

VIRTUAL VISITING DIPLOMAT PROGRAM

ORGANIZED BY THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES CONSORTIUM OF GEORGIA (ISCOG)* -

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

proudly presents.

LET'S TALK ABOUT EGYPT

WITH



Dr. Heba Mahmoud Saad
Cultural Attaché and Director

Diplomat Saad received her M. A. in 2000 and Ph.D. in 2004. She was a Fulbright Scholar at Mary Baldwin University (2007-2008) and a visiting scholar at George Washington University (2017) and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Germany (2021, 2022, and 2023). She is also Professor of Islamic Archaeology at the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels in Alexandria University, Egypt. Over the years, she has held several administrative positions, the most recent of which was Vice Dean for Graduate Studies and Research. In addition, Dr. Saad has participated in several international projects and is a member of national and international associations specializing in archaeology, civilization, art history and heritage.

JOIN US ON THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2024 – 2:00 – 3:30 P. M. (EASTER TIME)

Meeting ID: 985 9179 4623

<https://columbiauniversity.zoom.us/j/98591794623>

For a 90-minute interactive program in which diplomat Saad will introduce the historical and cultural aspects of Egypt. Students attending the program will gain global competency skills to help them succeed in a dynamic and highly interdependent global economy. The program will also offer opportunities for career exploration, including government internships, for students attending schools in the consortium.

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Please contact Consortium Executive Director Rajgopal Sashti - raj.sashti@reinhardt.edu - for any additional information.

***Consortium Universities and Colleges:** Reinhardt University, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Albany State University, Alcorn State University (MS), Andrew College, Clayton State University, Columbus State University, Dalton State College, Edward Waters College (FL), Fort Valley State University, Georgia Highlands College, Gordon State College, Houston Community College System (TX), Jacksonville State University (AL), Middle Georgia State University, South Georgia State College, Tennessee State University, University of North Georgia.

THE VIRTUAL VISITING DIPLOMAT PROGRAM

The main objective of the Virtual Visiting Diplomat Program is to have a direct impact on the talented and accomplished students at Consortium universities/colleges and increase their knowledge and understanding regarding a country or a region or a global topic. The focus of the 90-minute interactive program (one hour of presentation followed by 30 minutes of question and answer) will be international and cross-cultural in nature. Visiting Diplomats will serve as presenters and resource persons for the program and will introduce the region/country and its social, cultural and economic footprint in the United States in general and the Southeast in particular to young men and women.

As a part of the program, the featured presenter will share his/her professional career trajectory to stimulate students to be creative and innovative and encourage them to aspire and reach higher levels of leadership as they pursue their own academic and professional goals. The purpose of the program is to provide students with unique experiences and opportunities not available in a textbook or in a classroom setting. The ultimate goal of the program is to assist young men and women acquire global competency skills and help them to adapt and succeed in a dynamic and highly-interdependent global economy.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR AMERICAN STUDENT TO LEARN ABOUT EGYPT

For 7,000 years, Egypt has inspired artists, writers, scientists and intellectuals. The pharaohs left a huge scientific legacy. They were the first to introduce mummification, medicine, agriculture, fermentation, engineering and architecture. The ancient Egyptians are important because they made revolutionary strides in thinking and discovery and passed on their discoveries about mathematics, medicine and farming to the rest of the world. Remains from this amazing civilization still exist today, such as the Pyramids of Giza and Tutankhamun's tomb.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF EGYPT TO THE UNITED STATES

Egypt is a vital strategic partner of the United States. Uninhibited access through the Suez Canal, a waterway through which 12% of international commerce flows, is a core U.S. interest. Egypt has proven an invaluable partner in promoting peace and security in Libya, Gaza, and the wider region.

OVERVIEW

Egypt (Language Arabic, population 108 million and Capital Cairo) is the largest Arab country and has played a vital role in Middle East. It is the 15th most populous country in the world, is an Arab nation bordered by Israel, Libya and Sudan, and has a global reputation due to the legacy of its ancient cultural roots. While the country's heritage remains a source of great pride, Egypt's contemporary culture has also been shaped by more recent historical events. Many traditional values continue to be defining aspects of Egyptian culture; however, these are now accompanied by new ideas and values. Furthermore, as the gateway between northeast Africa and the Middle East, it has been significantly influenced by various interactions with other cultures and countries.

In the 1950s President Gamal Abdul Nasser pioneered Arab nationalism and the non-aligned movement, while his successor Anwar Sadat made peace with Israel and turned back to the West.

The country's great cities and almost all agricultural activity is concentrated along the banks of the Nile River and its delta.

The economy Egypt depends heavily on agriculture, tourism, and remittances from Egyptians working abroad - mainly in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries. However, rapid population growth and limited amount of arable land are major challenges facing Egypt.

AN INTRODUCTION TO ANCIENT EGYPT

It is not easy to write an introduction to ancient Egypt, since so many details, past and present, need to be covered for this fascinating and extremely variant culture. A great deal of this fascination can be attributed to the aesthetic quality of Egyptian art which had left its mark over a period of 3,000 years as well as the good preservation of many monuments and objects. Salima Ikram (American University Cairo) provides an excellent introduction – lavishly illustrated with photos and drawings. In nine chapters, the book aims at a general readership not familiar with Egypt by “setting the stage for their further study and investigation”. The focus is not only the various aspects of ancient Egypt's history and culture, but also their reception as well as rediscovery through the ages. Click on the following link for more details:

<https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2010/2010.09.45/>

Core Concepts of Egyptian Culture

Geography and Spaces, Social Stratification, Ethnicity and Identity, and Honor and Dignity are the core concepts. Click here for more details:

<https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/egyptian-culture/egyptian-culture-core-concepts>

Religion

Religion plays a large role in Egyptian society. Islamic principles regarding law, politics and social customs continue to influence Egypt's laws and political interactions despite Egypt's formal status as a **secular** state. The vast majority of the Egyptian population (90%) identify as Muslim, mostly of the Sunni denomination. Of the remaining population, 9% identify as Coptic Orthodox Christian and the remaining 1% identify with some other denomination of Christianity. While these statistics give an overview of the religious landscape of Egypt, there is also a small but growing number of people who identify as **atheist** or nonreligious, as well as some who consider themselves to be Muslim by birth but not by devotion. Click here for more details:

<https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/egyptian-culture/egyptian-culture-religion>

Egyptian Cuisine

Click here for more details: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_cuisine

Do's and Don'ts: <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/egyptian-culture/egyptian-culture-do-s-and-don-ts>

Communication: <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/egyptian-culture/egyptian-culture-communication>

Etiquette: <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/egyptian-culture/egyptian-culture-etiquette>

Egyptian Diaspora in the United States: Things to Know:

<https://egyptfwd.org/Article/2/39/5-Things-to-Know-about-the-Egyptian-Diaspora-in-the>

Egyptian Art and Architecture

<https://www.britannica.com/art/Egyptian-art>

Why Study in Egypt?

<https://www.onlinestudies.com/articles/why-study-in-egypt>

Study Abroad in Egypt

<https://www.goabroad.com/study-abroad/search/egypt/study-abroad-1>

United States – Egypt Relationship

<https://www.state.gov/the-u-s-egypt-relationship/>

Current U. S. Economic Assistance to Egypt

\$2.1 billion per year. The current levels of assistance -- to Israel, \$3 billion per year (\$1.8 billion for military, \$1.2 billion for economic); to Egypt, \$2.1 billion per year (\$1.3 billion for military, \$815 million for economic) -- have varied only occasionally since 1980.

Why is United States Helping Egypt?

Since 1978, the United States has contributed more than \$50 billion in military assistance, which has contributed to Egypt's capabilities to protect and defend its land and maritime borders and to confront an evolving terrorist threat, including in the Sinai Peninsula.

Relationship Between Egypt and the Gulf Countries

There is and will continue to be an edge of rivalry in Egypt's relations with the dominant Gulf Arab powers.

Egypt and the Gulf Arab region have long been important poles of political, military economic and cultural power and influence in the Middle East. Under the presidency of Gamal Abdel-Nasser, Egypt was the dominant force in the region, but the balance of power shifted towards the Gulf in the 1970s, as Egypt's economy faltered and the Gulf Arab states reaped the benefits of resurgent oil prices in the wake of the 1973 OPEC embargo. The popular uprising against President Hosni Mubarak's regime in 2011 elicited divergent reactions in the Gulf. The leaders of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were concerned about the risks of a movement for revolutionary change spreading to their own region, while Qatar saw an opportunity to strengthen its regional role through supporting the Muslim Brotherhood.