolo, Mumbai, and Accra. The aim of this exchange is a global partnership able to offer support to the highest possible level of reflection on the new realities and active, intelligent, and productive engagement with those realities.

The **Amman Lab** already serves as the home of a dynamic set of activities ranging from historic preservation to urban poverty alleviation and community building.

heart of the city on Rainbow Street, used mainly for visiting faculty. The Heritage Residence has three different types of apartments; studio, one bedroom, and two bedroom apartments, and offers these to CUMERC at discounted rates. Further, the Center has made long-term deals with several residential hotels that offer housing options to large groups of visiting students, such as those enrolled in summer courses and programs.



An exterior view of the Columbia Global Centers | Middle East from Moh'd Al Sa'd Al-Batayneh St. in the Dabouq region of Amman

One of the Center's development plans includes the transformation of the Ibrahim Hashem House in downtown Amman into the "Columbia House." The Center has been granted access to this historic property, once the home of the Hashemite Kingdom's first Prime Minister, and GSAPP students have begun documentation and planning, in collaboration with a well-known Jordanian architect, to convert the house into a cultural center that would be an anchor in Amman's historic Rainbow District. The facility will be used for hosting guests, displaying exhibitions, conducting roundtables or salon-style discussions, and holding cultural events. It is envisioned that, once completed, the Columbia House will also house a *Studio-X*.



An east view of the Ibrahim Hashem House, situated in one of the oldest neighborhoods of Amman

#### **Funding**

The Center's funding model involves several key features. First, it works to maintain a minimal overhead. The facility, which would ordinarily generate large operational costs, has been made available for Columbia's use by Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah. The Center maintains primary responsibility for upkeep and technology costs, and the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) provides in-kind support by making available utilities, security, and landscaping services. The Center draws on a lean, but committed staff: sixteen professional and program management employees, as well as additional support staff. As a result, daily operational costs are kept to an absolute minimum and are covered through gifts from donors—private individuals as well as institutions—which means that the Center does not rely on Columbia University for day-to-day funding.

Research and education programs are self-funded, often through grants or through gifts from partners. The Center utilizes indirect cost recovery to offset basic operational expenses, and the funding structure for each program differs slightly. Some generate revenue, some operate on a fee-based model, and all are designed to ensure the Center's long-term financial sustainability. This model gives the Center greater flexibility in that it does not rely on central resources for viability. Fundraising efforts in the coming year will focus on developing endowment funding to ensure this financial stability continues for decades to come.

### Leadership

Professor Safwan M. Masri is the Director of the Columbia University Middle East Research Center and Professor at Columbia's Graduate School of Business. Professor Masri joined the Columbia faculty in 1988 and served as Vice Dean of Columbia's Graduate School of Business from 1993 to 2005. His traditional academic expertise has focused on operations management, and much of his recent work has focused on education and business development in the Middle East, with an emphasis on academic and economic reform. Professor Masri earned both his Bachelor and his Master of Science in Industrial Engineering from Purdue University, and his Ph.D. from Stanford University in Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management. He is also Chairman of Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA), Founding Chairman Emeritus of King's Academy, Trustee of International College, and Trustee of the Children's Museum in Jordan, as well as serving on the boards of a number of NGOs.



Professor Safwan Masri, Director of the Columbia Global Centers I Middle East, at his office in Amman, Jordan

#### **CUMERC Team**

The Center currently employs sixteen full-time professional staff to manage programs, enrich academic content, and handle operational tasks. The staff is organized into several teams: the research team, which pursues academic partnerships and research activities and administers the development of the Center's various institutes; the programs team, which manages and develops academic programs in partnership with Columbia University schools, in addition to leading communications efforts; and the operations team, which handles logistics, finances, and event management. The Center also has an information technology office, as well as additional support staff administrative, logistical, maintenance-related tasks.



CUMERC Team (from left to right)
Farrah Bdour, Noor Higley, Hala Zahran, Dr. Mona Taji, Ruba Kalouti, Rula Saidawi,
Muna Issa, Mark Azizeh, Christina Hawatmeh, Jack Rabah (1<sup>st</sup> row)
Samer Suboh, Diala Dabbas, Aya Khairy, Safwan Masri, Rita Salameh, Hanya Salah (2<sup>nd</sup> row)
Not present: Nadine Kharoba, Nadine Nasir, Qais Zasha

#### **Faculty Steering Committee**

The Center is governed by a board of directors of Columbia University senior administrators and receives guidance from the Columbia University Faculty Steering Committee and the Office of Columbia Global Centers. The following individuals comprise the Faculty Steering Committee of the Columbia Global Centers | Middle East:

- Bashir Abu-Manneh, Assistant Professor of English, Barnard College
- Peter Awn, Dean of the School of General Studies and Director of the Middle East Institute
- Zainab Bahrani, Edith Porada Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University
- Carol Becker, Dean of the School of the Arts, Columbia University
- Richard Bulliet, Professor of History, Columbia University
- Thomas Corcoran, Co-Director, Consortium for Policy Research in Education, Teachers College
- Nicholas B. Dirks, Executive Vice President and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University
- Wafaa El-Sadr, Director of the International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs (ICAP)
- Brian Gibson, Assistant Dean, International and Comparative Law, Columbia Law School
- · Rashid Khalidi, Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies and Literature, Columbia University
- David Klatell. Professor. School of Journalism. Columbia University
- **Upmanu Lall,** Director of Columbia Water Center and Alan & Carol Silberstein Professor of Engineering, Columbia University
- Safwan Masri, Professor, Graduate School of Business and Director of the Columbia University Middle East Research Center
- Timothy Mitchell, Professor of Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures, Columbia University
- Ibrahim Odeh, Associate Research Scientist, Department of Civil Engineering and Engineering Mechanics and Special Advisor to Columbia Dean of Engineering and Applied Science
- Kenneth Prewitt, Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs and the Vice President for Global Centers, Columbia University
- Jeanette Takamura, Dean of the School of Social Work, Columbia University
- · Gordana Vunjak-Novakovic, Professor, Biomedical Engineering, Columbia University
- Mark Wigley, Dean, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University
- Portia Williams, Director of International Affairs, Teachers College
- Kathryn Yatrakis, Dean of Academic Affairs and Senior Associate Vice President for Arts and Sciences, Columbia College



Kenneth Prewitt is the Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs and the Vice President for Global Centers at Columbia University. In addition to teaching for many years at the University of Chicago, he has served as the Director of the United States Census Bureau, Director of the National Opinion Research Center, President of the Social Science Research Council, and Senior Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation.

# **Advisory Board**

The Center's Advisory Board also provides oversight and is composed of prominent academics, public figures, and business leaders. The Board meets annually and provides ongoing leadership and counsel regarding the Center's activities. The following individuals comprise the Advisory Board of the Columbia Global Centers | Middle East:

- Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah has been a tireless advocate of educational advancement in Jordan and helped create the vision for establishing the Center.
- His Excellency Kofi Annan, Nobel laureate and former Secretary-General of the United Nations, was named one of Columbia University's three inaugural Global Fellows in 2009.
- Lee C. Bollinger is the nineteenth President of Columbia University and set out the vision for an international network of Columbia Global Centers as part of his strategy to increase the University's presence around the world.
- Ms. Jean Magnano Bollinger is a practicing artist with an academic background in education; she received her master's degree in education from Columbia University's Teacher College.
- His Excellency Amr Dabbagh serves as Governor and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority.
- Ms. Hanzade Dogan founded one of Turkey's leading Internet investment companies and also serves as Deputy Chairman of Dogan Gazetecilik, a leading Turkish media company.
- Professor Meyer Feldberg is a Senior Advisor at Morgan Stanley and Professor and Dean Emeritus of Columbia Business School.
- Her Excellency Dr. Rima Khalaf Hunaidi is the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).
- **Professor Safwan M. Masri** is a professor at the Graduate School of Business at Columbia University and Director of the Columbia University Middle East Research Center.
- Mr. Arif Naqvi is the Founder and Group Chief Executive Officer of Dubai-based Abraaj Capital, which ranks among the world's 50-biggest private equity groups.
- The Honorable Professor Kenneth Prewitt is the Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs and Vice President for Global Centers.
- His Excellency Zaid Al-Rifai is a former Prime Minister of Jordan and a former President of the Senate of Jordan.
- Her Excellency Mary Robinson served as the first woman President of Ireland and was the former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- Mr. Isam Salfiti is Chairman of Union Bank for Savings and Investment, as well as Chairman of the Board of Union Land Development Company and Jordan Hotels and Tourism Company.
- Mr. Savio Tung is Managing Director at Investcorp International Inc., where he oversees the firm's global technology and telecommunication investment activities.
- Ms. Elaine Wolfensohn is an expert in international education and has worked closely with the World Bank on education and gender issues. She also works with the Wolfensohn Development Center at the Brookings Institution.
- Mr. Majdi Yasin received his master's degree from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs in 1997 and runs Yasin Investment Group, a Jordan-based investment company.

#### **ACTIVITIES**

Because of the wide range of partnerships and academic opportunities that have presented themselves, the Center has broadened its scope of activities beyond exclusively research to include four pillars: research, education, applied scholarship, and outreach.

#### A) Research

Enriching the tradition of scholarship is one of the greatest educational needs in the region, and the Center is committed to catalyzing this development. By promoting research, the Center not only builds capacity locally, but also broadens opportunities for Columbia students, faculty, and partners. In its first year, the Center has made progress not only in launching major research initiatives, such as the Global Soil Mapping Initiative, but also in promoting cooperation among research institutes in the region. In the years ahead, the Center will continue to deepen its research base by increasing opportunities for research by Columbia faculty and students, helping researchers generate and publish their scholarship, and strengthening ties among research centers in the region.

#### The Institute for Scholars

This year, the Center established its foundation in research, with support from the Ministry of Higher Education's Scientific Research Fund, by establishing the **Institute for Scholars**, a unique element of the Center that hosts up to 12 visiting scholars and fellows in Amman. These researchers pursue their own projects, which focus on a range of disciplines pertaining to the Center's mission and activities. In addition, scholars contribute to the intellectual vitality of the Center by hosting conferences, discussions, and seminars. In January, the Center formalized the Institute by announcing a call for applicants to its Visiting Scholars and Fellows Program.

The program designates a set of funded research positions and offers the possibility of additional research funding from the Center. Two tiers of positions are available: the Visiting Scholar designation is available to authors or faculty on sabbatical or leave to pursue research projects, and the Visiting Fellow position is tailored to post-doctoral candidates. To be eligible, candidates must be faculty or Ph.D. students of Columbia University or its affiliates, or academics who self-identify as Middle Eastern or live in the MENA region. To apply, candidates were required to submit research proposals and letters of recommendation. From the pool of 26 applications received, 11 awards were granted.

# Institute for Scholars – Visiting Scholar & Fellow Awards

Recipients of Visiting Scholar & Visiting Fellow awards for 2010-2011 were drawn from a distinguished set of applicants, and selection was made on the basis of academic credentials, quality of the research proposal, and overall diversity of scholarship at the Center.

Name	Affiliation	Discipline	Project Focus
Fida Adely	Georgetown University	Gender Studies	Women's labor in Jordan
Leigh Graham	Columbia University	Anthropology & Education	Female education and class issues in Saudi Arabia
Scheherazade Hassan		Ethno- musicology	Art musical tradition of Iraq
Luna Khirfan	University of Waterloo	Urban Planning	Global transfer of urban planning ideas particularly between Toronto and Amman
Tarek Masoud	Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Middle East Initiative	Public Policy	Organization of Jordanian political parties
Muhsin Musawi	Columbia University	Arts & Musicology	Culture of migrating Iraqis
Turki Obaidat	Jordan University of Science & Technology	Engineering	National Higher Education Conference work plan
Sarah Rogers	Smithsonian Institute	Architecture	Modern art in Beirut
Suzanne Schneider	Columbia University	Education & History	Education system in Palestine under the British mandate
Nomi Stone	Columbia University	Cultural Anthropology	Cultural translations in wartime Iraq
Noha Tadros		Arab History & Journalism	20 <sup>th</sup> century Palestinian newspaper ( <i>Falastin</i> )

The program is overseen by Resident Fellow Dr. Mona Taji. In her work at the Center, Dr. Taji focuses on research, partnership development, and coordination of CUMERC's higher education reform initiative, which will fall under the scope of the Center's **Institute for Education**. Once established, the Institute will engage in policy research and coordinate a broad range of education-related activities. She also helps connect affiliates of the **Institute for Scholars** to resources, universities, and research centers in the region, as well as develop relationships with potential donors. Previously, Dr. Taji worked on several World Bank projects in Jordan, starting in 2005 when she joined a supervision mission and prepared a policy paper on higher education in Jordan.

Of the 11 Visiting Scholar and Fellow awards granted for 2010-2011, approximately one half of the recipients have an affiliation with Columbia University, and the fields range from a history of a 100-year-old Palestinian newspaper to a study of education-based change for women in Saudi Arabia. Visiting Scholars and Fellows, whose term at the Center varies from one month to one year, will join the ranks of last year's affiliates of the Institute. In 2009-2010, the Institute hosted the following academics:

- Rima Khalaf Hunaidi, Ph.D., served as CUMERC's first Visiting Scholar. Dr. Khalaf Hunaidi is the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), former CEO of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation, former Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, and former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning and International Cooperation in Jordan.
- **Leigh Llewellyn Graham**, Ph.D. candidate in anthropology and education at Columbia University is a Visiting Fellow at CUMERC, whereby she conducted research for her dissertation, "Strategies, Spaces, and Status: Saudi Arabia's Female Educated Elite as a Driving Force in the Global Knowledge Economy." Graham has been awarded a continuation of her affiliation and will be a Visiting Fellow in 2010-2011.
- **Cairn Verhulst**, MA/MPH, served as a Visiting Fellow at CUMERC from December 2009 until March 2010. Verhulst is a 2009 graduate of Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. Her work focused on assessing the viability of a regional initiative—in association with Columbia's Program on Forced Migration and Health—to provide technical assistance and training in the field of child protection and humanitarian response.

When the Institute was first conceived last year, Iranian architect Kian Tajbakhsh was originally scheduled to join as a Visiting Scholar in conjunction with his appointment to the GSAPP faculty. However, he was arrested in Iran last summer during the protests that followed the Iranian elections and has been sentenced to prison for espionage. This conviction has been criticized by the U.S. State Department, NGOs, Columbia faculty, and others.

Two additional fellows have been accepted by the Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF), which coordinates placements for Iraqi academics to pursue their research and study. Dr. Natik Al-Kubaisy has begun his term at the Institute with a research focus on post-traumatic experiences of the Iraqi population. Dr. Sami Al Kaisi will be

joining the Center next spring to work on a research project titled "Iraqi Policy towards the Problem of Palestine from 1936 to 1958."

In the coming year, new activity will be generated by these academics' work, and the Center strives to utilize their input and expertise to widen its set of offerings. For example, while at CUMERC, Visiting Scholar Professor Muhsin Musawi organized an Iraqi Arts Week in July 2010 in which various prominent Iraqi expatriate artists were invited to discuss and share their work in a well-attended public event. The theme of this Arts Week revolved around the implications and manifestations of nostalgia and alienation evoked in poetry, painting, architecture, and story writing. This event is the precursor to an important conference on the culture of migrating Iraqis that is scheduled to be held in the spring of 2011.

#### Research Training

In addition to establishing the **Institute for Scholars**, the Center also helps promote skill-development of regional researchers by offering trainings and workshops. In December 2009, the Center

#### **Scholar Rescue Fund**

The Institute of International Education (IIE), an independent nonprofit organization that administers the Fulbright Program, has participated in the rescue of persecuted scholars since its founding in 1919. In 2002. IIE launched the Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF) as a formalized response to this ongoing international dilemma. SRF provides fellowships for established scholars whose lives and work are threatened in their home countries. These fellowships allow professors, researchers and other senior academics to find temporary refuge at universities and colleges anywhere in the world, enabling them to pursue their academic work and continue to share their knowledge with students, colleagues, and the community at large. The Center is currently working with SRF not only to secure placements for individual Iraqi scholars, but also to coordinate skill-building workshops and other joint initiatives.

hosted the **Online Research Methods Workshop**, in conjunction with Columbia University Libraries. The workshop trained participants about usage of open-access resources and free internet research tools. It also identified subsets of resources tailored to participants' interests. Approximately 20 researchers from various institutes in Jordan attended the workshop. A seminar in **Quantitative Methods and Data Analysis** was also offered at the Center, with instruction by faculty from Columbia's Institute of Social and Economic Research and Policy (ISERP). The program brought 50 Iraqi scholars, identified by SRF, to CUMERC for training workshops. Instruction focused on research and case studies relevant to higher learning in post-conflict regions, and on topics that affect the development of higher educational systems in Iraq.

This relationship with ISERP has laid the foundation for an additional, two-week research training to be offered in December 2010: **Social Science Research Methodology (SSRM)**. The course will be available to research centers, NGOs, and government agencies such as Jordan's Institute of Diplomacy. The curriculum for the training was developed in coordination with the Center's research roundtable. In addition to these trainings, the Center has forged partnerships with other leaders of research in the region. The **Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA)** held its induction for honored research teams at the Center with input from the Center's research team. Programs took place in both December and April with a follow-up event held in September.

#### **Scholarly Research**

In collaboration with Columbia faculty, the Center develops opportunities to pursue and fund scholarly research studies in and about the Middle East. Given the need in the region to enhance the tradition of scholarly research, this focus is a tremendous priority for the Center. In its first year of operation, considerable effort was devoted to helping Columbia academics identify and pursue funding for research projects in the Middle East, and this will continue to be a major area of emphasis.

The Center has helped generate a major breakthrough in regional research by helping coordinate regional involvement in the Global Soil Mapping Initiative GlobalSoilMap.net. The Center has been working with the Earth Institute, the Jordanian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Jordanian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS), the International Soil Reference and Information Centre (ISRIC), and international scientists to establish the **Institute for Digital Soil Mapping**, which is housed at the Center and started operations in October 2010. The international effort seeks to create a searchable, online map of the world's soil composition. The Center will not only host the national node as the headquarters of research in Jordan, but also the Central and West Asia and North Africa node. This research endeavor involves coordinating data collection from 25 countries—from Morocco to Uzbekistan—and compiling the data in publicly accessible formats. The Center's role in this research initiative was facilitated by multiple visits to the region by Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation contributed \$18 million to compile and digitize Africa's soil composition data, and additional seed money has been raised to expand these efforts globally. As an international initiative, the project will require \$100 to \$200 million, and costs for the region over the duration of five years are projected at \$30 million.



In March 2010, the Center hosted a national workshop to formalize the node's establishment at the Center, and recent meetings with local partners have helped identify a pilot area to launch data collection. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has committed seed funding for the operation of the Institute's national node until the end of the year, as well as 50% of the funding needed for its operation over the next five years. Further, the Ministry of Agriculture will provide in-kind support that entails the provision of staff members to man the Institute, in addition to support of the Center's efforts in fundraising. Next steps in the project include:

- Finalizing secondment of soil scientists from Jordan's Ministry of Agriculture to work at the Institute
- Convening and hosting a regional workshop to announce Central and West Asia and North Africa node at CUMERC
- Positioning Jordan as the host of the 5<sup>th</sup> Global Workshop on Digital Soil Mapping in 2012

Other scholarly research activities underway include a research proposal from the Columbia University School of Social Work, which recently received funding approval from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The study will generate assessments of childhood development in out-of-home care facilities in Jordan, such as juvenile justice centers and orphanages, and establish a baseline set of data. This study is envisioned as a pilot project for a multiyear research investigation on adolescent care.

#### GlobalSoilMap.net

GlobalSoilMap.net, officially launched in February 2009, is an initiative of the Digital Soil Mapping Working Group of the International Union of Soil Sciences and represents the work of an international consortium. The consortium focuses on creating a digital soil map of the world using state-of-the-art and emerging technologies for soil mapping and predicting soil properties at fine resolution. This new global soil map will be supplemented by interpretation and functionality options that aim to assist better decisions in a range of global issues like food production, hunger eradication, climate change, and environmental degradation.

In November 2008, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) provided an \$18 million grant to map most parts in Sub-Saharan Africa, and make all Sub-Saharan Africa data available. From this grant, there are also funds for coordinating global efforts and establishing a global consortium. Several institutions have assumed a leading role in this effort.

The consortium currently consists of the following nodes:

- Sub-Saharan Africa Tropical Agriculture Program of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, World Agroforestry Centre, and Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility Institute
- North America United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Geospatial Development Center in Morgantown, USA
- Latin America & Caribbean National Center of Soil Research -Embrapa Solos Rua Jardim Botânico in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Europe and Eurasia Institute for Environment and Sustainability of Joint Research Centre of the European Union in Ispra, Italy
- Australia and Oceania Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization in Canberra, Australia
- East Asia Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences in Nanjing, China
- Central and West Asia North Africa CUMERC in partnership with the Jordanian Ministry of Agriculture in Amman, Jordan
- No node has yet been established in South Asia

The Center has also begun working with the American University in Cairo (AUC) to deepen research about philanthropy in the region. The partnership was facilitated by a memorandum of understanding signed this spring between the Center and AUC, which will enable further collaboration in various areas including research, conferences, student and faculty exchanges, study trips, among others. A joint study currently underway will include a trends analysis of philanthropic institutions in Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia as case studies and will possibly be broadened to other locations in the Middle East. The research would build on an initial mapping study of institutional philanthropy by AUC. A draft of this paper is expected to be completed by January 2011. It is envisioned that this relationship will also include a regional conference in the spring of 2011 on philanthropy and civic engagement, hosted in conjunction with the Gerhart Center.

Finally, the Center is also working in partnership with Columbia College to offer global core fellowships for Columbia faculty to conduct research in Jordan, and be hosted at the Center.

#### Research Roundtables

The Center also focuses on promoting research in the region by strengthening communities of scholars. To further this effort, the Center has organized a roundtable discussion series for leaders of research centers in Jordan. The meetings, which were initiated in December 2009, provide a forum for participants to discuss the priorities and needs of their institutes, as well as possible ways to share resources and partner in skill-development workshops. As part of its mission, the roundtable collaborates in delivering research training workshops such as SSRM and has agreed to collaborate in the creation of a shared knowledge portal for Jordanian research centers that would expand regionally to include regional research centers. The objective of the portal is to create a virtual space to disseminate knowledge, share opportunities and engage community members in research on an ongoing basis. Discussion is also underway about the possibility of establishing an independent association of researchers and research centers that would develop the portal



Research roundtable convenes at CUMERC in July 2010

as one of its tools and possibly operate with an independent budget and secretariat. This initiative will be further developed in upcoming meetings. Additional goals of the research roundtable include identifying areas for collaboration with Columbia University and proposing appropriate research partners. The roundtable series will also help to identify gaps in skills by conducting a training needs assessment, on the basis of which trainings will be designed to serve the needs of the research community, and assist research centers in the application of newly acquired skills to further their institutional and/or national goals. Preliminary discussions are also underway with leaders in academia and research in the West Bank to host a Palestinian roundtable series, as well as to expand the research roundtables throughout the region. The research roundtable represents just one of the roundtable discussion series that the Center has been leading and organizing.

### B) Education

Several of the Center's most vibrant programs offer training and executive education that draw on the expertise of Columbia University faculty to develop skills, exchange knowledge, and promote learning in and about the region. The Center also provides opportunities for Columbia students to broaden their educational experience through regional study in the Middle East in a variety of fields. As its educational offerings continue to expand and deepen, the Center is formalizing the establishment of the **Institute for Education** to coordinate this broad range of activities. Among the Institute's first activities will be a joint project with the Al Hussein Fund for Excellence (HFE) that entails a review of academic programs in educational studies in universities across the Kingdom.

In addition, one of the main near-term priorities for the Center's work is to develop advanced degree offerings in conjunction with Columbia schools, for which the Center's Middle East location affords unique insight and perspective. Existing and planned education activities include:

# **Queen Rania Teacher Academy**

One of the Center's first major initiatives—pre-dating its official launch in March 2009—was helping establish the Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA), an independent Jordanian institute committed to advancing teacher education and policy deliberation throughout the region. QRTA was established under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah and in partnership with Teachers College (TC), through its relationship with the Center. The linkages among the entities began as a result of the first visit of TC President Susan Furhman to Jordan in 2007 with President Bollinger, following his initial visit in 2006. QRTA is a unique institute because its customized offerings extend beyond simply in-service workshops for teachers or certification programs. Instead, with expertise from TC, QRTA has established a unique set of scaffolded professional development programs through its school networks. These networks-formalized and managed by QRTA-create communities that reinforce and continue developing the lessons of in-service workshops throughout the school year. In its first year of official operation, QRTA made a marked impact on the landscape of teaching and public education in Jordan. Since its inception in 2009, QRTA's network programs have reached more than 1,000 school teachers and educators in Jordan.



Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah at the inauguration of QRTA in Amman in June 2009

The need to ensure high quality pre-service training, for all those who intend to join the teaching profession has been identified as a key priority by Jordan's Ministry of Education (MoE) and is evident in the goals of the larger Education Reform for Knowledge Economy (ERfKE II) initiative in Jordan. In 2008 – 2009, upon the request of the Ministry of Education, QRTA developed a comprehensive plan in partnership with TC and CUMERC for teacher/principal induction programs. The goal of induction programs is to ensure that all newly hired teachers are proficient in basic classroom practices and can, after one year of support, demonstrate progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills required to meet Jordan's National Teacher Professional Standards. The program also aims to prepare principals with the knowledge to become instructional leaders and the skills to create school environments that support effective teaching and learning.

In support of this measure, the MoE has recently launched a six-month *Teacher Pre-Service Training Program and Certificate (TPSTPC)*, in which QRTA and CUMERC play a significant advising role. Holding the program certificate will become, as of June 2011, one of the requested preconditions for teacher recruitment and employment. This summer, QRTA worked with the Education Reform Support Project (ERSP) and their implementing partner, Change Agent for Arab Development and Education Reform (CADER), to lead the MoE induction program for 1,200 teachers. In the coming year, QRTA will continue development of the nation's first-ever induction program for newly hired teachers, in conjunction with TC and with support from the Center. Such trainings by TC faculty have prepared a cadre of local staff to be the next generation of leaders for workshops and training sessions. This knowledge transfer helps boost skill levels in Jordan, enhances the sustainability of the program, and allows TC experts to use their trainings to focus on introducing new material.

The mission of QRTA also includes advancing research and supporting policy reform initiatives in collaboration with the **Institute for Education** at CUMERC. Because QRTA and TC have established an expertise regarding the Jordanian education curriculum, Professor Lucy Calkins, Founding Director of TC's Reading and Writing Project, advised Jordan's Ministry of Education on developing variations in teaching methods and expanding existing lessons. In addition, the **Consortium for Policy Research in Education** (**CPRE**), a US-based education think-tank, conducted a comprehensive impact study on QRTA's programs, and its results will inform and guide future program development.



International Baccalaureate coordinators during QRTA training workshop in August 2010

QRTA and TC have developed unique expertise in customizing teacher training programs for the Arab world in ways that are responsive to local education system constraints. This model leverages the knowledge of each partner—QRTA in regional contexts and Arabic language, TC in providing world-class research and pedagogical insights related to education, and the Center in its base of relationships throughout the region. Through the Center, QRTA has forged relationships in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Palestine, Egypt, and the UAE. In conjunction with TC and the Center, QRTA signed an agreement in September with various partners, including Azzwad, a company registered in Saudi Arabia that is developing a national teacher academy based in the King Abdullah Economic City (KAEC) to provide high quality education offerings starting in 2011. QRTA and TC have also joined forces with Her Majesty's Madrasati Palestine initiative to support the improvement of teaching and learning in the classrooms of twenty Palestinian public schools in Jerusalem that are governed by the Jordanian Ministry of Awgaf and Islamic Affairs (MoAIA).

#### **Higher Education**

The Center is also active in promoting higher education development efforts and reform-related research in Jordan and throughout the Middle East. At the request of Jordan's Ministry of Higher Education, the Center helped engineer, organize and convene a national conference, with the support of the Ministry's Scientific Research Fund, on developing study plans, teaching and learning, student assessment, program evaluation, and technology-enhanced learning. The event, held on June 15-17, 2010 under the Patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah II, brought together more than 500 participants from Jordan and the region to discuss and diagnose core issues in higher education, and propose strategies and solutions for improving the higher education process. Each panel discussion paired a Jordanian educator who shared the experience of local universities with an international specialist who offered insights on relevant best practices from other contexts.

Featured speakers from Columbia's Teachers College included Vice Provost William Baldwin, Associate Vice Provost Catherine Embree, Professor Lou Cristillo, and Professor Ryan Kelsey who offered perspectives on topics such as faculty development and effective usage of technology in the classroom. Also participating was Dr. Karen Baldwin, Associate Professor of Nursing and Graduate Coordinator of Nursing at Mount Saint Mary College. Other external participants, by invitation from CUMERC, represented the University of Toronto, Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands, Birzeit University, and the American University of Beirut.



Associate Director of Education and Research at Columbia University's Center for New Media Teaching and Learning, Professor Ryan Kelsey, offers his insight on developing technology-enhanced learning

In addition to the general sessions and the discussions carried out by the panelists, a session titled "Weaving It Altogether" concluded the Conference and allowed participants to break out into smaller groups corresponding to the different themes of the Conference. Each group voiced their thoughts and opinions on fundamental challenges and shared suggested recommendations.

The perspectives of students on the education process were conveyed in a documentary entitled "Student Voices" displayed during the inaugural session. With the Center's oversight, students also worked on developing the Conference's bilingual website (http://henc-jordan.org/) that makes available the presentations, archived video of discussions, and background documents.

As a key member of the Conference Steering Committee, the Center is spearheading the process of translating the recommendations of the Conference into a draft implementation plan. The draft plan was submitted in July to the Higher Education Council (HEC); the policy advisory arm of the Jordanian Ministry of Higher Education, for review and endorsement. The plan was recently endorsed and will provide a roadmap of next steps for CUMERC in partnership with the Ministry; thus formalizing the Center's role in the arena of supporting higher education development in Jordan. The plan has been distributed by the Ministry to all public universities across Jordan, along with a request for nomination of individuals to carry forward the various components of the plan, in addition to the formation of steering committees responsible for its implementation.



Professor Abdallah Zoubi from Princess Sumaya University for Technology discusses the key issues and challenges of e-learning in Jordanian universities

### **Onsite Learning Programs**

Onsite learning is strongly advocated in the Center's mission statement, and the facilities available allow the Center to hold numerous onsite training programs. A number of training programs are currently underway with the goal that the Center will host degree-granting programs onsite, ideally by the fall of 2012, in addition to the certificate-granting programs the Center currently offers.

• JSWEEP Training – The Jordan Social Work Education for Excellence Program (JSWEEP) is a partnership among CUMERC, CUSSW, Jordan's Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), and other entities. JSWEEP offers a range of programs to professionalize the practice of social work in Jordan, and one of its primary elements is a set of skill-building workshops. CUSSW faculty first developed and offered a course focusing on basic practice, the "Foundations for Social Work Practice," in early 2009 that has been offered three times since then. Approximately 300 frontline workers and supervisors have participated in JSWEEP trainings to date. This initiative has been expanded to include specialized courses focusing on adolescent care, family violence, and management training.

For the second time, the three-day course "Management for Success" was offered in September 2010 to approximately 40 supervisors in the field of social work. The course was coupled with a trainee program that aims to build local capacities by training five committed JSWEEP participants who have successfully completed the course, "Foundations for Social Work Practice," as teaching assistants for future courses. In this role, they will assist in role plays, case studies, and skill development, engage trainees in workshop discussions, and aid in the development of culturally-appropriate course material.

Engagement through this training has given CUSSW the relationships and expertise necessary to play a role in advising the Government of Jordan on creating a code of ethics for social work, as well as launching quantitative research studies. In the coming months, the JSWEEP team will finalize an impact on knowledge-base report that includes an analysis of course evaluations and surveys of social work agencies and program participants, in order to design future training plans with MoSD and other partners. Further, the Open Society Institute (OSI) awarded a grant that facilitated a nine-day visit in October to CUSSW for two participants from Jordanian universities and one participant from MoSD. The purpose of the trip was to learn about graduate social work curriculum, research and field education.



Jordanian Minister of Social Development, Her Excellency Hala Lattouf, Director Safwan Masri and Dean of the Columbia University School of Social Work, Jeanette Takamura, present certificate to participant completing JSWEEP course

Currently, the Center is working with CUSSW to explore new partnerships and develop plans for 2011, in addition to actively seeking funding for JSWEEP's activities and other proposed social work education initiatives.

Finally, a convening ceremony at the Center is scheduled for late November, with participation of JSWEEP Co-Directors CUSSW Dean Jeanette Takamura and Professor Nabila El-Bassel. This event will likely include roundtable discussions with social work experts, a networking activity with JSWEEP participants, and meetings with various partners to discuss program development and future plans.

• Summer Design Workshop - In the summer of 2009, the Center's first-ever onsite workshop in collaboration with GSAPP brought 25 architecture students from New York, the UAE, and Jerusalem to create collaborative design proposals. Students were divided into teams and assigned a target area of downtown Amman. During the three-week program, they created architectural interventions to introduce public space into the urban environment, and their proposals were unveiled to leading architects and urban planners in the region. In 2010, a second iteration of the workshop paired students and faculty from GSAPP with academic partners in Jordan, Palestine, and the UAE. The three-week workshop was held from July 21 - August 5, and enabled students from these different academic and cultural contexts to engage in collaborative studio and fieldwork. Students worked on proposals investigating individual issues of comfort in public space, which were shared with a wider audience at Nabad Art Gallery in Amman on August 5, 2010.



Exhibition of students' final proposals for the Amman Lab: Summer Design Workshop 2010, at Nabad Art Gallery

- Columbia Presidents' Seminar In alliance with the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO), the Center hosted the executive education program "Strategic Leadership" for approximately 40 regional business leaders in March. Instruction was provided by Columbia Business School Professors William Klepper and Eric Abrahamson and focused on providing concrete strategies to improve management techniques. The program is envisioned as the first in a series that CUMERC will offer in conjunction with the YPO, and conversations are underway regarding how to structure and deliver such trainings, both locally and regionally.
- Summer Arabic Language Program In conjunction with the Office of Global Programs, the annual Arabic Language Program, held for the first time this summer, offered 25 Columbia undergraduates, in addition to a number of students from other universities, the opportunity to strengthen their skills in Modern Standard Arabic and Colloquial Levantine Arabic. Students studied at CUMERC and also had opportunities to improve language skills through regional engagement, cultural activities, volunteering, and travel, coordinated by the Center.



Students enrolled in the Summer Arabic Language Program enjoy traditional Arabic food as part of their cultural experience in Jordan

- Arts Program In partnership with Columbia's School of the Arts (SoA), the Center is hosting a series of programs in the arts, spanning from creative writing to photography to film workshops. Activities of the Arts Program include:
  - Film festival focused on regional issues A Critical Mirror: America Looks at the Iraq War (June 2010)
  - Creative writing workshop with Binnie Kirshenbaum, Chair of the SoA Writing Program, and prominent local writers – The Art and Craft of the Short Story (Spring 2011)
  - Undergraduate photography seminar, including visits to ancient sites such as Petra and Jerash (Spring 2011)
- Barnard College Design Studio The Center hosted 12 Barnard and Columbia College undergraduate seniors majoring in architecture for a one-week design studio in October. Students conducted research and documentation on urban issues, which resulted in an exhibition displayed at the Center's Amman Lab, and possibly in New York as well.

#### **Iraq War Film Festival**

From June 9–14, 2010, the Center hosted a series of film screenings, "A Critical Mirror: America Looks at the Iraq War," in conjunction with Columbia's School of the Arts and local partners. The five-night series was curated and hosted by Richard Peña, Professor of Film Studies at Columbia, and award-winning Palestinian filmmaker Annemarie Jacir. Films were paired with guest speakers such as Egyptian film critic Samir Farid, Iraqi artist Kais Al-Zubaidi, local filmmakers, and representatives of Jordan's Royal Film Commission. The films screened included:

- The Hurt Locker (dir. Kathryn Bigelow, 2009)
- The Situation (dir. Philip Haas, 2010)
- Gunner Palace (dir. Michael Tucker, 2004)
- Meeting Resistance (dir. Steve Connors and Molly Bingham, 2007)
- My Country, My Country (dir. Laura Poitras, 2006)
- Global Classroom The Center is working with Columbia's Center for New Media Teaching and Learning (CCNMTL) to develop a Global Classroom partnership. The technology-enhanced classroom experience would combine courses and faculty offerings at Columbia University with onsite instruction in Amman, as well as global student participation through other Global Centers. Leaders of CCNMTL visited the Center in June 2010, in association with the conference on higher education. These experts provided input on ways to strengthen global classroom offerings and linkages with other Columbia Global Centers, as well as strategies for delivering online content for master's degree and executive education programs at the Center.
- College Preparatory Program The Center is working with Columbia's School of Continuing Education to offer a college preparatory program to 20 rising 12<sup>th</sup> grade students from the Middle East who plan to attend university in the United States or Canada. The residential four-week program will likely take place in the summer of 2011, and is designed to provide students with the opportunity to hone college skills needed for the American university experience. This includes: critical reading, expository writing, mathematics with a focus on complex problem solving, and study skills. The program will also include discussions on the cultural aspects related to attending college in the U.S., the college application process, and tips on choosing the college that best suits the student.

• Summer Ecosystem Experiences for Undergraduates (SEE-U) Program – Discussions are underway between CUMERC and the Center for Environmental Research and Conservation at Columbia University's Earth Institute regarding offering the Summer Ecosystem Experience for Undergraduates Program in Jordan. The five-week program is intended to provide Columbia undergraduates with a global understanding of ecology and environmental sustainability, and the opportunity to conduct fieldwork in unique natural settings, both in the U.S. and internationally, in combination with classroom lectures and lab work.

The program is currently offered at a number of sites around the world including Brazil, the Dominican Republic, New York and Puerto Rico. Jordan would be a unique site that offers students the opportunity to study the desert ecosystem, among other habitats in locations such as the Jordan Valley, as well as issues of water, energy and climate change as they relate to sustainable development. At each site, students are required to undertake their own research project, though they work extensively in teams when collecting data in the field. Each student is then required to contextualize their research project within a core issue of environmental sustainability, thus allowing students to experience the interconnectedness of science and sustainability and enhance their understanding through "real-world" application. It is expected that the SEE-U Program will be offered in Jordan in the summer of 2011 to approximately 15 Columbia undergraduates.

- **Business Planning** At the request of Jordan's Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, the Center is working with the School of Continuing Education to develop training workshops on business planning and program monitoring and evaluation that would also draw on the expertise and experience of the Columbia Business School. The trainings will be offered to ministerial staff, as well as to employees at partner NGOs and other organizations.
- Smart Cities Studio Workshop The Center is currently exploring the possibility of offering a three-week Smart Cities Studio Workshop in the summer of 2011 in collaboration with the Earth Institute. The workshop will focus on building and maintaining urban sustainable development through the development of intellectual and social capital.

#### **Development of Degree-Granting Programs**

The Center has invested in planning and conducting programs and executive education offerings, in addition to establishing disciplinary foundations for degree-granting programs that build on previous experiences. These programs would be offered in concert with Columbia University, and would be developed and designed by the faculty at Columbia's various schools. It is envisioned that the Center could begin inaugural coursework for such programs within two years. In part, these offerings have been requested from the regional community: students, NGO workers, government employees, and scholars have called for a greater range of offerings for graduate degree opportunities in the Middle East, and the Center is well-positioned to respond to this opportunity. Further, rooting the Center for a long-term horizon suggests the need to create a continuous set of offerings that will encourage regular and consistent contact with a set of faculty, a regular funding stream, and greater recognition in the region. In particular, three disciplines have emerged: public health and humanitarian assistance, conflict resolution, and sustainable development practice.

Public Health and Humanitarian Assistance – In partnership with the Mailman School of Public Health (MSPH), the Center has been exploring options for building regional capacity in health, nutrition, and child protection, in partnership with local and international institutions. In February, Professor Neil Boothby, Mailman's Director of the Program on Forced Migration and Health, visited Jordan to begin a needs assessment and establish a foundation of partnerships for future programming. Professor Boothby met with several agencies, ministries, and NGOs to discuss the feasibility of continuing education in public health. His work was supported and extended by Cairn Verhulst, Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Scholars, who spent three months at CUMERC helping to develop the program's feasibility study. Program planning and design continued under Dr. Jamie Eliades, a consultant and senior public health professional, who spent July and August at the Center to finalize the feasibility study and identify collaborations and activities. This work will provide the foundation for establishing the Institute for Public Health at the Center.

The Institute will provide technical support and partnership, support operational research, and provide training to address gaps identified by, and in partnership with, local and regional institutions. Activities will support Columbia's ongoing public health work in the region, and work to develop new partnerships. For example, the MSPH has been working with UNICEF on issues of child protection in the West Bank and Gaza strip, and as a result of meetings held at the Center last year, is currently developing collaborations with UNICEF in the area of HIV/AIDS. The Director of Columbia's International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs (ICAP), Professor Wafaa El-Sadr and ICAP experts held their annual meeting at the Center in October 2009. As a result of that meeting, ICAP and UNICEF are working together to develop a proposal to strengthen the capacity of HIV managers in the MENA region on prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and pediatric HIV. Using both in-person training at CUMERC in combination with distance learning will ensure regional accessibility by HIV managers to CUMERC's activities.

It is envisioned that the Center's **Institute for Public Health** will offer continuing education opportunities for humanitarian assistance and public health practitioners and focus on promoting research to affect programming and policy. Further, it will deepen and expand opportunities for Columbia students, as well as help supplement existing public health programs in the region. Conversations are already underway with universities, ministries, and local and international agencies to ensure that Columbia is adding value to existing programs in the Middle East.

**Conflict Resolution** – The Center is also exploring collaborative educational offerings to support the School of Continuing Education's Master of Science in Negotiation and Conflict Resolution. To assess the feasibility of continuing education programs, Paul McNeil, Vice Dean of the School of Continuing Education, Louise Rosen, Director of Academic and Research Programs at the Earth Institute, and Professor Beth Fisher-Yoshida visited the Center this spring. These visits offered professors opportunities to engage in discussions with government ministers, leaders of UN agencies, and members of the NGO community in order to define program beneficiaries and hone execution plans, as well as to explore other potential offerings in the Middle East.

Linkages developed during these visits helped lay the foundation for a series of programs. The first of these is a course that will be offered in conjunction with QRTA in January 2011 that provides conflict resolution techniques for public and private school teachers. In addition, the Center plans to offer dispute resolution training in association with Jordan's Institute of Diplomacy that will build skills of mid-career and future diplomats.

The Center is currently looking into further opportunities with the School of Continuing Education including offering executive education trainings that build off existing master's programs at Columbia University in both sustainability management and information and digital resource management. These will be offered to NGOs, government ministries and agencies, as well as other institutions.

**Sustainable Development Practice** – Even before the Center's launch in March 2009, a strong foundation for collaboration existed with Professor Jeffrey Sachs and the Earth Institute (EI). These linkages, as well as the Center's role in the Global Soil Mapping Initiative, make the Center ideally suited to offer advanced training in topics such as environmental management, resource scarcity, and climate change adaptation. A delegation from EI visited the Center in June 2010, which has resulted in the development of an **Institute for Sustainable Development Practice** which, under the leadership of Professor Sachs, will offer degree and certificate programs, in addition to providing technical advising and promoting academic research focusing on sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Programs will include trainings for various institutions and government ministries on topics ranging from rural infrastructure management to family planning. Working with Jordanian universities, the Institute will also introduce undergraduate and master's degree programs in development practice. Additionally, the Institute will focus on **water resources**, particularly as this pertains to poverty alleviation. Prospective water projects propose the integration of future water source developments into a symbiotic rural and urban joint structure that promotes long-term sustainability.

In parallel to the work conducted under the **Institute for Sustainable Development Practice**, the Center is also exploring other water projects with the Columbia Water Center including launching a study in partnership with government agencies, research centers, and universities in Jordan and across the region, to assess strategies for improving water usage in light of climate risks and examine the economic feasibility of proposed alternatives. Climate change, as well as demographic and economic pressures, have created a dire situation in terms of water scarcity in Jordan: its agriculture sector contributes about 3% of GDP but claims more than 60% of water resources. The prospective study

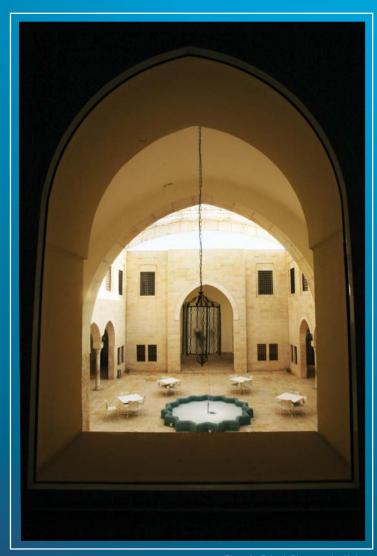


Photo by Zohrab Photography-Abdoun

will inform a set of capacity building and highly-specialized technical training programs that will be offered at the Center to institutions such as the King Abdullah II Center for Excellence (KACE), among others. Some of the key topics to be covered in the trainings may include the use of climate information in the determination of a reservoir's size and expected reliability, as well as the integration of such information into the management of water availability, in addition to the importance of climate variability on precipitation.

In another collaboration, the Center is currently exploring the possibility of supporting the development of a renewable energy master's program at the Princess Sumaya University for Technology (PSUT), through the provision of a certificate program in conjunction with the Earth Institute.

# **C) Applied Scholarship**

The Center also creates opportunities for scholarship and study beyond libraries and classrooms. Applied scholarship projects pair Columbia students and faculty with practitioners throughout the Middle East, working in a variety of sectors, to develop hands-on projects that promote study and expand the range of academic experiences. These projects highlight the range of opportunities that the Global Centers can offer to members of the Columbia community—from excavating a historic property in downtown Amman to engaging with youth groups in underprivileged neighborhoods.

Such activities also strengthen the Center's impact on its communities, by allowing scholars to work in hands-on, applied settings with local experts. In the coming months and years, the Center anticipates broadening its applied scholarship activities to a more extensive set of schools, from the Mailman School of Public Health to the Graduate School of Journalism.

#### **Poverty Alleviation Advising**

At the invitation of Jordan's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), a team of academics from the Earth Institute (EI) visited Jordan for a research mission in June 2010 to assess national poverty alleviation programs. The visit enabled the team to support Jordanian government officials in reforming the country's anti-poverty interventions in both urban and rural environments. Professor Glenn Denning, Associate Director of the Earth Institute's Center for Globalization and Sustainable Development, and his team conducted an initial assessment of the effectiveness of a particular set of policies and provided recommendations on the strategy revision for 2011-2013.

Professor Denning's work gave particular attention to an area of Jordan where poverty levels exceed 40%, compared to the national average of 14%. The EI team has developed expertise in introducing sustainable development practices in such contexts, based on experience with the Millennium Villages Project (MVP) in Africa. MVP specializes in helping communities learn better agricultural techniques and creating economic alternatives that are more efficient from an environmental and resource-consumption standpoint. In addition, this work builds on an initial visit Professor Denning conducted to Jordan in 2008, made possible by funding from the Office of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah. As EI plays a more involved role at the Center with the development of the **Institute for Sustainable Development Practice**, it is envisioned that EI experts will support the design and implementation of a revised policy, as well as advanced training and capacity building. A proposal has been submitted to MoPIC for approval to officially launch the Institute, which will initially focus on identifying intervention options and developing action plans for poverty alleviation across the country's poverty pockets.

# **Ibrahim Hashem House Preservation Project**

This project with GSAPP focuses on preserving and restoring the historic, 1930s home of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's first Prime Minister, Ibrahim Hashem, and serves as a model for the combined opportunities of academic study, international enrichment, and community impact that the Global Centers can harness. The program includes fieldwork, coursework, and a final deliverable that could have a tremendous impact on the historic community in Amman in which the house is situated.

In the spring and summer of 2009, a team of GSAPP students and faculty spent several weeks assessing the site, interviewing descendants and neighbors who remembered the home, and documenting its original plan. A follow-up GSAPP studio course, which was offered with co-instruction from a prominent Jordanian architect,



Architecture experts discuss plans for the Ibrahim Hashem House at the unveiling ceremony at CUMERC in May 2010

built on this foundation by generating plans to restore and transform the Hashem House into a cultural center for use as part of the broader Columbia Global Centers innitiative, and by the local community.

The preservation report and plans for creating the "Columbia House" were unveiled at the Center in May 2010 in a special ceremony that brought together family members, community leaders, and architecture and preservation experts. The primary architect, Ammar Khammash, involved in the project also outlined further plans to prepare the site for rebuilding, and helped to secure the permits needed to begin redevelopment work. Currently, the land is being inspected by surveyors, in order to prepare for renovation.

It is envisioned that the house will become fully functional as a resource for Columbia University and the community within one to two years. It is also anticipated that, once functional, it will house a *Studio-X* that would be connected to other advanced research laboratories in GSAPP's global network around the world, as well as to the **Amman Lab**.

#### **Hashem House Preservation**

The Ibrahim Hashem house sits in a historic district in downtown Amman that has become the focus of urban renewal projects in recent years. The home, which itself has suffered from decades of neglect, was made available to Columbia University by the Greater Amman Municipality. The Municipality has played an essential role in supporting work by teams of students led by GSAPP Professor Andrew Dolkart. Work began in March 2009, with an additional component of site research and interviewing during the summer of 2009.

The initial phases of the project included data collection and documentation that provided the basis of a report, released at the Center in June 2010, outlining key elements of preservation plans. The Center is currently in the beginning of implementation of the schematic designs for future use of the house. Plans will focus on preserving the historic character of the house and its key design features. In addition, GSAPP's preservation team has worked with members of the community to ensure the facility is consistent with and helps reflect the character of the neighborhood. Ultimately, the house will include a <code>Studio-X</code>, exhibition space, a residential component for the Center's guests, and convening area for salon-style events.

The site will provide another venue for Columbia University in the city of Amman that has the specific function of developing collaborative projects between Columbia and local and regional architects, planners, and preservationists. This summer, Professor Dolkart and a student delegation returned to Amman to present their findings and showcase linkages between the rehabilitation plan and the Municipality's vision for reenergizing the area. At the event, the team presented a formal, bound report that marked the first publication resulting from work at the **Amman Lab**. The following is an excerpt from the study: *Bait Ibrahim Hashem: A Documentation Report:* 

Ibrahim Hashem's house, though modest in size and decoration, is situated in one of the oldest neighborhoods of Amman, and was an important political venue during the creation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan [over sixty years ago]... Given its character, it provides a natural contrast to the modern, suburban context of CUMERC and offers a wealth of possibilities for Columbia faculty, students, and researchers to engage with and learn from Amman and its citizens.

GSAPP's presence in the historic neighborhood of Jabal Amman has the potential to support a rejuvenation of urban living in Amman, a city typified by suburban sprawl for nearly fifty years. A sensitive restoration and adaptation of the site can offer an opportunity to unite diverse populations within the city and enhance an appreciation for the existing urban form reflecting local and traditional materials, climate, and history.

### Studio Course with the Sustainable Living Urban Model Lab (S.L.U.M. Lab)

The Center is facilitating work by GSAPP students and faculty to design a community center for Russeifeh, Jordan, an urban area with high poverty rates. Conducted in partnership with Jordan's Ministry of Social Development, the project allows GSAPP students the opportunity to research and conduct interviews with Jordanian experts to design and develop proposals for the construction of a sustainable, urban youth center for the community. Columbia faculty conducted initial visits in January 2010, and students returned with these instructors in March to continue refining designs and planning. The youth center will be designed over the course of several GSAPP studios at the **Amman Lab** and with oversight from the Urban Think Tank, a multi-disciplinary design practice that frequently partners with GSAPP. The center will be tailored to the needs of the community and will offer youth a safe environment for creative pursuits, sports, and other activities. S.L.U.M. Lab has designed similar projects in Sao Paolo, Brazil and around the world.

S.L.U.M. Lab plans were announced and the report was unveiled at a public event at the Center in June, which was highly attended by planners, developers and architects, and featured remarks by the Mayor of Amman, His Excellency Engineer Omar Maani. The presentation, conducted by Professors Alfredo Brillembourg and Hubert Klumpner from GSAPP, as well as several GSAPP students, shared the results of the research and proposed a new vision for Russeifeh; outlining several potential projects that could direct youth towards community involvement and development. In cooperation with the Center, partners of the initiative including the Ministry of Social Development and several other governmental and non-governmental agencies, have recently secured funding for the Russeifeh center, as well as five other centers, the locations of which have yet to be determined.

The ceremony at the Center was followed the next day by an interactive "mosaics workshop" in Russeifeh with GSAAP students, local youth and members of the community, in coordination with the Ministry of Education, El Hassan Youth Award, and the Institute of Traditional Islamic Art and Architecture. Organizers envision that the resulting collaborative artwork will be maintained at the Center until the S.L.U.M. Lab's community center in Russeifeh is fully realized.

#### S.L.U.M. Lab

The Sustainable Living Urban Model Lab is a unique architecture and design project that brings together planners, architects, and students from around the world to work together on issues related to architecture and poverty alleviation. The Lab is a program of Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation under the direction of architects at the Urban Think Tank.

S.L.U.M. Lab focuses on exploring urban density and the ecosystems of poverty-ridden communities within major metropolitan areas. As a global exploration, students and faculty associated with the Lab have researched topics such as wastewater reuse in Kolkata, India; street graffiti near Utrecht, Netherlands; and topographical solutions to specific neighborhood conditions in a section of Sao Paulo, Brazil. The Lab's work in Russeifeh will serve as a pilot for similar projects elsewhere in Jordan and would expand on this global foundation.

## **Urban Planning**

GSAPP Professor Robert Beauregard led a research team in the documentation of the methodology behind the creation and development of the city of Amman's urban infrastructure, *Amman Master Plan 2025*. After several visits to Amman and interviews with a number of experts involved in the process during the spring and summer of 2009, Professor Beauregard released the research in June 2010 at the Center, in conjunction with the Greater Amman Municipality and the Amman Institute for Urban Development. The latter organization was created by GAM to promote excellence in urban governance, community planning and development, and organizational reform in Jordan and the region, and has been an ongoing supporter of the Center's urban planning and architecture initiatives in Jordan. The final report, *Amman 2025: From Master Plan to Strategic Planning Initiative*, provides a case study about the development and planning process and assesses features such as municipal government organization, stakeholder participation, and transportation planning.

#### Social Work Code of Ethics

Following the successful engagement of CUSSW faculty in JSWEEP training programs, Jordan's Ministry of Social Development invited JSWEEP Co-Directors CUSSW Dean Jeanette Takamura and Professor Nabila El-Bassel to serve as advisors for the creation of Jordan's first-ever code of ethics for the profession of social work. A committee was established, and members developed and agreed on the language for the code. Under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah, and in collaboration with the Center, CUSSW faculty, and leaders in the field, the Ministry will hold an event to unveil the finalized code in late November.

# D) Outreach

Outreach—the fourth pillar of the Center's work—not only encourages interactions among teachers and learners, but also helps catalyze research opportunities and raise awareness about regional needs. Previous, ongoing, and emerging outreach activities include:

### The Center's Launch

The launch and unveiling of CUMERC on March 22, 2009 represented a major announcement to the regional and international academic community about the creation of the Columbia Global Centers and about CUMERC's foundation in Jordan and the Middle East. Held under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah, the launch drew more than 200 attendees from around the world and featured panel discussions by internationally renowned speakers.



The courtyard reception following the launch of the Center in March 2009

In addition to Her Majesty, Columbia President Lee Bollinger, and Professor Safwan Masri, speakers included:

- His Excellency Nader Dahabi. Prime Minister of Jordan
- Alan Brinkley, Provost of Columbia University
- Jeffrey D. Sachs, Director of Columbia University's Earth Institute
- Rashid Khalidi, Professor of Arab Studies, Columbia University
- Lisa Anderson, Provost of the American University in Cairo
- Daniel C. Kurtzer, Former U.S. Ambassador to Egypt and to Israel
- Jim Muir, BBC's Middle East Correspondent
- Rajenda K. Pachauri, Chairman of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Discussions were organized around several topics such as environmental sustainability and the potential impact of U.S. President Barack Obama on the Middle East. Following these discussions, Her Majesty hosted a dinner for featured guests. The launch helped draw international media attention from outlets such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *The Christian Science Monitor* about the establishment of the Global Centers.

## Alumni Symposium

Following the launch of the Center, CUMERC hosted the first-ever Middle East Alumni Symposium, in collaboration with the Columbia Alumni Association. The event included panel discussions, networking events, dinners hosted by alumni, and a trip to historic Petra.

Panel discussions focused on themes such as media perspectives on the Middle East, sustainability and consumption, and Islam in the 21st century. The event helped strengthen the University's connections to alumni throughout the region, increase awareness about the Global Centers among members of the Columbia community, and provide a foundation for ongoing alumni engagement at the Center. This network has become a base of support for the Center's activities and has helped broaden connections to potential partners in the Gulf and throughout the Levant.



President Lee Bollinger and Director of the Earth Institute
Jeffrey Sachs in a panel discussion during the Center's launch

### **Alumni Symposium Speakers**

Featured speakers at the Alumni Symposium, held in March 2009, included:

- Carol Becker, Dean of Columbia University's School of the Arts
- Ethan Bronner, Jerusalem Bureau Chief, New York Times
- Hassan Fattah, Deputy Editor of UAE-based newspaper The National
- Jeffrey D. Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute, Columbia University
- John Coatsworth, Dean of Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs
- Lee C. Bollinger, President, Columbia University in the City of New York
- Mark Wigley, Dean of Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation
- Naif Al-Mutawa, Creator of The 99
- Peter J. Awn, Dean of the School of General Studies and Director of the Middle East Institute, Columbia University
- Rashid Khalidi, Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies and Literature, Columbia University

# Speaker Series

The Center is currently coordinating two series of themed lectures, in addition to its regular schedule of public lectures, readings, and cultural events. These themed series help cement the Center's reputation in Jordan as a leader in promoting academic discourse on a range of issues and also help raise awareness in the region about the Center's focus on hosting local and international academics and well-known speakers.

Of its two existing themed series, the first, the **CUMERC-YPO Speaker Series**, was launched in May 2009 and is offered in conjunction with the Young Presidents' Organization. The CUMERC-YPO series seeks to spark dialogue among members of the community and leaders in public policy, business, and economics and has drawn numerous high-profile lecturers to the Center since its creation. In addition, the Center is working with the Middle East Institute to develop another themed series launched this fall that could result in a joint conference in 2011. The themed series will create a two-way exchange of lecturers between the Center and the Institute in New York, with experts associated with the Institute to speak in Amman, as well as local and regional experts to travel to New York to share their expertise. This formalized initiative will provide closer linkages between the Center and faculty members who specialize in the region.

#### **CUMERC Public Lecture Series**

Highlighted below is a sampling of the public lectures and discussions the Center has organized since its launch:

- Reading and Book Signing for About This Man Called Ali by Amal Ghandour
- Ruling the Waves; Cycles of Invention, Chaos, and Wealth from the Compass to the Internet by Debora Star, President of Barnard College
- Socio Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition by Kristine Billmyer, Dean of Columbia's School of Continuing Education
- Memory: How it works, Why it sometimes doesn't and What you can do to improve yours by Mark Gluck, Professor of Neuroscience at Rutgers University
- The End of Empire: Britain, India, and the United States by Nicholas Dirks, Executive Vice President and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Columbia University
- The Universal Language of Islamic Arts by Professor Minwer Al-Meheid, Dean
  of the College of Islamic Arts and Architecture at the World Islamic Sciences
  and Education University
- The Housing Bubble and the Financial Crisis in the United States: Causes, Effects, and Lessons Learned by Professor Soulaymane Kachani, Director of Master of Science Programs and the Director of Executive Education at Columbia University's School of Engineering and Applied Science
- Globalization and Capitalism by Peter Jungen, Chairman of the Center on Capitalism and Society at Columbia University
- Presentation and Book Signing for Hidden Histories: Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean by Basem Ra'ad

### **CUMERC-YPO Speaker Series**

Since its launch in June 2009, the series has featured the following speakers:

- Jordan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Nasser Judeh
- Prime Minister of Jordan, His Excellency Samir Rifai
- Jordan Minister of the Environment, His Excellency Hazem Malhas
- Former UN Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi
- Political Analyst James Zogby
- Former US Ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq & the UN, His Excellency Ambassador Zalmav Khalilzad
- Delegation of J Street Leaders, including Executive Director Jeremy Ben-Ami
- Paris Bureau Chief and Middle East Regional Editor for Newsweek Magazine, Christopher Dickey

### **Hosting Faculty**

The Center has invested considerable effort in identifying members of the Columbia faculty, inviting them to visit the region, and organizing meetings relevant to their research with community leaders. Because of the partnership nature of many projects, this type of in-person interaction is invaluable to the establishment of new projects and research. In March and April 2010 alone, the Center welcomed a number of deans and senior faculty to the Middle East including Kristine Billmyer, Dean of Columbia's School of Continuing Education, Mark Wigley, Dean of Columbia's School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Barnard College President Debora Spar, among others. Several of these trips were focused specifically on regional outreach, such as a trip by Nicholas Dirks, Executive Vice President and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and Professor Safwan Masri to Jerusalem and the West Bank in March 2010. Meetings held in the context of this trip helped establish the foundation for future engagement in the West Bank, particularly among Palestinian research centers and universities.

Part of the Center's role is not only to help connect academics with regional entities but also, after faculty members return to New York, to ensure that proper follow-up takes place. In Palestine alone, the Center has begun work with entities such as Birzeit University and Riwag, a local NGO focused on restoration and community sustainability. Likewise, collaboration with entities in Saudi Arabia is underway for possible programs in education, engineering, and other fields. Faculty from the Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science have begun conversations with Jordanian partners regarding possible programs in financial engineering, sustainable engineering, and entrepreneurship, and the recent trip of Dean Feniosky Peña-Mora to Jordan and Saudi Arabia in October provides an opportunity to advance program development in the region. Such visits are an essential tool for reaching out to the regional community and extending the Center's offerings.



Director Safwan Masri, Dean Feniosky Peña-Mora and Ibrahim Odeh meet with Prince Turki bin Saud bin Mohammed, Vice President of the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

## **Conferences and Major Events**

The Center has engaged with numerous partners to host events featuring international experts, regional scholars, and policymakers on issues ranging from education reform to environmental sustainability. Partners have included the World Bank, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, various embassies, and research centers from the region. National partners have ranged from government ministries to business organizations to universities.

These events help elevate the Center's prominence in the region as a focal point of intellectual engagement, and generate interest among attendees regarding possible partnerships. Highlights of major events from 2009-2010 are featured in the corresponding sidebar.

## **Major Conferences & Symposia**

The following events represent a sampling of major conferences the Center hosted in its first year of operation:

- First-ever Middle East Alumni Symposium with the Columbia Alumni Association (March 2009)
- Teacher Preparation: What Does the Evidence Suggest?
   Conference in partnership with the World Bank, Teachers College, and Queen Rania Teacher Academy (June 2009)
- 1,000 Voices for the Future: A discussion on the status of women and girls worldwide, in partnership with Empower Peace (June 2009)
- Leadership conference for Columbia's International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs (October 2009)
- The Way to Copenhagen, in collaboration with the Embassy of Sweden in Amman, the European Union, and Jordan's Ministry of Environment (November 2009)
- Palestinian Rule of Law Program Alumni Conference, hosted by the Open Society Institute (January 2010)
- Partner in the Dubai-based Barnard College Global Symposium:
   Women in the Arab World (March 2010)
- National Conference for the Development of Study Plans, Teaching and Learning, and Scientific Research (June 2010)

# **Major Upcoming Events**

**Education** – This winter, CUMERC, QRTA and TC will host a second annual conference on teacher education, co-sponsored by the World Bank. Last year's event marked the first time that such focus had been placed on the issue of teacher education in Jordan, and the assembly of regional and international experts sparked dialogue that provides a baseline for the 2011 conference. By creating this annual tradition, QRTA strives to become an international center of excellence in teacher training and a forum for exchanging best practices from around the world.

Research Conference: Philanthropy – In conjunction with AUC's John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, the Center will co-host a conference in April 2011 focused on Arab philanthropy and civic engagement. The event will highlight existing research, strengthen connections among scholars in the field, and draw attention to gaps where additional study is needed. A call for abstracts will be issued to solicit research on topics such as philanthro-capitalism, youth and civic engagement, and the role of civil society in the Arab region and diaspora communities. It is envisioned that the event could become a recurring series, to be held in parallel with the bi-annual Arab Foundations Forum, which brings together more than 60 practitioners and scholars in the field.

**Exhibition: Historical Archeology in the Ottoman Empire** – Columbia Professor of Art History and Archaeology Zainab Bahrani, with academic partners in Istanbul, is planning an exhibition at the Ottoman Bank Gallery in Istanbul in the spring of 2011. The exhibition will examine the rise of scientific archaeology in the Ottoman domains and the interplay between British and Ottoman actors involved in uncovering regional antiquities. The Center anticipates hosting a digital correlate of the exhibit and a symposium associated with the topic in Jordan, following the event in Istanbul.

**Conference:** Shari'a, Reform, and Women's Rights – Professor Lila Abu Lughod from Columbia's Center for the Critical Analysis of Social Difference is working with the Center to host a conference in April 2011 focused on disentangling some of the polarized debates about shari'a. The applicability of shari'a in regulating women's lives has been the source of heated debate in recent years, and this event will bring together experts from policy, academia, and law from across the Muslim world to develop more nuanced understandings of the role of Islamic law in today's world.

**Conference: Commemorating the Centenary of the Newspaper** *Falastin* – The Center will host an international conference in June 2011 on the content and history of the Palestinian newspaper *Falastin*; founded in Jaffa in 1911. The conference is being organized by Dr. Noha Tadros, a Visiting Fellow at the Center's **Institute for Scholars**, and will build on the newspaper's centenary to reconstruct the dynamic intellectual and social history of Palestine, in addition to reflecting and undertaking a multidisciplinary assessment of the contribution of *Falastin* to the political, cultural and social trends in the Middle East in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is equally a tribute to the key role of the press, both as a tool for the transmission of information, for freedom of expression and for the forging of public opinion.

**World Science Festival** – The Center is also planning to host Jordan-based events in association with the World Science Festival in 2011. The collaborative event will highlight the connections between modern science and historic advancements in Islamic science, and is expected to attract participants from across the Middle East. It is envisioned that a series of events—including experiments, lectures, and a street festival—will complement the program, and that students will play a leading role in highlighting Islamic achievements throughout history and in modern science. Staff members are currently exploring partnerships with various local institutions and organizations.

**Conference: Development Excellence** – The Center will likely be holding a conference in 2011 on Development Excellence focused on best practices and capacity building for sustainability that will target practitioners, policymakers and academics in Jordan and throughout the region. The conference may be held in partnership with the Center for Development Excellence at Development Alternatives Inc., and will be one of the many activities spearheaded by the **Institute for Sustainable Development Practice**.

### Roundtables

In addition to the research roundtable series, the Center has organized a series of additional roundtable meetings that are defined around specific disciplines or target areas, such as education, architecture and urban design, humanitarian work, the arts, and public policy and government affairs, emphasizing input from government ministers. These forums provide opportunities for community leaders and academics to discuss common problems, identify educational needs, and provide feedback on the Center's activities. The roundtables also provide a source of ongoing expertise and guidance to increase awareness about the Center's programming and to plan new activities. The first meeting of the research roundtable was held in December 2009, and this group has become a vibrant source for soliciting feedback and identifying education needs. Likewise, the Center's architecture roundtable has met on multiple occasions and has provided valuable feedback on GSAPP plans and programs. The policy roundtable featured input from a range of government ministers, who have helped identify avenues for additional programming.

In the coming months, the Center plans to organize additional roundtable series focused on interdisciplinary sustainability and education, as well as a possible series with the Palestinian research community.

## Internship Program

In an ongoing attempt to expand offerings that benefit Columbia undergraduates, the Center is working with the Center for Career Education (CCE) to generate placements for the Columbia Experience Overseas (CEO) program. The program matches students with overseas work experiences, primarily focused on Asia at the moment, to increase cultural exposure and learning opportunities. Depending on their field of study, eight students from Columbia's School of Engineering, General Studies and Columbia College will intern in the NGO, business, and finance sectors in Amman for eight weeks during the summer of 2011. Ideally, interns will also be mentored by Columbia alumni in the country. A visit to Jordan in October by the Dean of Career Education, Kavita Sharma, helped to finalize discussions including the positioning of interns within the various host organizations, as well as to explore other prospective opportunities. The likely host organizations of interns in the CEO program next summer are:

- Aramex
- EDAMA
- Front Row Magazine
- Hikma Pharmaceuticals
- Jordan Investment Board
- Jordan Phosphate Mines Company
- Jordan River Foundation
- Jordan Tourism Board
- Nugul Group

- Royal Film Commission
- Ruwwad
- Sustainability Excellence Arabia
- Union Bank for Savings and Investment

In addition, staff members are working with the Middle East Institute at the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) at Columbia University to help coordinate regional placements for graduate students. This summer, the Center hosted an intern from Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA).

The Center also hosts a regular set of interns, primarily in the summer with additional interns assisting activities and coordinating programs throughout the academic year. Interns tend to be undergraduates engaged in study overseas or in the region who have interest in or linkages to Jordan. Interested students inquire about internship positions through CUMERC's website, but the Center also often receives interns through referrals or through its wide base of contacts. Internships at the Center are unpaid, six weeks long at minimum, and are available in a range of fields, including: the arts, architecture, social work, alumni outreach, sustainability, and research support. Last summer, the Center hosted four interns; this year, nine interns were engaged in the different departments and activities at CUMERC.

#### Interns in 2009

Name	University	Field of Study	Area of Support at CUMERC	Internship Period
Farah El-Sharif	Georgetown University	Arts in Culture and Politics Islam & Colonialism	Research	June – July
Haya Majali	King's College London	Computer Science	GSAPP	October - March 2010
Jeeda Masoud	York University	Social Science	Communications & Administration	June – July
Omar Al Masri	McGill University	Undecided	Research & Education	July – August

#### Interns in 2010

Name	University	Field of Study	Area of Support at CUMERC	Internship Period
Dana AI - Dajani	McMaster University	English Literature	Communications	June – August
Dina Zyadeh	Carleton University	Public Affairs and Policy Management	Research	July – August
Farah Al Haddad	London School of Economics	Environmental Policy and Economics	Research	June – July
Hanin Ababneh	American University of Beirut	Political Science and English Literature	Social Work	July - September
Laila Salti	University of Toronto	Architectural Design and Fine Art History	GSAPP	May – July
Odai Dabbas	University of Ontario	Business Management and Organizations Studies	Administration	July – August
Taraf Abu Hamdan	University of Arkansas	Environmental, Soil & Water Sciences	Research	July – July 2011
Zein Jardaneh	Cornell University	Policy Analysis and Management	Research	June – July

# **International Education Events & Speaking Opportunities**

The Center seeks to raise awareness about the Global Centers model and about projects underway in Amman by participating in education-related events in the region and internationally. Director Safwan Masri has been invited to speak and participate in more than a dozen such conferences and forums since the Center's launch.

# Highlights from 2009 include:

- The Harvard Arab Alumni Association's fourth annual Arab World Conference, "The Arab World: Shaping the Future" (Cairo, May 2009)
- Inauguration of the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (Saudi Arabia, September 2009)
- Meeting of the Yale Arab Alumni Association (Beirut, October 2009)
- Roundtable discussion on education reform at King Saud University (Riyadh, October 2009)
- The Arab-British Chamber of Commerce's first Arab-British Economic Forum (London, October 2009)
- The third annual Harvard Arab Weekend, "From Tradition to Innovation | Leading Change in MENA" (Cambridge, November 2009)
- The 54<sup>th</sup> International Council on Education for Teaching World Assembly, "Maintaining Strategic Agility: Managing change and assuring quality in education for teaching" (Muscat, December 2009)



Professor Safwan Masri speaks at an international forum

### THE WAY FORWARD

In its first year of operation, the Center has focused on establishing a broad and sturdy foundation of activities. It has developed core competencies in fields such as architecture, social work, and education. Its offerings in these core areas—from lectures to training workshops—have helped build trust with regional partners and cement the Center's reputation for academic innovation. In addition, the programs have benefited the national and regional communities, from training over 1,000 school teachers and administrators to reaching hundreds of participants in academic events and lectures. Many of its programs are distinctively interdisciplinary and bring together partners from academia and practice in new combinations. The exact shape these combinations will take—and the types of output they will produce—remain to be seen, but in pioneering a new model of international education, the Global Centers represent a promising innovation. The impact the Center has already made on its local and regional context is exactly what makes Columbia's model of internationalization distinctive and adds depth and value to its partners.

An additional focus of work during the first year has been developing a wide network of partners, at Columbia and among governments, academic institutions, and NGOs in the Middle East. By interacting with leaders throughout the region and strengthening ties with different schools and faculty at Columbia, the Center has helped identify a range of opportunities that will expand core competencies. Offerings such as seminars in public health and environmental research will be formalized in the coming months because of the foundation and base of contacts the Center has helped establish.

While this year has demonstrated the potential of the Global Centers model, the Center has identified several goals in the near-term in order to ensure long-term success. First, the Center will continue its regional expansion efforts, primarily in North Africa, other parts of the Levant, and the Gulf. The range of activities in Jordan has given the Center's staff and Columbia University and its affiliated partners, including Teachers College and Barnard College, the experience necessary to develop customized programs for the Middle East. The Center is currently focused on leveraging this experience to create customized academic offerings in a range of new settings, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Iraq.

Second, the Center is focusing on expanding its educational offerings and academic depth by formalizing the establishment of several institutes. These institutes will be organized around disciplines that are central to the Center's activities, as well as major areas of interest in the region. Two of these institutes have already been created: the **Institute for Scholars** and the **Amman Lab**. The Center is actively engaged in establishing institutes in:

- Public Health
- Digital Soil Mapping
- Education
- Sustainable Development Practice

These institutes will become regionally and internationally recognized sources of expertise and research. Activities will include developing linkages with faculty, advancing scholarship that informs policymaking, hosting summits, and potentially offering advanced degrees. In the next phase, the Center will also look to invest in developing and expanding programs in the realm of economic policy.

Third, plans are underway to reach the goal of developing advanced and master's degree programs at the Center. A number of partners in the region have articulated the need to increase the range of high-quality educational opportunities for students to pursue advanced study in and about the Middle East. The Center helps pair Columbia schools and faculty members with potential partners in the region—both donors and academic collaborators—to develop needs assessments and design programs calibrated to meet these needs and regional opportunities. It is envisioned that within the next year, the development of a set of advanced-study offerings will have begun and will potentially focus on themes central to the Center's Institutes. The Center has held initial conversations with Columbia's School of Engineering and Applied Science and the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabic regarding the development of dual degree graduate programs.

Finally, the Center is focusing on programs that could be offered jointly with other Global Centers. The possibilities for joint research and education have expanded by orders of magnitude, particularly with the newly established hubs in Paris and Mumbai. The Center is exploring possible pilot initiatives and experimental offerings that could help build on the vision for what the Global Centers can accomplish by working collaboratively.

The Center remains committed to helping Columbia University engage more thoroughly in the Middle East by creating opportunities for members of the Columbia community to explore their academic backgrounds in new settings. The Middle East presents a range of challenges and opportunities that are unique to the region, and the Center will continue to strive to find mutually beneficial ways to leverage the potential of scholarly engagement.



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