Letter from the Director
Middle East Institute

MEI Self Study

In the year since the Middle East Center for Peace, Culture and Development was notified of impending program review, it has undergone an enormous amount of change. Though a Center at the time of the notification, it became the Middle East Institute in January 2006. As a result of this evolution, we have tried to meet the comprehensive standard of departmental, rather than center review. This attempt has been hindered in a number of ways. First, and most importantly, many of the data required in departmental program review are not available for the MEI. In some cases this is a result of inability to link data to the MEI, in others it is result of the MEI’s lack of any core faculty prior to January 2006. Wherever, possible we have tried to provide appropriate data, but it was not possible to complete some of the requested tables.

For the program review period, much of the MEI’s contribution to credit-hour generation was subsumed in the data for the department of Modern and Classical Languages; we have attempted to extract that data to provide a more complete picture of the MEI’s activity. Similarly we have also included, where appropriate, activities of the affiliated faculty as the Institute’s degrees programs and other activities are heavily dependent on their efforts.

The need for additional core faculty is strongly articulated in the self study. With only three core faculty members, the MEI is unable to truly function as an independent Institute. The MEI continues to rely heavily on visiting instructors and needs to build a larger faculty cohort. Without additional core faculty the MEI will be unable to grow its degree programs, for which a great demand clearly exists.

The MEI is also in a stage of transition, having been formally created as an Institute, it still, in many ways, acts like a center. Most importantly, faculty governance issues need to be address and the differing roles of core and affiliated faculty clarified.

In sum, the MEI has grown very quickly over the past few years. Through the self-study process we have been able to chart a path for slower and more intentional growth in the coming years. The outcome will be a strong Middle East Institute with a regional and national reputation.