



APSA MENA Workshop

Political Science in the Arab Middle East and North Africa

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: 2016 WORKSHOP FELLOWS

**“Civil Society Revisited: Researching Associational Life in Comparative Perspective”
May 2016 in Beirut – September 2016 in Cairo**

The American Political Science Association (APSA) is pleased to announce a Call for Applications for early-career scholars who would like to participate in the 2016 MENA Workshops program. This two-part workshop program is a unique opportunity to network with colleagues from across the MENA region and develop current research related to civil society in the Arab region and the changing state-society dynamics engendered by the Arab Uprisings post-2010.

The first one-week workshop will be hosted by the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship at the American University of Beirut (AUB) from May 16-20. A follow-up workshop from September 11-15 will be hosted by the Middle East Studies Center at the American University in Cairo (AUC). The organizers, with support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, will cover all the costs of participation (including travel, lodging, meals, and materials) for up to 22 qualified applicants. The working language of the workshop is English.

The 2016 program is part of a multi-year effort to support political science research among early-career scholars in the Arab Middle East and North Africa, and strengthen research networks linking Arab scholars with their colleagues overseas. Previous workshops have been held at the American University in Cairo (AUC), the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR) in Amman, the Center for Maghreb Studies in Tunis (CEMAT), Lebanese American University (LAU), Qatar University's Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI), and the Alsalam Center for Development and Strategic Studies in Kuwait.

Program information, eligibility requirements, and a web link to the 2016 Application Form can be found online at the APSA MENA Workshop website: www.apsanet.org/menaworkshops. **The deadline for applications is Sunday, December 20, 2015 at 11 PM (EST).**

Participants

The workshop is principally targeted at Ph.D. students and post-doctoral fellows who are currently based at institutions in the Middle East and North Africa. A smaller number of applicants from universities in the United States or Europe will also be accepted. The program is open to scholars in political science and other social science disciplines undertaking research related to the workshop theme. Applicants are expected to apply with a manuscript or research project in progress, which they will share at the first workshop week, improve over the interim period, and present formally during the second workshop week, with the expectation that they will then submit their piece to a peer-reviewed political science journal soon after the conclusion of the workshop program. A selection of papers will be published on the BCARS website after peer-review. Professional fluency in English is required.

Workshop Theme

The 2016 workshops will be led by Fateh Azzam (Asfari Institute for Civil Society & Citizenship, Lebanon), Sandrine Gamblin (American University in Cairo, Egypt), Augustus Richard Norton (Boston University, USA), and Denis Sullivan (Northeastern University, USA). Together with workshop participants, co-leaders will revisit the concept of civil society and explore the central question: how and to what extent do people in the region seek to engage in associations that promote, demand or protect rights, freedom, or accountability and how do states control, restrict or respond to these efforts? Though the concept of civil society has received newfound attention in the wake of the Arab Uprisings, the precise causal mechanisms by which it is believed to exert an influence remain understudied. In other words, there is broad agreement that civil society matters, but little understanding as to how it matters. As the region experiences upheavals and regime-change, a wide range of actors with sometimes competing ideologies struggle to define and operationalize the mechanisms for securing durable political reform, stability, and lasting social peace. These changing state-society dynamics offer scholars a unique opportunity to reexamine, and potentially reconceptualize, traditional understandings of civil-society.

To provide a framework for reflection and investigation relating to these and other relevant questions, the workshop will also focus on issues of research design, modes of and approaches to political science inquiry, and issues associated with manuscript preparation and publication. Workshop sessions will be devoted to small seminar discussions, presentations of participants' ongoing research, and training on research design and research methods. Following the workshops, alumni will be eligible to apply for small grants to facilitate further research collaboration.

Applications

To submit an application for participation in the workshop, first review the eligibility requirements on APSA's MENA Workshop website and then follow the web link to the online Application Form. Completed applications, including all necessary supporting documents, must be submitted **by December 20, 2015 at 11 PM (EST)**. The final list of selected Workshop Fellows will be announced in February 2016.

Applications must be in English and include:

1. The completed online Application Form.
2. A detailed, recent Curriculum Vitae/resume.
3. A 500-2,000 word statement that describes your current research interests and how it relates to the workshop theme. This should be a detailed outline or research plan summarizing the work-in-progress you intend to bring with you to the first workshop and continue to develop over the course of the workshop program. This research should not be a co-authored project, nor should it be an excerpt from an already completed work.
4. Two letters of reference on official letterhead and scanned as electronic files. If you are a graduate student, one letter should be from your supervising professor. If you are a researcher or faculty member, the letters can be from a former dissertation supervisor, a colleague at your home institution, a university official, or an employer.

For more information, contact menaworkshops@apsanet.org. Please do not contact the workshop leaders directly.