27 February 2008

To: Karen Campbell, Chair, CEP
From: James Epstein, DUS, History
Subject: Middle East and Africa

With regard to your request for clarification about our new concentration in Middle East and Africa, obviously we are not seeking approval without having considered the need for courses that would fall into this category. Along with those you list – Hist 127, 128, and 213 – next academic year our new colleague Julia Cohen is teaching Hist 287c., Cities of Europe and the Middle East, and JS 115 09, Jews and Muslims: A Modern History, which will be dual listed in history; Tom Schwartz is teaching JS 256, Power and Diplomacy in the Modern Middle East, which will be dual listed; and David Wasserstein (who is on leave next year) teaches JS 120 and JS 121, Islam and the Jews and Introduction to Jewish History – both of which are dual listed in history. Also, Hist 295 is an open listing; in the past, for example, Moses Ochonu has taught Hist 295, Nationalism and Africa, and Economic History of Sub Saharan Africa. Next year, however, Prof Ochonu is teaching Hist 294, Economy, Society, and the History of Poverty in Africa. Moreover, as I noted in my original memo, the department and college are in the process of making a major commitment to Middle Eastern and Islamic studies. We now have tenure-track offers out to three historians – in medieval and modern Middle Eastern history, and in the Islamic regions of the former Soviet Union – all of whom would be teaching new courses fitting into our proposed concentration.