

Kurdish

POLITICAL STUDIES PROGRAM

A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND PROGRAM

The Kurdish people are one of the largest ethnic groups in the Middle East. They have a strong sense of nationhood and form large populations in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, as well as several European countries. The Kurdish Political Studies Program (KPSP), hosted in the Department of Political Science, is the first academic program dedicated to the study of politics of Kurds and Kurdistan in the United States.

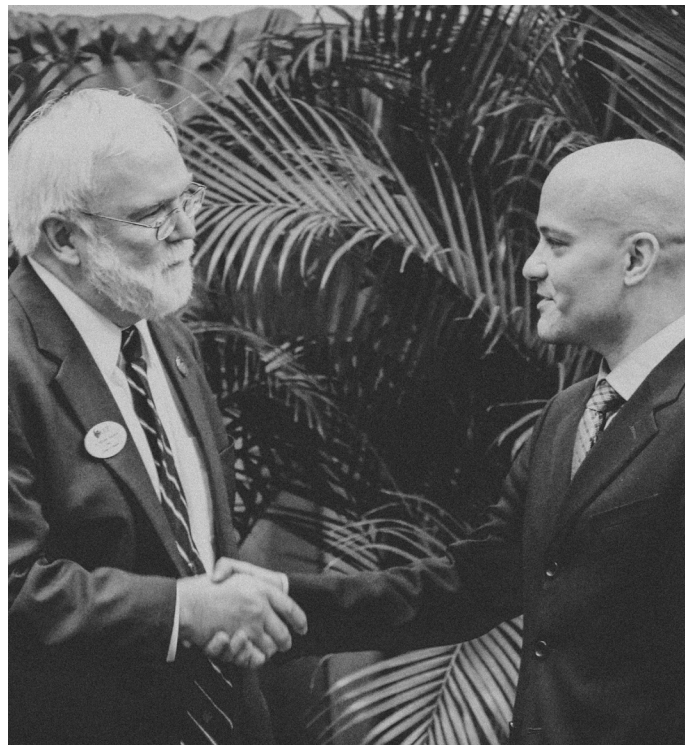
The KSPS promotes academic studies and public awareness of Kurdish politics, organizes events addressing contemporary issues affecting Kurdish people, facilitates exchanges and collaborations between UCF and Kurdish universities, and develops curriculum focusing on themes related to the Kurdish experience. The KSPS closely collaborates with the Global Perspectives Office and the Middle Eastern Studies Program and is integrated with the Security Studies doctoral program.

A DEDICATED ENDOWED CHAIR

The KSPS is also the home of the Jalal Talabani Endowed Chair of Kurdish Political Studies, the only such position in the USA, which was inaugurated on October 29, 2015.

The Endowed Chair was established by a donation led by Najmaldin Karim, M.D., a neurosurgeon, who is also the Governor of Kirkuk. Güneş Murat Tezcür, Ph.D. is the inaugural holder of the Chair. The mission of the Chair includes teaching, research and scholarly pursuits centering on Kurdish Political Studies, and further developing recognized excellence in that field. It also facilitates fellowships, distinguished visitors, public forums, courses, workshops and other offerings that objectively present and

discuss policies and conditions affecting the security, peace and democratic governance of the Kurdish people, including episodes of mass violence such as the Anfal genocide.



(Left) COS Dean **Michael Johnson** and (right) **Güneş Murat Tezcür, Ph.D.**, Inaugural Jalal Talabani Endowed Chair of Kurdish Political Studies.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

The KSPS presents various opportunities to undergraduate students including the Dr. Najmaldin Karim fellowship to undergraduate students. In each fall semester, a committee composed of reviewers from UCF faculty selects a student to be the fellow in the next spring semester. The fellow receives \$500 and conducts research on Kurdish politics under the supervision of Dr. Tezcur for approximately ten hours a week during the semester.

The KSPS also offers courses on Kurdish politics and invites students to attend multiple events every academic year. These events include guest speakers, conferences on various topics related to Kurdish politics such as gender and violence, refugees, and democratic state-building, and activities organized by UCF faculty such as public lectures and student essay contests.



NATIONAL AND GLOBAL REACH

The KSPS pursues collaboration with universities in the Middle East including the Iraqi Kurdistan and initiates student and faculty visits and exchanges and partnered research programs. It also aims to inform policy and public discussions of Kurdish issues at the national level via briefings and meetings. Furthermore, it sponsors the Best Article Award in Kurdish Political Studies to recognize high quality research by rising scholars.



Contact the Kurdish Political Studies Program (KPSP) by visiting us on UCF's Orlando campus, visiting our website, calling, or emailing.

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