Approved by the Board of Trustees

July 20, 2023

**20**

Board Meeting

July 20, 2023

# ESTABLISH THE CENTER FOR SOUTH ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES AS A PERMANENT CENTER, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, URBANA

**Action:** Establish the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies as a Permanent Center, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**Funding:** No impact anticipated

The chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System, with the advice of the Urbana-Champaign Senate, recommends approval of a proposal from College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to establish the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies as a permanent center.

The Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (CSAMES) has had temporary center status on the Illinois Board of Higher Education’s inventory for several years. Originally founded in 1983 as part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS), CSAMES was incorporated within the Illinois Global Institute (IGI) along with other area and thematic centers in 2019. The center has been designated a National Resource Center under the U.S. Department of Education’s Title VI and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) programs. Permanent center status will help ensure CSAMES long-term growth.

CSAMES engages in activities to foster knowledge and debate on the societies of South Asia and the Middle East. The center supports language instruction in other departments, such as linguistics, where most Middle Eastern and South Asian languages are taught. CSAMES offers two undergraduate interdisciplinary minors, one in South Asian Studies and one in the Study of the Islamic World, along with two master’s programs, one in Middle Eastern Studies and one in South Asian Studies. The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is one of two universities in the state (along with the University of Chicago) with a National Resource Center (NRC) and FLAS awards for the Middle East region. CSAMES pursues the core mission of furthering knowledge about and awareness of societies of South Asia and the Middle East in the community by supporting and advocating for disciplinary and multidisciplinary scholarship and academic programs central to these regions, as well as organizing, hosting, and contributing to a variety of engagement activities on campus. The vision of CSAMES is to serve as a source of support for leading multidisciplinary research and education and to attract scholars, students, and community members interested in the Middle East and South Asia.

CSAMES is one of 10 area and thematic centers and programs housed within the IGI. A companion action item seeks permanent status of the IGI, which currently has temporary institute status. Additional companion action items seek permanent status for two other constitutive units within IGI, the Center for Global Studies (CGS) and the Program in Women and Gender in Global Perspectives (WGGP). Permanent status will align WGGP, CGS, and CSAMES with the other centers housed within the IGI (the Center for African Studies; the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies; the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies; the European Union Center; the Lemann Center for Brazilian Studies; and the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center). CSAMES, like all units within IGI, is organized around the principle that a public university has a responsibility to foster global understanding and the capacities for global engagement.

Establishment as a permanent center does not impact CSAMES’s funding, faculty affiliations (faculty affiliates have zero percent appointments with CSAMES), students, or facilities. Permanent center status, which will put CSAMES on level ground with the other IGI centers, is strongly supported by the executive committee, faculty affiliates, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which houses IGI.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The executive vice president and vice president for academic affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further senate jurisdiction is involved.

The president of the University of Illinois System recommends approval.

This action is subject to further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.