The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization congratulates this year’s graduating students. We celebrate and acknowledge their diversity of backgrounds, of academic interests, and future goals. We recognize their many collective accomplishments, and we honor the common good that they have bestowed upon our department, the University of Washington, and that which they will continue to bring to our greater society.
Learn more about this year’s cohort of graduates, which includes both undergraduate majors and graduate students.

Undergraduate Students

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in Near Eastern Studies. Students choose one of four options offered within the major: Languages and Civilization, Culture and Civilization, Comparative Islamic Studies, and Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East.

Gameti Kalil graduated in Spring 2020 with a specialization in Near Eastern Studies: Languages and Cultures.

Forrest Martin graduated in Spring 2020 majoring in both Near Eastern Languages and Civilization with a specialization in Hebrew Bible & Ancient Near East and Classics specializing in Greek studies. Forrest will continue his studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization in Autumn 2020 when he will begin work on a Masters Degree focusing his research on the ancient Near East and Hebrew Bible.

Hafsah  حفصه graduat ed in Spring 2020 majoring in both Near Eastern Languages and Civilization (Near Eastern Studies: Languages and Cultures) and Early Childhood and Family Studies. Hafsah will return to the University of Washington in Autumn 2020 where she will begin her Masters in Teaching in the Elementary Education Program.
Hasanah McCauley will graduate in Summer 2020 with a specialization in Near Eastern Studies: Languages and Cultures. Hasanah plans to pursue experience in the Public Health sectors that address structural barriers to healthcare with a specific focus on communities impacted by internalized stigmas.

Sophie Ossorio graduated in Spring 2020 with a specialization in Near Eastern Studies: Languages and Cultures. Sophie will begin work towards a Master of Arts in International Studies (MAIS) in Autumn 2020 at the University of Washington's Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies's Middle East Studies program.

Ellen Perleberg will graduate in Summer 2020. She is a double major who will graduate with degrees in Near Eastern Languages and Civilization (Near Eastern Studies: Languages and Cultures) and Linguistics. Ellen is also minoring in Jewish Studies; Spanish; Education, Learning, & Society in the School of Education. Ellen has interned in the NELC Digital's Svoboda Diaries Project. She will pursue a Master's degree in library science after graduation with the goal of working in public library services.

Dureti Shemsi graduated in Spring 2020 with a specialization in Near Eastern Studies: Comparative Civilizations. Dureti will pursue work as a medical assistant to gain experience in the healthcare field with a long term goal is to apply to become a Physician Assistant.
Micah Slaughter graduated in Spring 2020 earning degrees in both Near Eastern Languages and Civilization (Near Eastern Studies: Languages and Cultures) and International Studies. Micah plans to work for in her field of interest for the next year or two before pursuing a Master's degree.

Kayla van Kooten graduated in Spring 2020 with a specialization in Near Eastern Studies: Languages and Cultures. She earned an additional major and a minor from the Jackson School of International Studies. Kayla plans to take a gap year teaching English in Southern Spain with Moroccan immigrant communities before continue her studies in a Master's degree program in Migration Studies or European Studies where she will continue her studies on Middle Eastern migrants in Europe.


Graduate Students
NELC graduate students develop a thorough understanding of historical and cultural contexts and skills in critical analysis of texts, research procedures, and integrative thinking in the languages and cultures of our area of study. In NELC one can find experts in Arabic, Hebrew (ancient and modern), Persian, Turkish (Ottoman and Modern), Egyptian (hieroglyphic and Coptic), and the languages of Central Asia.

Erin Kelleher graduated in Spring 2020 with an MA in Near Eastern Languages and Civilization. During her studies at NELC Erin honed
her language skills and continued to study her research interest on the development of Egyptian print media. She completed advanced classes in Arabic, intermediate Turkish, and counted French as her research language.

To compliment her language studies, Erin received multiple FLAS awards to study Turkish both at UW and abroad. She completed an intensive summer course in Intermediate Turkish at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, Turkey. She was also awarded the NELC Department’s Turkish and Ottoman Literature Fellowship and a NELC Schwarz Fellowship.

Erin will attend an intensive Turkish Summer Program, before moving to Texas to begin Ph.D. program in the Middle Eastern Studies Department at the University of Texas. She will focus on Middle Eastern History where she will continue to study late nineteenth and early twentieth-century print media in Egypt.

Bret Windhauser graduated in Spring 2020 with an MA in Near Eastern Languages and Civilization. During his time at NELC Bret studied Arabic and modern Turkish with French as his research language. His thesis examined how smuggling networks between Israel and the Palestinian Territories delegitimize the concept of a national border and complicates nation-building efforts.

Bret worked as a teaching assistant for the NELC program teaching Gateway to the Near East and a class on the Ancient Near East. He was named the 2019-2020 Mickey Sreebny Memorial Scholar in Jewish Studies and an Israel Studies Graduate Fellow by the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies at UW.

Bret will continue his work with NELC volunteering with the Svoboda Diaries Project and will be applying to graduate programs after a gap year.

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