U.S. Department of Education Title VIa grant under the Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program

Title: “Strengthening Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies at the University of Illinois”

Grant period: Sept. 1, 2012-Aug. 31, 2014

Amount: $102,346 for Year 1; $114,546 for Year 2

Purposes:

Objective #1: Expand curricular offerings by:

· seeding a faculty position in Arabic literature and language pedagogy, to meet high student demand for courses in Arabic and provide a regular course on Arabic literature.

· seeding a position in Persian (Farsi), to make Persian a permanent feature of our curriculum, to be taught yearly at elementary, intermediate and advanced levels.

· creating a team-taught, interdisciplinary course for undergraduates on contemporary sociopolitical change in the Middle East, for which a textbook will also be developed

· offering grants for faculty to create and develop new study abroad courses in South Asia and the Middle East

· creating new undergraduate majors in South Asian and Middle Eastern studies

Objective #2: Encourage student study of the languages and cultures of the Middle East and South Asia by

· offering scholarships for students to do summer language study and to take study abroad courses

· showcasing student research on and study in the Middle East and South Asia through a portfolio project to be held in conjunction with a “New Middle East” conference and posted online

Objective #3: Enhance faculty, student and community awareness of the Middle East and South Asia by

· hosting a conference on “The New Middle East,” the proceedings of which will be open to the public and published; two of the speakers will speak in undergraduate forum

· host a series of public lectures on the Middle East and South Asia

· holding a Middle East film series and an Indian Film Festival, held in conjunction with undergraduate courses and aimed at both students and the general public