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A Resolution Condemning the Global Rise of Islamophobia

A bill for the consideration of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government

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Whereas, the mission of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government (hereafter LSA SG) is to “actively seek the voices of LSA students and advocate their interests to improve academic and non-academic life”;¹ and,

Whereas, LSA SG was founded in 1970 as the result of a campus-wide referendum and one of the original goals of LSA SG was to protest the injustices of the Vietnam War and to end the complicity of the University of Michigan in the Vietnam War;^{2,3} and,

Whereas, Islamophobia has existed in various forms and strains throughout the course of history, with each version of it containing some distinct features of prejudice and similarities to established modes of racism;⁴ and,

Whereas, Islamophobia has been present as a global phenomenon for centuries, in the last two decades it has become “accentuated, explicit, and extreme”;^{5,6} and,

Whereas, Islamophobia can be understood as “a contrived fear or prejudice fomented by the existing Eurocentric and Orientalist global power structure. It is directed at a perceived or real Muslim threat through the maintenance and extension of existing disparities in economic, political, social and cultural relations, while rationalizing the necessity to deploy violence as a tool to achieve 'civilizational rehab' of the target communities (Muslim or otherwise). Islamophobia reintroduces and reaffirms a global racial structure through which resource distribution disparities are maintained and extended”;⁷ and,

¹ The Constitution of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government. Article II

² [History of LSA Student Government](#)

³ [Resistance and Revolution: The Anti-Vietnam War Movement at the University of Michigan, 1965-1972](#)

⁴ [Islamophobia: A New Word for an Old Fear](#)

⁵ Williams, Charlotte; Soydan, Haluk & Johnson, Mark (1998). *Social Work and Minorities: European Perspectives*

⁶ Grant, Paul. “Book Reviews : Visions of Reality: Religion and Ethnicity in Social Work By Naina Patel, Don Naik and Beth Humphries (London, CCETSW, 1998) 158pp.

⁷ Islamophobia Research & Documentation Project. "Defining "Islamophobia"". Center for Race & Gender, University of California at Berkeley.

Whereas, the Runnymede Trust established the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia in 1996, the 1997 report titled *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* found that Islamophobia consisted “an outlook or world-view involving an unfounded dread and dislike of Muslims, which results in practices of exclusion and discrimination”;⁸ and,

Whereas, the introduction of the term “Islamophobia” was justified in the aforementioned report on the assessment that “anti-Muslim prejudice has grown so considerably and so rapidly in recent years that a new item in the vocabulary is needed”;⁹ and,

Whereas, in a symposium on Islamophobia and Religious Discrimination hosted in 2009, Robin Richardson, who served as a director of the Runnymede Trust and as an editor on the aforementioned report, claimed there to be numerous drawbacks to the term Islamophobia in its inability to encompass all of the larger prevailing narratives that make up anti-Muslim prejudice; and,

Whereas, eight key disadvantages were pointed out by Richardson in the limited understanding of Islamophobia, these are as follows:

1. “Medically, phobia implies a severe mental illness of a kind that affects only a tiny minority of people. Whatever else anxiety about Muslims may be, it is not merely a mental illness and does not merely involve a small number of people.
2. To accuse someone of being insane or irrational is to be abusive and, not surprisingly, to make them defensive and defiant. Reflective dialogue with them is then all but impossible.
3. To label someone with whom you disagree as irrational or insane is to absolve yourself of the responsibility of trying to understand, both intellectually and with empathy, why they think and act as they do, and of seeking through engagement and argument to modify their perceptions and understandings.
4. The concept of anxiety is arguably more useful in this context than the concept of phobia. It is widely recognised that anxiety may not be (though certainly may be) warranted by objective facts, for human beings can on occasions perceive dangers that do not objectively exist, or anyway do not exist to the extent that is imagined. Also it can sometimes be difficult to identify, and therefore to name accurately, the real sources of an anxiety.
5. The use of the word Islamophobia on its own implies that hostility towards Muslims is unrelated to, and basically dissimilar from, forms of hostility such as racism, xenophobia, sectarianism, and such as hostility to so-called fundamentalism. Further, it may imply there is no connection with issues of class, power, status and territory; or with issues of military, political or economic competition and conflict.¹⁰
6. The term implies there is no important difference between prejudice towards Muslim communities within one’s own country and prejudice towards cultures and regimes elsewhere in the world where Muslims are in the majority, and with which ‘the West’ is in military conflict or economic competition.

⁸ Encyclopedia of Race and Ethics, p. 215

⁹ Meer, Nasar; Modood, Tariq (July 2009). "Refutations of racism in the 'Muslim question'". *Patterns of Prejudice*. **43** (3–4): 335–54.

¹⁰ Samuels, Andrew (2006) *The Fascination of Fundamentalism*

7. The term is inappropriate for describing opinions that are basically anti-religion as distinct from anti-Islam.
8. The key phenomenon to be addressed is arguably anti-Muslim hostility, namely hostility towards an ethno-religious identity within western countries (including Russia), rather than hostility towards the tenets or practices of a worldwide religion. The 1997 Runnymede definition of Islamophobia was ‘a shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam – and, therefore, to fear or dislike of all or most Muslims’. In retrospect, it would have been as accurate, or arguably indeed more accurate, to say ‘a shorthand way of referring to fear or dislike of all or most Muslims – and, therefore, dread or hatred of Islam’;¹¹ and,

Whereas, Mattias Gardell contends that Islamophobia is “socially reproduced prejudices and aversion to Islam and Muslims, as well as actions and practices that attack, exclude or discriminate against persons on the basis that they are or perceived to be Muslim and be associated with Islam”;¹² and,

Whereas, the precise definition of Islamophobia continues to be contested by academics due to varying formations of Islamophobia,^{13,14,15,16,17,18} the underlying negative connotations associated with Islam and emotions against Muslims, including fear,^{19,20} and social anxiety,^{21,22} form an intrinsic backbone of addressing this form of xenophobia; and,

Whereas, Islamophobia is intrinsically linked to racism and xenophobia in a uniquely anti-Muslim lens, drawing on common tropes of the association of Islam or Muslims to violence, terrorism, and exceedingly brutal behavior;²³ and,

¹¹ [Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism - or what? - concepts and terms revised](#)

¹² [Islamophobia - Definitions and Expressions](#)

¹³ Allen, Chris (2010). *Islamophobia*. Ashgate. p. 21

¹⁴ Bleich, Erik (December 2011). "What Is Islamophobia and How Much Is There? Theorizing and Measuring an Emerging Comparative Concept". *American Behavioral Scientist*. **55** (12): 1581–1600.

¹⁵ Cesari, Jocelyne (1 June 2006). "Muslims In Western Europe After 9/11: Why the term Islamophobia is more a predicament than an explanation"

¹⁶ Imhoff, Roland & Recker, Julia; Recker (December 2012). "Differentiating Islamophobia: Introducing a new scale to measure Islamoprejudice and Secular Islam Critique". *Political Psychology*. **33** (6): 811–24.

¹⁷ Andrew Shryock, ed. (2010). *Islamophobia/Islamophilia: Beyond the Politics of Enemy and Friend*. Indiana University Press. p. 6.

¹⁸ Burak Erdenir (2010). Anna Triandafyllidou (ed.). *Muslims in 21st Century Europe: Structural and Cultural Perspectives*. Routledge. p. 28.

¹⁹ Lee, S. A.; Gibbons, J. A.; Thompson, J. M.; Timani, H. S. (2009). "The islamophobia scale: Instrument development and initial validation". *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*. **19** (2): 92–105.

²⁰ Kunst, J. R.; Sam, D. L.; Ulleberg, P. (2012). "Perceived islamophobia: Scale development and validation". *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. **37** (2): 225–37.

²¹ Corrina Balash Kerr (20 November 2007). "Faculty, Alumnus Discuss Concept of "Islamophobia" in Co-Authoring Book". *Wesleyan University Newsletter*.

²² "Images of Muslims: Discussing Islamophobia with Peter Gottschalk". *Political Affairs Magazine*. 19 November 2007.

²³ Modood, Tariq (29 September 2005). "Remaking multiculturalism after 7/7"

Whereas, Islamophobia has witnessed a marked increase in the past two decades ever since the “Global War on Terror” wherein the civil liberties and human rights of large groups of peoples have faced severe violations;²⁴ and,

Whereas, Islamophobia is empirically-related to other forms of racism, including anti-Asian, anti-Turkic, and anti-Arab prejudice;^{25,26,27} and,

Whereas, The Runnymede Report highlighted the following views as falling within the parameters of Islamophobia:

1. Islam is seen as a monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to change.
2. It is seen as separate and “other”. It does not have values in common with other cultures, is not affected by them and does not influence them.
3. It is seen as inferior to the West. It is seen as barbaric, irrational, primitive, and sexist.
4. It is seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, and engaged in a ‘clash of civilizations’.
5. It is seen as a political ideology, used for political or military advantage.
6. Criticisms made of ‘the West’ by Muslims are rejected out of hand.
7. Hostility towards Islam is used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society.
8. Anti-Muslim hostility is accepted as natural and ‘normal’;²⁸ and,

Whereas, Muslim viewpoints have been severely underrepresented in the media and press;²⁹ and,

Whereas, Muslims have consistently and systematically been presented in a negative light in the media and framed as a threat to ‘Western security and values’;³⁰ and,

Whereas, the use of terms such as “Islamic terrorism”, “Islamic bombs”, “violent Islam”, “Islamic attacks” in the media and public discourse have fueled negative perceptions of Islam and Muslims,^{31,32} and,

²⁴ Kundnani, Arun. (2014) *The Muslims Are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror*

²⁵ "The Multicultural State We're In: Muslims, 'Multiculture' and the 'Civic Re-balancing' of British Multiculturalism", *Political Studies*: 2009 Vol 57, 473–97

²⁶ Nathan Lean (2012). *The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Fear of Muslims*. Pluto Press.

²⁷ Poynting, S.; Mason, V. (2007). "The resistible rise of Islamophobia: Anti-Muslim racism in the UK and Australia before 11 September 2001". *Journal of Sociology*. **43**: 61–86.

²⁸ *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*

²⁹ Poole, E. (2003). "Islamophobia". In Cashmore, Ellis (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies*. Routledge. pp. 215–19.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Egorova; Tudor (2003) pp. 2–3

³² "A. Marquina, V. G. Rebolledo, 'The Dialogue between the European Union and the Islamic World' in *Interreligious Dialogues: Christians, Jews, Muslims*, *Annals of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts*, v. 24, no. 10, Austria, 2000, pp. 166–68. "

Whereas, in a study conducted by John E. Richardson, 85% of mainstream newspaper articles treated Muslims as a threat to British society;³³ and,

Whereas, Western media has been oft critiqued for over-reporting and making mention of terrorist incidents committed by Muslims while under-reporting a substantially larger number of planned terrorist activities by those of other backgrounds;³⁴ and,

Whereas, in a study conducted by the Universities of Alabama and Georgia tabulating the period between 2005 and 2015, it was found that 357% more media attention was allocated to terrorist attacks committed by Muslims as compared to non-Muslims in the United States in the same period, with the former receiving an average of 105 headlines while the latter received an average of 15;^{35,36,37,38} and,

Whereas, a 2012 study found that Muslims across countries such as Germany, France, and the United Kingdom are victims of the highest degrees of Islamophobia in the media;³⁹ and,

Whereas, in a report published by the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding in 2018, it was found that “in terms of print media coverage, Muslim-perceived perpetrators received twice the absolute quantity of media coverage as their non-Muslim counterparts in the cases of violent completed acts. For “foiled” plots, they received seven and half times the media coverage as their counterparts”;⁴⁰ and,

Whereas, there has been an observed growth of an “Islamophobia industry”,^{41,42,43,44} wherein varying ideologies, organizations, and political proclivities come together in a bid to advance a distinctly anti-Muslim agenda;⁴⁵ and,

³³ Richardson, J. E. (2009). "Get Shot of the Lot of Them': Election Reporting of Muslims in British Newspapers". *Patterns of Prejudice*. **43** (3–4): 355–77.

³⁴ Mehdi Hasan (9 July 2009). "Know your enemy". *New Statesman*.

³⁵ Chalabi, Mona (20 July 2018). "Terror attacks by Muslims receive 357% more press attention, study finds". *The Guardian*.

³⁶ Staff (19 February 2019). "Terror Attacks By Muslims Get 357 percent More Media Coverage Than Other Terror Attacks, Study Shows". *Georgia State News Hub*.

³⁷ Kearns, Erin M.; Betus, Allison E.; Lemieux, Anthony F. (19 September 2019). "Why Do Some Terrorist Attacks Receive More Media Attention Than Others?". *Justice Quarterly*. **36** (6): 985–1022.

³⁸ Kearns, Erin; Betus, Allison; Lemieux, Anthony (2 April 2018). "Why Do Some Terrorist Attacks Receive More Media Attention Than Others?". Rochester, NY.

³⁹ Kunst, J. R.; Sam, D. L.; Ulleberg, P. (2012). "Perceived islamophobia: Scale development and validation". *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. **37** (2): 225–37.

⁴⁰ "Equal Treatment? Measuring the Legal and Media Responses to Ideologically Motivated Violence in the US". *The Institute for Social Policy and Understanding*.

⁴¹ Kaminski, Joseph (2014). "The Islamophobia Industry, Hate, and Its Impact on Muslim Immigrants and OIC State Development". *Islamophobia Studies Journal*. **2** (2): 157–176.

⁴² Bazian, Hatem (21 December 2015). "The Islamophobia Industry and the Demonization of Palestine: Implications for American Studies". *American Quarterly*. **67** (4): 1057–1066.

⁴³ Stein, Arlene; Salime, Zakia (1 February 2015). "Manufacturing Islamophobia: Rightwing Pseudo-Documentaries and the Paranoid Style". *Journal of Communication Inquiry*. **281** (4): 2015–1.

⁴⁴ Shipoli, Erdoan A. (2018). *Islam, Securitization, and US Foreign Policy*. Springer. p. 116.

⁴⁵ Lean, Nathan (2012). *The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Fear of Muslims*. Pluto Press. p. 66.

Whereas, attempts to recruit Muslims to aid in identifying potential threats in a bid to formulate preventative measures constitutes racism, in this case Islamophobia, due to the underlying notion that there is a threat that requires mitigation from a specific community;⁴⁶ and,

Whereas, in a 2002 report written by Chris Allen and Jorgen S. Nielsen of the University of Birmingham, it was found that Muslims have become the victims of abuse and violent rhetoric in recent times, including blaming the entire group for terrorism, the spitting on Muslims, the labeling of individuals as ‘Osama’ in the context of a racial slur, the removal of women’s hijabs, and other assaults;⁴⁷ and,

Whereas, Orientalist perceptions of Muslims have been exacerbated in recent times, including fantastical representations and caricatures of Muslim figures and ideas;⁴⁸ and,

Whereas, in a survey conducted in 2021 with support from Newcastle University, it was found that 83% of Muslims in Scotland claimed to have experienced Islamophobia, with 75% claiming it was a regular issue, and 78% alleging it was getting worse;⁴⁹ and,

Whereas, in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation’s report to the Islamophobia Observatory in 2012, it was found that in the preceding five years in the West there was an “institutionalization and legitimization of the phenomenon of Islamophobia”;⁵⁰ and,

Whereas, Hijabophobia is a form of discrimination against women who don a veil, such as a hijab, chador, niqab, and burqa;^{51,52,53,54} and,

Whereas, Hijabophobia is a subsection of broader Islamophobia,⁵⁵ encapsulating the sexist aspects of it, wherein Muslim women are victims of vilification, assaults, and attacks;⁵⁶ and,

Whereas, Hijabophobic sentiments while stemming from the vilification and hatred of Islam, Muslims, and the perceived threat that such veils pose, find victims of non-Muslim background as well,⁵⁷ including

⁴⁶ Lavalette, Michael (2014). "Institutionalised Islamophobia and the 'Prevent' agenda: 'winning hearts and minds' or welfare as surveillance and control?". *Race, Racism and Social Work: Contemporary issues and debates*. England: Policy Press at the University of Bristol. pp. 167–90.

⁴⁷ Allen, Chris and Nielsen, Jorgen S. "Summary report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001"

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Douglas Barrie (29 June 2021). "Islamophobia in Scotland on the rise as four-fifths of Muslims report verbal and physical attacks". *Microsoft News*.

⁵⁰ "OIC warns of exploiting Islamophobia phenomenon". *Arab News*.

⁵¹ Hamzeh, Manal (2012). *Pedagogies of Deveiling: Muslim Girls and the Hijab Discourse*. IAP.

⁵² Manal, Hamzaeh (1 July 2017). "FIFA's double hijabophobia: A colonialist and Islamist alliance racializing Muslim women soccer players". *Women's Studies International Forum*. **63**: 11–16.

⁵³ Mohamed Salih, Veronica. "Stereotypes regarding Muslim men and Muslim women on the Romanian Internet: a qualitative comparative analysis for 2004-2009 and 2010-2015". *Journal of Gender and Feminist Studies*

⁵⁴ Shebaya, Halim (15 March 2017). "The European Court Has Normalized Hijabophobia". *Huffington Post*.

⁵⁵ Kaya, Ayhan (2012). *Islam, Migration and Integration: The Age of Securitization*. Palgrave Macmillan.

⁵⁶ Keddie, Amanda (2017). *Supporting and Educating Young Muslim Women: Stories from Australia and the UK*. Taylor & Francis.

⁵⁷ Oltermann, Philip (27 March 2018). "Austrian full-face veil ban condemned as a failure by police". *The Guardian*.

South Asian women regardless of faith who don a dupatta, Jewish women wearing a sheitel, mitpachat, tichel, or shpitzel, and members of other backgrounds donning head scarfs or other head coverings;⁵⁸ and,

Whereas, Muslim men face discrimination on the basis of wearing head-coverings such as a kufi, topi, turban, and as a result members of other faith groups such as those donning a Dastar, Biretta, or Kippah also face assaults;⁵⁹ and,

Whereas, Islamophobic sentiments often bleed into anti-Sikh sentiment due to Orientalist worldviews failing to distinguish between different ethnic and religious groups in the Middle East and South Asia, as seen by assaults on Sikh men wearing a Dastar and attacks on Gurdwaras;⁶⁰ and,

Whereas, on 14 March 2017, a European Court of Justice verdict held that “the prohibition on wearing an Islamic headscarf, which arises from an internal rule of a private undertaking prohibiting the visible wearing of any political, philosophical or religious sign in the workplace, does not constitute direct discrimination based on religion or belief within the meaning of that directive”;⁶¹ and,

Whereas, laws upholding bans on such religious attire violate the basic tenets of non-discrimination in employment practices, and normalize Islamophobia, given the dismissal of several Muslim women from their jobs and the additional barriers they face in employment;⁶² and,

Whereas, in areas such as France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Russia, the People’s Republic of China, Syria, Chad, Niger, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, and Malaysia, a number of different laws have enacted restrictions on face coverings, hijabs, niqabs, and full-face veils at different levels depending on age, occupation, or other factors;⁶³ and,

Whereas, viewing the hijab or niqab as ‘unprofessional’ inconveniences Muslim workers and influences corporate policy-making, as evidenced by hospitality injunctions in areas of Malaysia;⁶⁴ and,

Whereas, the aforementioned Islamophobic sentiment has led to the lack of hijab sportswear options, and cases of female athletes being denied access to play without the removal of religious attire;⁶⁵ and,

⁵⁸ “[Women in many countries face harassment for clothing deemed too religious – or too secular](#)”. *Pew Research Center*

⁵⁹ “[The experiences of non-Muslim men who suffer Islamophobia because they look Muslim](#)”. November 2020

⁶⁰ “[If the Sikh Temple Had Been a Mosque](#)” Samuel G Freedman *New York Times*, 10 August 2012

⁶¹ “[Employers allowed to ban the hijab: EU court](#)”. *www.aljazeera.com*.

⁶² “[The European Court has normalized 'Hijabophobia'](#)”. *openDemocracy*.

⁶³ “[Why are the burqa and burkini being banned?](#)”. *CNN*.

⁶⁴ Finieli, Salsabilla Terra; Hasan, Rusni; Zain, Nor Razinah Mohd (20 December 2018). “[Hijabophobia: A Closed Eye Challenge towards Muslim Friendly Hospitality Services in Malaysia](#)”. *Malaysian Journal of Syariah and Law*. **6** (3): 1–9.

⁶⁵ Hamzeh, Manal (July 2017). “[FIFA's double hijabophobia: A colonialist and Islamist alliance racializing Muslim women soccer players](#)”. *Women's Studies International Forum*. **63**: 11–16.

Whereas, in recent months there has been a surge of incidents wherein students have reported their hijabs being pulled off by teachers and peers,^{66,67,68} and,

Whereas, in a 2015 survey conducted by the European Commission, 13% of respondents indicated they would be completely uncomfortable working with a Muslim,⁶⁹ and,

Whereas, actions ranging from anti-Muslim rhetoric, restrictions on the construction of mosques, and translations of the Qur'an have been on the rise in several countries across different continents and regions;^{70,71,72,73,74,75,76,77,78} ,

Whereas, the government of India under the Modi administration enacted a series of measures fundamentally discriminatory against Muslims, including the Citizenship Amendment Act leading to protests across the country resulting in violent mob attacks and lynchings of Muslims, including students at Aligarh Muslim University;^{79,80,81,82,83} and,

Whereas, Myanmar's armed forces and police are complicit in organizing a major crackdown on people in the Rakhine state and continue to commit genocide and ethnic cleansing against Rohingya Muslims;^{84,85,86,87,88,89,90} and,

⁶⁶ [Muslim teen says she had hijab ripped off her head by 2 students at North Penn High School](#)

⁶⁷ [7-year-old girl says teacher pulled off her hijab](#)

⁶⁸ [Family says daughter's 2nd-grade teacher ripped hijab off her head in NJ school](#)

⁶⁹ Bona, Marzia (2 August 2018). "How widespread is anti-Roma prejudice?". *OBC Transeuropa/EDJNet*.

⁷⁰ Daniel Kalder (8 October 2013). "Russian court bans Qur'an translation". *Guardian*.

⁷¹ Husna Haq (9 October 2013). "Russia blacklists translation of the Quran". *Christian Science Monitor*.

⁷² "No change for the better: Georgia appears to have moved backwards under Bidzina Ivanishvili". *The Economist*.

⁷³ "Rising tide of Islamophobia engulfs Athens". *Globe and Mail*. Toronto.

⁷⁴ Ben McPartland (15 February 2013). "Islamophobia has been trivialized in France". *The Local*.

⁷⁵ EDT, Lucy Draper On 5/6/15 at 1:29 PM (6 May 2015). "New report exposes huge rise in racist crime in Europe". *Newsweek*.

⁷⁶ Islamophobia, social distance and fear of terrorism in Australia: a preliminary report

⁷⁷ "Sri Lanka to ban burqa, shut more than 1,000 Islamic schools". *Al Jazeera*.

⁷⁸ "Anti-Muslim violence in Delhi serves Modi well". *The Guardian*.

⁷⁹ "Delhi riots: Violence that killed 53 in Indian capital 'was anti-Muslim pogrom', says top expert". *The Independent*.

⁸⁰ "For Jews, the New Delhi riots have a painfully familiar ring". *The Times of Israel*.

⁸¹ Ellis-Peterson, Hannah; Azizur Rahman, Shaikh (16 March 2020), "Delhi's Muslims despair of justice after police implicated in riots"

⁸² Gettleman, Jeffrey; Abi-Habib, Maria (1 March 2020), "In India, Modi's Policies Have Lit a Fuse", *The New York Times*

⁸³ [Genocide Emergency: India August 2021](#). *Genocide Watch*

⁸⁴ "AP finds mass graves, latest evidence of Rohingya genocide in Myanmar". CBS News.

⁸⁵ "U.N. genocide advisor: Myanmar waged 'scorched-earth campaign' against the Rohingya". *Los Angeles Times*.

⁸⁶ "UN official convinced of Myanmar Rohingya 'genocide'". CNN

⁸⁷ "U.N. calls for Myanmar generals to be tried for genocide, blames Facebook for incitement."

⁸⁸ "Myanmar Rohingya: UN says military leaders must face genocide charges." *BBC News*

⁸⁹ "Investigators call for genocide prosecutions over slaughter of Rohingyas." *CBS News*

⁹⁰ "UN's top court orders Myanmar to protect Rohingya from genocide". *The Guardian*.

Whereas, Uighur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and other Turkic Muslims have been subject to arbitrary detention in internment camps in Xinjiang,^{91,92} forced labor,^{93,94} severe suppression of freedom of faith,⁹⁵ political indoctrination,⁹⁶ severe ill-treatment,⁹⁷ forced sterilization,⁹⁸ forced contraception,^{99,100} forced abortion,^{101,102} and a variety of other human rights abuses tantamount to ethnocide,^{103,104} and genocide;^{105,106,107,108} and,

Whereas, Muslim men are targets of vilification and the increased perception of posing a threat, as displayed by the Srebrenica genocide;¹⁰⁹ and,

Whereas, a new report co-authored by Enes Bayrakli has found that Islamophobia has reached a “tipping point” in Europe;¹¹⁰ and,

Whereas, Muslims have been noted to receive disproportionate amounts of screening and background checks at airport and security checkpoints;¹¹¹ and,

Whereas, a 21 July 2014 Human Rights Watch report outlining a pattern of anti-Muslim acts in the U.S., it was found that discriminatory investigations, use of overly broad material support charges, prosecutorial tactics that may violate fair trial rights, harsh and at times abusive conditions of confinement, including but not limited to prolonged solitary confinement, severe restrictions on

⁹¹ Waller, James; Albornoz, Mariana Salazar (2021). "Crime and No Punishment? China's Abuses Against the Uyghurs". *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*. **22** (1): 100–111.

⁹² Danilova, Maria (27 November 2018). "Woman describes torture, beatings in Chinese detention camp". *Associated Press*.

⁹³ Turdush, Rukiye; Fiskesjö, Magnus (28 May 2021). "Dossier: Uyghur Women in China's Genocide". *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal*. **15** (1): 22–43

⁹⁴ Sudworth, John (December 2020). "China's 'tainted' cotton". *BBC News*.

⁹⁵ Congressional Research Service (18 June 2019). "Uyghurs in China". *Congressional Research Service*.

⁹⁶ "Muslim minority in China's Xinjiang face 'political indoctrination': Human Rights Watch". *Reuters*. 9 September 2018.

⁹⁷ "Responsibility of States under International Law to Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, China". Bar Human Rights Committee.

⁹⁸ "China cuts Uighur births with IUDs, abortion, sterilization". *Associated Press*.

⁹⁹ "China Forces Birth Control on Uighurs to Suppress Population". *Voice of America*.

¹⁰⁰ Samuel, Sigal (10 March 2021). "China's genocide against the Uyghurs, in 4 disturbing charts". *Vox*.

¹⁰¹ "China: Uighur women reportedly sterilized in attempt to suppress population". *Deutsche Welle*. 1 July 2020.

¹⁰² "China 'using birth control' to suppress Uighurs". *BBC News*. 29 June 2020.

¹⁰³ "'Cultural genocide': China separating thousands of Muslim children from parents for 'thought education'". *The Independent*.

¹⁰⁴ Finnegan, Ciara (2020). "The Uyghur Minority in China: A Case Study of Cultural Genocide, Minority Rights and the Insufficiency of the International Legal Framework in Preventing State-Imposed Extinction". *Laws*. **9**: 1.

¹⁰⁵ "Uighurs: 'Credible case' China carrying out genocide". *BBC News*. 8 February 2021.

¹⁰⁶ Alecci, Scilla (14 October 2020). "British lawmakers call for sanctions over Uighur human rights abuses". *International Consortium of Investigative Journalists*.

¹⁰⁷ Piotrowicz, Ryszard (14 July 2020). "Legal expert: forced birth control of Uighur women is genocide – can China be put on trial?". *The Conversation*.

¹⁰⁸ Falconer, Rebecca (9 March 2021). "Report: "Clear evidence" China is committing genocide against Uyghurs". *Axios*.

¹⁰⁹ "Bosnia's Srebrenica massacre 25 years on – in pictures". *BBC News*. 10 July 2020.

¹¹⁰ Islamophobia in Europe 'has worsened' in 2020: Report

¹¹¹ "Traveling While Muslim Complicates Air Travel". *The New York Times*

communicating in pretrial detention, and excessive lengthening of sentences and draconian conditions post-conviction occurred;¹¹² and,

Whereas, a 23 March 2019 report by The Intercept highlighted how the Justice Department has routinely, systematically, and disproportionately utilized terrorism charges against Muslim perpetrators of violent crimes as part of a larger pattern of sustaining the view that Muslims are the principal perpetrators of egregious attacks;¹¹³ and,

Whereas, in a June 2021 study published by the University of Southern California Annenberg's Inclusion Initiative wherein the top 200 popular films across the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand were analyzed, the following was found:

1. While Muslims constitute the most racially and ethnically diverse religious group in the world and the United States, 66.7% of the character shown were of Middle Eastern/North African background, reinforcing the stereotype of an equation between Arab and Muslim identity.
2. Of the 200 films, 90.5% (181) films (84.32% of 32 Australian films, 91% of 100 U.S. films. 92.1% of 63.3 U.K. films, and 100% of 5 New Zealand films) did not feature even a single speaking Muslim character.
3. Of the Muslim characters shown, only 23.6% were female (25.5% in the U.S., 36.7% in the U.K., 15.9% in Australia, 0% in New Zealand).
4. Out of 8,965 speaking characters, 1.6% were Muslim (1.1% in the U.S., 1.1% in the U.K., 5.6% in Australia, 0% in New Zealand).
 - a. Seven were children.
 - b. Out of 23 animated movies, there was not a single Muslim character.
5. Across the 200 films from 2017 to 2019, a mere six featured a Muslim character in a lead solo, duo, or ensemble role.
 - a. Five of them were Muslim men who were young adults and teens.
 - b. One of them was a Muslim woman who shared the lead role with two other men.
 - c. Five of the six were featured in films set in the past.
6. 51.1% Muslim characters were set in films set in the past.
7. Only one brief portrayal of a Muslim character was set in the United States
8. Of 41 Muslim primary and secondary characters:
 - a. 53.7% were targets of violence.
 - b. 39% were perpetrators of violence.
 - c. 19% died by the end of the film.
 - i. Five out of the eight died by violent means.
 - d. 58.5% were immigrants, migrants, or refugees
 - e. 87.8% spoke no English or spoke with an accent (as compared to that of the production/host audience).
 - f. 75.6% wore clothes associated with their faith.
 - g. In a qualitative analysis, it was found that Muslim women were by and large shown as romantic partners and family members while Muslim characters were displayed in secondary roles assisting other lead white roles;

¹¹² "Illusion of Justice: Human Rights Abuses in US Terrorism Prosecutions". *Human Rights Watch*.

¹¹³ "Domestic Terrorism: FBI Prosecutions". *The Intercept*.

9. A number of demeaning and racist slurs were utilized against Muslim characters in the films;¹¹⁴ and,

Whereas, Executive Order 13769, colloquially known as the ‘Muslim Ban’, issued in 2017, was a culmination of long-standing anti-Muslim fear mongering, hatred, prejudice, and attacks at an institutional and societal level, was a fundamentally discriminatory policy aimed at restricting immigration on the basis of religious identity, engineered to disadvantage Muslims of varying nationalities and residents of the U.S., violated the “basic principles” of the United Nations,¹¹⁵ and was illegal under international law;¹¹⁶ and,

Whereas, a 25 February 2016 report by the Islamophobia Working Group at the University of Michigan found that in regards to political climate, “Since September 11, 2001, there has been a rise in anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment across the nation. In the year after 9/11, the FBI reported a 1600% increase in hate crimes against Arabs and Muslims. Since then, hate crimes have been commonplace and have increased following other terrorist attacks committed by Arabs and Muslims, such as in Paris in November 2015 and the San Bernardino, California shootings in December 2015. The recent Super Survey published by the Bridge Initiative at Georgetown University reveals two decades of Americans having an unfavorable view of Arabs and Islam. Notable in recent statistics is that 4 in 10 Americans view Islam unfavorably; 47% of Americans said that Islam was more likely to encourage violence than other religions; and 43% percent of American Muslims have faced hostility, been racially profiled, or attacked. At the University of Michigan, a survey of 200 students who self-identified as Muslim American revealed that 63% have experienced discrimination based on their religious identity. Another survey of 110 students who identify as Muslim at the University of Michigan indicated that 50% have witnessed the perpetuation of Islamophobia on campus by staff, faculty, and students. Anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment in the current political climate is not only the result of individual perspectives and actions, but also of state policies and practices. Post-9/11 domestic and foreign policies, from the USA PATRIOT Act to invading Afghanistan and Iraq, to the NYPD’s surveillance of mosques and Muslim Students’ Associations on college campuses, have positioned Arabs, Muslims, and those who appear to be Arab or Muslim as suspected potential terrorists. Discrimination, intimidation, threats, and violence targeting American Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslim) and Islamic institutions are routine occurrences. Mosque burnings, hate crimes, workplace and airline discrimination have become commonplace. Murdering Muslims or those who appear to be Muslim is also not unusual. Last year, three Muslim students in Chapel Hill, North Carolina were killed, and in 2012, seven Sikhs were killed in the Oak Creek Massacre in Wisconsin. Islamophobia does not affect only Muslims; it also affects those who are erroneously assumed to be Muslim (even though Muslims are of all backgrounds) – this includes Arab Christians, Iranian Jews, Sikhs, and Hindus. Often people most at risk are those who display religious symbols – the hijab or headscarf, a long beard, or a Sikh turban. Though anti-Muslim rhetoric by public figures and political leaders is not new, a few recent examples include Republican Presidential Candidate Ben Carson’s statements last September that a Muslim should not be president because Islam is not compatible with American values and the Constitution; and Republican Presidential Candidate

¹¹⁴ [Missing and Maligned: The Reality of Muslims in Popular Global Movies](#)

¹¹⁵ Somini Sengupta, U.N. Leader Says Trump Visa Bans 'Violate Our Basic Principles', *The New York Times* (February 1, 2017).

¹¹⁶ "U.N. rights chief says Trump's travel ban is illegal". *Reuters*. January 30, 2017.

Donald Trump's statement last December that all Muslim refugees and immigrants should be banned from entering the U.S. Such public statements have the effect of normalizing anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment. These government policies, public opinion polls, discriminatory actions, and rhetoric reveal a refusal to understand that the 1.6 billion Muslims of the world are people like any other people, with a wide range of experiences and characteristics. It is simply not possible to describe 1.6 billion people with any kind of accuracy. It reveals that Islam is perceived in a very reductive way, as having nothing in common with Christianity and Judaism, as un-American, as violent, and as threatening.

As if this political climate was not enough to contend with, many students who identify as Arab, Muslim, or MENA are involved in campus activism to spread awareness on the impacts of complex geopolitical shifts in the Middle East.¹¹⁷ and,

Whereas, the aforementioned group found in regards to campus climate that "The University of Michigan is certainly not shielded from the larger political climate in the U.S. Students have reported microaggressions from faculty and students; verbal and physical assaults on the bus and on the streets; the receipt of hate mail; hostility toward activists organizing around Palestine and other MENA-related issues such as the Winter '15 *American Sniper* incident; and a reluctance to call the police or to report bias incidents. The examples below are based on personal communications; a focus group conducted with some Arab and Muslim undergraduate students; informal surveys with Arab, Muslim, and MENA students; and an Islamophobia Working Group meeting. In a February 2016 survey of Anti-Muslim Bias at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, Muslim, MENA and South Asian alumni and undergraduate and graduate student respondents reported overwhelmingly being the target of and/or witnessing bias and discrimination against those perceived to be Muslim (or Arab) in classrooms, in and around campus, and from students, faculty and staff. Alarming, threats of violence, verbal harassment, and fear and anxiety were expressed. 50% of the respondents reported University of Michigan staff, faculty, students and institutions perpetuate Islamophobia against Muslim, MENA and South Asian communities on campus and 33% of all respondents reported feeling marginalized in U-M classrooms. The survey overwhelmingly cited social media, namely Yik Yak, as a site of discrimination and racism. Survey comments included:

1. Fear and reluctance around self-expression of Muslim, MENA and South Asian identities in the classroom and on and around campus.
2. Concerns over both mental and physical safety and an ineffectual bias reporting system. One respondent reported the most unsafe s/he ever felt was "on this campus."
3. Lack of institutional response to matters on campus related to Islamophobia such as Harbaugh's comments in the WI/15 *American Sniper* incident
4. A need for education and awareness workshops and programming for the campus community, namely faculty and staff. One respondent noted the negative impact on the learning process: "While all of these experiences are problematic and upsetting, when they take place in classroom discussions, students in the minority, without defense from the instructor or even in the face of discrimination by the instructor, often feel insulted or attacked with no means of rebuttal or self-defense. *It hinders one's ability to participate, to learn, and to feel like a respected or valued member of an intellectual discussion.*"

As with other forms of discrimination and bias, it impacts the learning process and emotional and physical well-being of these U-M community members. While the information below is based on

¹¹⁷ [Islamophobia Working Group 25 February, 2016 Report](#)

undergraduate students, the February 2016 Anti Muslim Bias Survey reflected graduate student concerns. Additional communication with the Muslim graduate student population at the University of Michigan revealed similar issues. They too encounter threats and hateful remarks as a result of the expression of their faith. Some graduate students in professional programs reported difficult scenarios with advisors who made dismissive comments about Islam, implying that they do not take their Muslim students seriously. Graduate students often find it difficult to challenge such situations without institutional support. They fear that such interactions with advisors could directly influence their progress and careers”;¹¹⁸ and,

Whereas, the aforementioned group further found in regards to microaggressions and harassment that “Students have reported insensitive, inappropriate, or offensive comments about Arabs and Islam from faculty members both inside and outside of the classroom. The power dynamics often prevent students from addressing issues with their professor or GSI ... Students report a lack of cultural competency across the university; they often feel as if they are expected to be spokespersons for their identities. Some students tend to take courses with the same few faculty members to minimize experiences with microaggressions in the classroom”;¹¹⁹ and,

Whereas, the aforementioned group highlighted specific incidents that led to students feeling unsupported by the administration mentioned within the larger context of the Islamophobia Working Group’s report (attached as Appendix A);

Whereas, following Central Student Government’s 10 May, 2021 Executive Press Release, a number of leading figures in the student body who co-signed the statement in solidarity, faced threats, were victims of explicit Islamophobic slurs, and were harassed to a muted response by the University administration; and,

Whereas, Muslim representatives on student governments and leaders of MENA, Muslim, and South Asian affiliated clubs have noted to receive comments ranging from questions with Islamophobic undertones to unambiguous racism; and,

Whereas, on 8 December 2021 acts of vandalism were committed in the prayer room at Arizona State University, including the burning and tearing apart of the Islamic holy book, the Qur’an, with defilement of Muslim prayer spaces having also occurred at the University of Michigan in the past;¹²⁰ and,

Whereas, nation-wide assaults on mosques have escalated in the past few months;¹²¹ and,

Whereas, it is within the scope and duty of LSA SG to comment on events of inside and outside of campus life that play such an important role in deconstructing structures of colonialism, racism, and global oppression.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ [ASU police make arrest in vandalism incident involving Quran in campus library prayer room](#)

¹²¹ [Nationwide Anti-Mosque Activity. ACLU](#)

Be it therefore resolved, as part of LSA SG’s commitment to combat racial injustice and prejudice actively, it is important to begin by recognizing U-M’s long history of neglecting the voices of marginalized and minority groups, including those of Muslim, MENA, and South Asian backgrounds; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG recognizes that as a university, Michigan engages in research for those weapons manufacturers that sell arms and conduct deals to enforce systems of racial, ethnic, and religious-based oppression, having been described as a “proxy of the national security state” in academic literature,¹²² and those that are residents of the U.S. pay taxes to further the budget of colonial ventures and domestic surveillance programs targeted at minorities; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG offers earnest support to Muslims in our community, especially those who have family in regions that have been targeted by the oppressive forces of colonialism; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG expresses its solicitude for those innocent individuals, families, communities, peoples, and nations who have been affected by the ‘War on Terror’; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG condemns the documented violations of internationally recognized human rights and law by governments and non-state actors against Muslims; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG calls upon all members of the U-M-community to engage in educational experiences aimed at recognizing systems of oppression and prejudice, including Islamophobia, and actively endeavor to uplift Muslim and other marginalized communities’ voices; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG shall strive to work with the Islamophobia Working Group, Muslim Students’ Association, and other relevant organizations aimed at tackling anti-Muslim racism on campus; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG commits itself to advancing necessary reforms, including those of the Muslim community, needed to ensure a more equitable and inclusive environment on campus; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG unequivocally condemns all acts of Islamophobia on or off-campus; and,

Be it further resolved, students are urged to report instances of Islamophobia or other forms of prejudice, bigotry, or hatred to Dean of Students’ Office as a [Campus Climate Support Concern](#); and,

Be it finally resolved, LSA SG shall co-sign and endorse, as well as repost on relevant LSA SG social media platforms, the 13 December 2021 statement (attached as Appendix B) on Islamophobia put out by Elected Representatives Bilal Irfan and Maria Wajahat, in conjunction with President Tyler Watt and Muslim Students’ Association.

¹²² Elzway, Salem. “Pentagon Midwest: Making the Military-Industrial-Academic Complex (and Its Discontents) at the University of Michigan.” *Michigan Historical Review*, vol. 44, no. 1, Spring 2018, pp. 23–66.

Appendix A



**Including Muslim, Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African Students in the
University's Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
The Islamophobia Working Group
February 25, 2016**

I: Overview

The national climate of Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism impacts students, faculty, and staff at the University of Michigan. Students have reported hostility from faculty and other students; verbal assaults on the streets; the receipt of hate mail; hostility toward activists organizing around MENA-related issues, especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and a reluctance to call the police or to report bias incidents. Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified faculty report various challenges in areas of teaching, research, and service, such as having their authority challenged in the classroom, lack of recognition of the challenge to their research, and being overburdened with unacknowledged service. This report's objective is to identify the experiences of Arab, Muslim, and MENA (Middle Eastern and North African) students and faculty and to suggest ways for the administration to build upon the initiatives that it has already implemented to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus environment for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students. We offer some suggestions on how to build upon existing efforts and propose some additional ideas to improve the climate for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students, staff, and faculty. We structure these suggestions around three categories: resource building, crisis support, and education.

II: Current Political Climate

Since September 11, 2001, there has been a rise in anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment across the nation. In the year after 9/11, the FBI reported a 1600% increase in hate crimes against Arabs and Muslims. Since then, hate crimes have been commonplace and have increased following other terrorist attacks committed by Arabs and Muslims, such as in Paris in November 2015 and the San Bernardino, California shootings in December 2015. The recent [Super Survey](http://bridge.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/The-Super-Survey.pdf)¹²³ published by the Bridge Initiative at Georgetown University reveals two decades of Americans having an unfavorable view of Arabs and Islam. Notable in recent statistics is that 4 in 10 Americans view Islam unfavorably; 47% of Americans said that Islam was more likely to encourage violence than other religions; and 43% percent of American Muslims have faced hostility, been racially profiled, or attacked. At the University of Michigan, a survey of 200 students who self-identified as Muslim American revealed that 63% have experienced discrimination based on their religious identity. Another survey of 110 students who identify as Muslim at the University of Michigan indicated that 50% have witnessed the perpetuation of Islamophobia on campus by staff, faculty, and students.

¹²³ The Super Survey: Two Decades of Americans' Views on Islam & Muslims," The Bridge Initiative, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, 2015, <http://bridge.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/The-Super-Survey.pdf>

Anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment in the current political climate is not only the result of individual perspectives and actions, but also of state policies and practices. Post-9/11 domestic and foreign policies, from the USA PATRIOT Act to invading Afghanistan and Iraq, to the NYPD's surveillance of mosques and Muslim Students' Associations on college campuses, have positioned Arabs, Muslims, and those who appear to be Arab or Muslim as suspected potential terrorists.

Discrimination, intimidation, threats, and violence targeting American Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslim) and Islamic institutions are routine occurrences. Mosque burnings, hate crimes, workplace and airline discrimination have become commonplace. Murdering Muslims or those who appear to be Muslim is also not unusual. Last year, three Muslim students in Chapel Hill, North Carolina were killed, and in 2012, seven Sikhs were killed in the Oak Creek Massacre in Wisconsin. Islamophobia does not affect only Muslims; it also affects those who are erroneously assumed to be Muslim (even though Muslims are of all backgrounds)—this includes Arab Christians, Iranian Jews, Sikhs, and Hindus. Often people most at risk are those who display religious symbols—the hijab or headscarf, a long beard, or a Sikh turban.

Though anti-Muslim rhetoric by public figures and political leaders is not new; a few recent examples include Republican Presidential Candidate Ben Carson's statements last September that a Muslim should not be president because Islam is not compatible with American values and the Constitution; and Republican Presidential Candidate Donald Trump's statement last December that all Muslim refugees and immigrants should be banned from entering the U.S. Such public statements have the effect of normalizing anti Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment.

These government policies, public opinion polls, discriminatory actions, and rhetoric reveal a refusal to understand that the 1.6 billion Muslims of the world are people like any other people, with a wide range of experiences and characteristics. It is simply not possible to describe 1.6 billion people with any kind of accuracy. It reveals that Islam is perceived in a very reductive way, as having nothing in common with Christianity and Judaism, as un-American, as violent, and as threatening.

As if this political climate was not enough to contend with, many students who identify as Arab, Muslim, or MENA are involved in campus activism to spread awareness on the impacts of complex geopolitical shifts in the Middle East. This includes the Israeli occupation on Palestinian life and livelihood. Needless to say, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most polarizing conflicts of our time. The public discourse often privileges Israeli narratives over Palestinian ones. It is a common trend across the country for engagements in this conflict that criticize Israeli government policies to lead to hostility and accusations of anti-Semitism and even of supporting terrorism, rather than a critical analysis of the differentiation of anti-Semitism from critiques of Israeli policies regarding Palestinians.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ Burg, A. (2009) *The Holocaust is over: We must rise from its ashes*. St. Martin's Griffin; Don-Yehiya, E. (2012). *Orthodox and Other American Jews and their Attitude to the State of Israel*. *Israel Studies*, 17 (2), 120-128; Mearsheimer, J. & Walt, S. (2008). *The Israel lobby and U.S. foreign policy*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux; and Sokhey, A.E., & Djupe, P. A. (2006). *Rabbi Engagement with the Peace Process in the Middle East*. *Social Science Quarterly*, 87 (4), 903-923.

III: The Impact of the Political Climate on Students on Campus

The University of Michigan is certainly not shielded from the larger political climate in the U.S. Students have reported microaggressions from faculty and students; verbal and physical assaults on the bus and on the streets; the receipt of hate mail; hostility toward activists organizing around Palestine and other MENA-related issues such as the Winter '15 *American Sniper* incident; and a reluctance to call the police or to report bias incidents. The examples below are based on personal communications; a focus group conducted with some Arab and Muslim undergraduate students; informal surveys with Arab, Muslim, and MENA students; and an Islamophobia Working Group meeting.

In a February 2016 survey of Anti-Muslim Bias at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Muslim, MENA and South Asian alumni and undergraduate and graduate student respondents reported overwhelmingly being the target of and/or witnessing bias and discrimination against those perceived to be Muslim (or Arab) in classrooms, in and around campus, and from students, faculty and staff. Alarming, threats of violence, verbal harassment, and fear and anxiety were expressed. 50% of the respondents reported University of Michigan staff, faculty, students and institutions perpetuate Islamophobia against Muslim, MENA and South Asian communities on campus and 33% of all respondents reported feeling marginalized in U-M classrooms. The survey overwhelmingly cited social media, namely Yik Yak, as a site of discrimination and racism.

Survey comments included:

- Fear and reluctance around self-expression of Muslim, MENA and South Asian identities in the classroom and on and around campus.
- Concerns over both mental and physical safety and an ineffectual bias reporting system.
 - One respondent reported the most unsafe s/he ever felt was "on this campus."
- Lack of institutional response to matters on campus related to Islamophobia, such as Harbaugh's comments in the WI/15 *American Sniper* incident.
- A need for education and awareness workshops and programming for the campus community, namely faculty and staff.
 - One respondent noted the negative impact on the learning process: "While all of these experiences are problematic and upsetting, when they take place in classroom discussions, students in the minority, without defense from the instructor or even in the face of discrimination by the instructor, often feel insulted or attacked with no means of rebuttal or self-defense. *It hinders one's ability to participate, to learn, and to feel like a respected or valued member of an intellectual discussion.*"

As with other forms of discrimination and bias, it impacts the learning process and emotional and physical well-being of these UM community members.

While the information below is based on undergraduate students, the February 2016 Anti Muslim Bias Survey reflected graduate student concerns. Additional communication with the Muslim graduate student population at the University of Michigan revealed similar issues. They too encounter threats and hateful remarks as a result of the expression of their faith. Some graduate students in professional programs reported difficult scenarios with advisors who made dismissive comments about Islam, implying that they do not take their Muslim students seriously. Graduate students often find it difficult to challenge such

situations without institutional support. They fear that such interactions with advisors could directly influence their progress and careers.

Microaggressions and Harassment

Students have reported insensitive, inappropriate, or offensive comments about Arabs and Islam from faculty members both inside and outside of the classroom. The power dynamics often prevent students from addressing issues with their professor or GSI. One example from inside the classroom is associating Islam with terrorism in a class on warfare. Students reported an instance in an introduction to Arabic course in which they were asked on the first day as an icebreaker where they were on 9/11, associating the learning of the Arabic language with terrorism. Other students reported learning militarized words (e.g. military, war, United Nations, terrorism) in first year Arabic and not learning numbers or colors until the second year of language instruction. Examples of microaggressions outside of the classroom include a professor asking a student if she is denying Israel's right to exist by wearing a necklace of a map of Palestine. Furthermore, MENA-identified female students report that they are asked often about their hijab. Students report that because it is a challenge to explain why the incident was offensive and then to ask someone with more authority to talk with the professor, they hesitate to take it further. Students report a lack of cultural competency across the university; they often feel as if they are expected to be spokespersons for their identities. Some students tend to take courses with the same few faculty members to minimize experiences with microaggressions in the classroom.

Campus Incidents

Particular incidents on campus have led to students feeling unsupported by the administration.

When the film *American Sniper* was released, it was [controversial](#) because some viewers stated that the film inspired them to want to join the U.S. military to kill Arabs.¹²⁵ One viewer posted to Facebook: "American Sniper' made me appreciate soldiers 100x more and hate Muslims 1000000x more." The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee reported an increase in hate crimes against Arabs and Muslims after the release of the film.

Last year's *American Sniper* campus controversy (Winter 2015) led to students receiving hate email and Facebook posts, documented at <http://umgotmail.tumblr.com>, that stated, for example, "Your 'religion' is a direct contradiction to our Bill of Rights and an insult to all Americans. Please take yourselves and all of your followers back to the Mideast and stay there," and "Go kill yourself." The hate posts include both visually offensive images as well as verbally offensive speech. Many students felt unsafe walking around campus alone during this time. One student received a death threat on the diag. She called DPS, waited over an hour, and when the officer arrived, her concerns were minimized. Another student reported that she had been followed home and harassed by strangers asking if she was "Arabic." The student didn't call the police because she didn't think it would be worthwhile. Students often no longer report incidents because they don't expect to be heard.

¹²⁵ Dominique Mosbergen, "American Sniper' Triggers Flood of Anti-Muslim Venom, Civil Rights Group Warns," *Huffington Post*, January, 24, 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/24/american-sniper-anti-muslim-threats_n_6537950.html

Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified students state that they would have felt safer if they had been in direct communication with the administration and had more administrative support throughout the process. Support could have been in the form of an email from the Dean of Students office or the President (condemning the hate mail) or an email to deans encouraging faculty to be as flexible as possible in arranging accommodations for targeted students. Someone in the administration told a student that the administration had supported not screening the film; yet the administration then reversed its decision and proceeded with the screening without informing students. Students say the university's decision might have contributed to an increase in bias incidents given that those who sent hate email and posts were empowered to engage in anti-Arab and anti Muslim hate speech as a result of the university's decision (and the coach's tweet).

This particular moment has had a lasting impact and has resulted in a sense of apathy and anxiety among students. One student stated that there is an overall feeling that the U-M administration "does not care about them" or take their issues of safety seriously. As a result some Arab, Muslim, and/or MENA students have reported that they do not feel safe on campus, and furthermore, they do not feel that reporting their issues is worthwhile because they no longer expect any positive outcome; instead, they feel they will only make themselves vulnerable and relive traumatic experiences. These comments reveal the impact on the emotional and psychological well being of students - well being necessary for optimal academic performance and engagement.

Another example of students feeling marginalized by an administrative response was after the terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015. Arab, Muslim, and MENA students were upset by an email communication sent from Dean Laura Blake Jones to students that expressed support for "our French students studying in Ann Arbor, for others directly affected by this situation and all international students," but did not explicitly mention Muslim students, who were negatively impacted by the attack in Paris. These students took this communication as evidence that the administration prioritizes some students over others and avoids taking a stance to protect Muslim students on campus during times of increased anti-Muslim sentiment across the country. Arab, Muslim, and MENA students would have liked to see the administration issue a public condemnation of Islamophobia, and a public offering of assistance and support to these specific communities during that time of crisis, which were done later by SACUA, Dean Martin, Associate Dean Dillard, and Assistant Dean Horton.

Student activism around Palestine

Leaders of the #UMDivest campaign in Winter 2014 faced targeted [backlash](#) for their organizing around Palestine.¹²⁶ Students in support of the movement were also met with [hate mail](#) on multiple forms of social media, stating, for example, "Get out, you Palestinian murderer."¹²⁷ Students turned to "Michigan in Color," an opinion section of *The Michigan Daily* reserved for people of color, to voice their frustrations with the campus climate surrounding Palestine. One student described her experiences in terms of having to defend her humanity. Students who participated in #UMDivest in 2014 reported that they were accused of anti-Semitism and were slandered in personal ways that threatened their emotional and psychological well-being as well as their academic and professional career. During these instances,

¹²⁶ Yazan Kherallah, "Viewpoint: Pineapple Express," *The Michigan Daily*, March 28, 2014, <http://www.michigandaily.com/opinion/03viewpoint-pineapple-express28>

¹²⁷ <http://umdivestfanmail.tumblr.com>

many Arab, Muslim, and Palestinian student activists did not feel protected by the University and concluded that the University was not made for them.

Students who engage in pro-Israeli activism have institutional support, whether through Hillel, Central Student Government, or other units, advisors and resources. In contrast, students who engage in pro-Palestinian activism do not have comparable support. Faculty who want to support them often shy away from the issue for numerous reasons, including fear of slander or negative impact on tenure applications given the power dynamics involved in discussing Israeli politics.¹²⁸ This dynamic mirrors the larger U.S. political context in which the U.S. government has consistently supported Israeli state policies at the expense of Palestinian lives and sovereignty.¹²⁹

Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified students operate within a climate of wariness at best and mistrust at worst in their relations with the administration as a result of these negative experiences. They have concluded that the needs of the administration and other students far outweigh concerns for their own safety and their sense of belonging on this campus.

IV: Faculty Experiences

Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified faculty report various challenges in areas of teaching, research, and service.

Teaching

The experiences of Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified faculty often parallel those of faculty of color.¹³⁰ In particular, Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified women faculty often face accusations of bias and challenges to their authority in the classroom, often from white male students. They also often face challenges to their grading. Some faculty who teach courses specifically on Arab and Muslim topics, often face criticisms from students because the course does not also cover other groups. As a result, some students conclude that the exclusion of other groups makes the class biased.

Faculty who teach about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict also face hostility in the classroom and accusations of bias from certain students, regardless of how much effort they put into presenting multiple perspective on the issue. Some faculty avoid the topic entirely both inside and outside of the classroom in order to avoid the potential harassment that comes with it and to avoid any potential harm to their tenure process. In both of these examples, student attitudes can negatively influence evaluations of the instructor and class. This is of particular concern for assistant professors on the tenure track. Some faculty feel that the time and energy they put into classroom management and preparing lectures that will then be challenged goes unacknowledged by the administration.

¹²⁸ (<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/08/16/university-michigan-rescinds-invitation-alice-walker>).

¹²⁹ Sasson, T.(2010). Mass mobilization to direct engagement: American Jews' changing relationship to Israel. *Israel Studies*, 15 (2), 173-195; Shain, Y. (2002). The Role of Diasporas in Conflict Perpetuation or Resolution *SAIS Review*, 22 (2), 115-144; and Weinzimmer, J. (2011). *Homeland conflict and identity for Palestinian and Jewish Israeli Americans*. El Paso, TX: LFB Scholarly Publishing.

¹³⁰ Chavella T. Pittman, "Race and Gender Oppression in the Classroom: The Experiences of Women Faculty of Color with White Male Students," *Teaching Sociology* 38(3), 183-196.

Research

Those faculty whose research is on Islam and/or Arabs face challenges given that this field is not as advanced as those of other underrepresented groups.

There are no specialized journals, especially in the social sciences, which have reputable impact factors that are encouraging work on this population. This means that if "mainstream" journals do not accept their work, they can't go to a specialized journal because its impact factor will not be considered acceptable for tenure requirements. Reviewers often come with their own set of biases, often asking questions such as, "Why is it necessary to examine issues of discrimination for Muslims? How are these experiences likely to be different than what we already know for other groups?" Such questions are not necessarily asked regarding research on other groups where it is a given that discrimination has detrimental consequences. Often, funding agencies that focus on social issues tend to prioritize racial and ethnic discrimination over religious discrimination. Without funding, it is almost impossible to conduct quantitative or qualitative research.

Faculty accomplishments are often met with hate mail. One faculty member's recent publication was featured in the University Record, leading to hate mail. Another faculty member was featured on the Wolverines of Ann Arbor Facebook page. It led to hateful comments because he states that he teaches about anti-Arab racism. The offensive posts were removed. Another faculty member receives hate mail whenever she publishes an op ed or any kind of public scholarship. She has developed a routine of calling the campus police approximately once per semester to report it. As a result, some Arab and Muslim faculty prefer not to highlight and celebrate their accomplishments publicly; which goes against the norm and unsaid expectation that departments publicize faculty achievements. This scenario highlights the need of departments to think about strategies to protect faculty from these kinds of negative reactions as well as value their work even if it is not publicized in the same way as that of others.

Recruiting graduate students who are interested in these topics is very difficult considering the lack of diversity in LSA graduate pools. Faculty also have to take into consideration the impact of the climate upon graduate students who conduct research on issues that draw considerable scrutiny and harassment, such as Islamophobia and Palestine, and personally see to their emotional and psychological well being. This is another example of the unacknowledged work of Arab, Muslim and MENA faculty that contributes towards creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment on campus.

Service

Arab and Muslim faculty tend to mentor a critical mass of Arab and Muslim students who feel marginalized at the university. These students come to faculty members because they don't know where else to go. Like other faculty of color, Arab, Muslim, and MENA faculty try to provide validation that these students have a place on this campus. However, this kind of advising requires time and effort and often gets unacknowledged as service and as contributing to diversity on campus by the department and the college.

When there is a rise in terrorism or Islamophobia, the same few faculty members are called upon to give

lectures or advise the administration. The problem is not that these faculty members do not want to be called upon; rather, because the numbers of these faculty are small, the burden is extremely high. These faculty members are asked for more labor with little consideration of the impact on their already extensive time commitment. Faculty who are needed to do significant advising or campus education should, at the very least, receive course releases and stipends to support them in doing this work. This problem also points to the need for more faculty members who do this kind of work to reduce the individual burden of speaking and advising on topics related to the national climate.

V: A More Inclusive Campus Environment

The national context of Islamophobia and the political environment surrounding the conflict in Israel and Palestine create a complex challenge for college campuses. Nonetheless, a few measures could contribute to creating a more inclusive campus environment for Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified students to thrive and feel a sense of belonging.

We acknowledge the administration's efforts and the strides it has made to create a more inclusive campus environment for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students over the last few years. The administration has been responsive to student needs in crisis situations. The efforts initiated by the administration provide an important foundation upon which to build. These are a few examples, and we are likely overlooking others:

- In response to student requests for an Arab and Muslim-themed multicultural lounge, staff members from Housing, the Dean of Students office, and other administrative units worked with students to create the Edward Said lounge in North Quad that was officially inaugurated in fall 2015.
- The Dean of Students' office's hire of a Bias Response Coordinator reflects recognition of Arab and Muslims experiences with bias and need for support.
- The arrangement for a Muslim Chaplain, funded through the Felicity Foundation, is also a welcome initiative to meet the religious needs of Muslim students.
- During the *American Sniper* incident, President Schlissel, VP Royster Harper, and Dean Laura Blake Jones met with students to learn from their experiences.
- MESA, the Dean of Students office, and Housing have made consistent efforts to be more inclusive of Arab and Muslim students through programming, outreach, and trainings.
- Dean Martin approved the formalizing of Arab and Muslim American Studies as an official Ethnic Studies unit within the Department of American Culture as of Fall 2015 (the program was founded in 2005). A hire for a faculty member who specializes in Muslim American Studies has also been approved.

- MESA launched Arab Heritage Month last year and is planning another one this year.
- OAMI launched an Arab graduation ceremony last year and is planning another one for this year.
- After the recent terrorist attacks in Paris, multiple administrative units responded. The Assistant Dean and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education took the initiative to collaborate with Arab and Muslim students in organizing an event, “Sharing Stories, Building Allyhood: Students Speak Out Against Islamophobia.” This event was successful not only in educating the campus community, but in providing institutional support to Arab and Muslim students. Also, President Schlissel and VP Harper invited Arab, Muslim, and MENA students to breakfast after the Paris attacks. Along similar lines, mass emails were sent out by Dean Martin and Associate Dean Dillard to underscore that Muslims are part of the U-M community and SACUA passed a resolution in support of U-M’s Muslim community.

Below, we offer some suggestions on how to build on the effort that the administration has already initiated to create a more inclusive campus environment for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students, staff, and faculty. We structure these suggestions around three categories: resource building, crisis support, and education.

Resource Building

- a) Hire more Arab/Muslim/MENA identified faculty and staff: Given the importance for institutional diversity for students to have faculty in their identity group, we suggest additional hiring at both the faculty and staff levels. This effort would also decrease the burden on the few faculty members who mentor students and seek to educate the campus on the impacts of anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia. Various administrative units would benefit from staff members who are knowledgeable about the issues this group of students face.
- b) Add a distinct designation for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students and faculty on the undergraduate application and on pool reports when faculty and staff are hired. The U.S. Census has plans to include a MENA category in the 2020 Census. Because of Census classifications, Arab students have been counted as white and not counted as adding to diversity initiatives. Data on religion is not collected. We would suggest tracking Arab, Middle Eastern, and South Asian populations in data collected about demographics at UM or consulting with students and community leaders on developing a more appropriate option than the existing one.
- c) Continue and increase support and recognition of Ethnic Studies units. Ethnic Studies at the University of Michigan and at campuses across the country offer courses that educate the student body on questions of race and racism and also empower underrepresented students by validating their experiences of marginalization and providing academic frameworks to address this marginalization. The Department of American Culture houses an Arab and Muslim American Studies (AMAS) program, one of only three in the country (the other two being at UM-Dearborn and San Francisco State University). AMAS offers a minor, internship opportunities, programming, courses, and advising to students. The program offers students an institutional “safe space” – sometimes physically and more often than not,

intellectually. Many Arab, Muslim, and MENA students take Arab and Muslim American Studies courses because they see themselves reflected in the academic curriculum and seek out Arab and Muslim-sensitive faculty or Arab and Muslim-identified faculty. AMAS has provided safe study spaces during finals and also during the *American Sniper* screening. AMAS does the work of creating a place of belonging for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students and in offering classes and diversity-related curriculum. Ethnic Studies directors do not receive the same kind of support as, for example, a director of an area studies institute. Furthermore, Ethnic Studies programs receive \$9,600 per year for programming, which does not compare to how other units are funded. More funding is needed to support the director positions, for programming to educate the campus community, and to support the work of students and student groups on campus. Additional funding would support Ethnic Studies units in making a greater impact on campus.

d) Increase funding for student programming: There are numerous Arab, Muslim, and MENA student groups who organize educational and cultural events to combat discrimination. Students suggest additional funding in the form of a five-year perpetual plan for these student groups. Students should be consulted on the best structure for allocating, approving, and implementing programming proposals by student organizations (e.g. Dean of Students, MESA, AMAS, etc.).

e) Create more spaces for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students: The Edward Said lounge is a significant effort on the part of the university administration to create a more inclusive environment for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students and reflects a responsiveness to these students' needs. Students have reported a need for another lounge space, one that is not restricted to dorm residences, but that could be used by any Arab, Muslim, or MENA student. One survey respondent said: "We need actual safe spaces. Not like Edward Said, which most people can't get to because it's in the residential part of North Quad or Trotter which is far away and next to the frats which make us uncomfortable at night." We propose another lounge space potentially in the new Trotter House and one on North Campus as well.

f) Provide a Muslim Prayer Space: Observant Muslim students pray five times per day. This is a central facet of the faith. Each prayer must be completed within a limited timeframe, based on a lunar calendar. Having access to a prayer or reflection space is essential to creating an inclusive environment. The Muslim Coalition representing several student organizations on campus surveyed 215 students in Fall 2015 on their use of prayer spaces on campus. The survey revealed that a prayer space in Mason hall is needed, given the high traffic in that building. Therefore, we suggest identifying a space in Mason Hall to be a designated prayer space for Muslim students. Based on the survey results, we also suggest providing better privacy in the Shapiro library prayer space; creating a reflection room map; and improving the existing prayer spaces on campus by installing a compass in the ceiling and to add a chair or two and a shelving unit.

g) Formalize the hiring of the Muslim Chaplain.

h) Designate an advocate for graduate students to provide support in cases of unfair treatment by an advisor and/or abuse due to an Islamophobic mindset.

Crisis Support

- a) Improve the Bias Reporting System: While some students have used U-M's bias reporting system, there is a general feeling that reporting will not help them. We suggest that the Dean of Student's office work with Arab, Muslim, and MENA students to improve the system so that students feel truly safe.
- b) Improve the Safe Ride Service: Muslim female students, particularly those who wear the hijab, feel particularly vulnerable to profiling and harassment when waiting for Safe Ride. They report long wait times leading to students concluding that it is an unreliable service.
- c) Create a hate mail policy: Given the frequency in which students have received hateful emails and Facebook posts, students would like to understand whether or not the university policy includes one on email harassment and hate rhetoric sent from umich email accounts. If no such policy exists, we suggest creating one to protect students from harassment and hate mail and providing a means of reporting and dealing with breaches of that policy.
- d) Provide administrative support during crisis situations: During crisis situations, students would appreciate if the Dean of Students (or appropriate office) would communicate with faculty on behalf of students to request feasible extensions and other academic accommodations to support them during times of increased distress due to harassment or being targeted as the result of the political climate on campus.
- e) Send out campus-wide communications during times of crisis: We applaud the recent resolution passed by SACUA, communications sent by Dean Martin and Associate Dean Dillard, and President Schlissel's winter graduation speech that took stances against discrimination targeting Arabs and Muslims. We encourage more of these kinds of targeted communications during times of crisis that highlight an increase in Islamophobia, that emphasize that Muslims are an important part of our campus community, and that discrimination is not tolerated on our campus. We also suggest considering drafting a communication modeled after the U.S. Department of Education's "Dear Colleague" letters.¹³¹ After the Paris terrorist attacks and San Bernardino shootings, the Department of Education issued a letter to urge schools to take measures to ensure that Muslim, Arab and refugee students are free from harassment. Official communications as such have the potential to shape a more inclusive campus environment.

Education

- a) Educate the campus community about the issues Arab, Muslim, and MENA students and faculty face, particularly on how the political climate impacts them and how to reduce microaggressions and bias: The administration has already created some important structures to encourage inclusive teaching practices, such as the LSA Teaching Academy, the CRLT-IGR seminar and various other CRLT workshops, LSA's Institute on Diversity and Climate, and the CRLT Players. Similarly ADVANCE's seminar for faculty who serve on search committees seeks to promote inclusive hiring practices. We

¹³¹ Evie Blad, "Make Schools Welcoming for Muslim, Arab, Refugee Studies, Ed. Dept. Urges," *Education Week*, January 4, 2016,

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rulesforengagement/2016/01/make_school_welcoming_for_muslim_arab_refugee_students_ed_dept_urgues.html and

<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rulesforengagement/safeschoolsletter.pdf>

would suggest using these existing structures to address the issues raised in this report. The urgency of educational workshops cannot be underestimated as world events, biased media and political trends continue to paint pictures of hate and rancor, the public looks to great institutions of higher learning for answers. Thus, the University of Michigan has an opportunity to implement important changes to address the safety and well-being of its students and be an excellent example for many other institutions.

b) Educate the police and other bias responders so that they fully understand the issues involved given the political climate of Islamophobia and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and insist upon punctual response times.

c) Finally, we suggest conducting a systematic survey of Arab, Muslim, and MENA faculty, staff, and students to gain more information. Given that the university does not currently have data on its Arab, Muslim, and MENA community members, the surveys used to create this report were mostly ad hoc. A more systematic data gathering method could yield important insights in identifying strategies towards creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students.

REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE ISLAMOPHOBIA WORKING GROUP

MISSION

Given the recent increase in anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment internationally, the purpose of this group of faculty, staff, and students is to study the climate and its impact on Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified students, faculty, staff and the campus community at large; strategize on how to create a safe and inclusive campus environment for Arab, Muslim, and MENA students and those who are impacted by anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiments (i.e. Sikh, etc.); and create a set of resources for community members, students and faculty included.

GOALS FOR WINTER 2016

1. To draft and submit a report to the administration suggesting ways to include Arab, Muslim, and MENA students in the University of Michigan's strategic plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
2. To create a resource list for Arab, Muslim, and MENA-identified students who are impacted by Islamophobia
3. To create a website that will serve as a clearinghouse for addressing Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism in the classroom

PARTICIPANTS

Faculty

- Samer Ali, Near Eastern Studies
- A7med Al3wami, Intergroup Relations and Sociology
- Charlotte Karem Albrecht, American Culture and Arab and Muslim American Studies
- Evelyn Alsultany, American Culture and Arab and Muslim American Studies
- Carol Bardenstein, Near Eastern Studies
- Rita Chin, History
- Juan Cole, History and Center for Middle East Studies

- Adrienne Dessel, Social Work and Intergroup Relations
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Staff

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- Rima Hassouneh, Center for Engaged Academic Learning (CEAL) · Marjorie Horton, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Education, LSA · Zikra Hussein, Bias Incidence Response Coordinator, Dean of Students Office · Diala Khalife, Project Leader and Research Assistant, The Program on Intergroup Relations (IGR)
- Dahlia Petrus, Internship Coordinator, American Culture
- Leena Safi, Felicity Foundation
- Mohammad Tayssir Safi, Muslim Chaplain, Felicity Foundation · Ayeza Siddiqi, Program Director, Transfer Connections and University Mentorship Program
- Lana Tolaymat, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Graduate Students

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- Ziah Dean, Biophysics
- Meryam Kamil, American Culture
- Aliza Kazmi, Public Policy
- Naz Khan, Law

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- Tamer Abuhawwah, Kinesiology, Economics, Arab and Muslim American Studies · Haleema Aqel, Communication Studies and Arab and Muslim American Studies · Tina Al-khersan, International Studies and AAPTIS
- Noran Alsabagy, Psychology, Community Action and Social Change, Arab and Muslim American Studies
- Fatima Chowdhury, International Studies, Middle East and North African Studies, Arab and Muslim American Studies
- Jad Elharake, Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience
- Mekarem Eljamal, International Studies, Middle East and North African Studies · Areeba

Jibril, Economics, Political Science, and Arab and Muslim American Studies · Devin Boulos
Jones, Economics and Political Science

· Nicole Khamis, International Studies

· Lamees Mekkaoui, Near Eastern Studies and Women's Studies · Danielle Rabie,
International Studies, Middle East and North African Studies, Arab and Muslim American Studies

· Sahal Saleh, Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience

Appendix B



December 13, 2021

To our Muslim friends and the U-M community at large,

We, as members of LSA Student Government, are appalled by recent [acts of vandalism committed in the prayer room at Arizona State University](#). The desecration of the Islamic holy book, the Quran, as well as considerable damage to the prayer space stand out as abhorrent acts of defilement and dishonor. We recognize that such attacks on religious items and spaces are utilized as a tool to incite fear of physical harm amongst marginalized communities. We stand committed in our goal to foster a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment at the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, as well as the wider university community. In that vein, we unequivocally condemn such actions of vandalism and affirm our support and solidarity with clubs, organizations, and groups committed to providing safe spaces for minority communities and people of faith to practice customs and worship freely.

On our own campus, we are dedicated to combating all acts of racism, prejudice, and actions rooted in fear-mongering, hatred, and bigotry, such as this recent Islamophobic attack. Islamophobia has a long and wide ranging history in this country and at U-M, ranging from anti-Muslim graffiti and slurs to physical threats; this attack is not a new development but rather part of a larger pattern of the systematic vilification of Muslims, particularly women donning a *hijab*, and [assaults on mosques](#). We further recognize that [Islamophobic sentiments have been weaponized as a tool to discredit Muslim activists, speakers, organizations, and thinkers](#).

Thus, we are resolved to stand in solidarity with initiatives dedicated to [curbing the rise in Islamophobia](#). We hope to see the University take further action in addressing the concerns of the entire student body, particularly marginalized and minority groups. Further action on expanding existing prayer spaces and reflection rooms for people of faith is vital to a more equitable environment on campus.

We urge students to email local representatives and spread the word about bill H.R.5665 to establish an Office to Monitor and Combat Islamophobia.

In Solidarity,

Bilal Irfan, LSA SG Vice Chair of Diversity Affairs

Maria Wajahat, LSA SG Vice Chair of Health Affairs

Tyler R. Watt, LSA SG President

Muslim Students' Association