

The Near Eastern Studies graduate students at UC Berkeley would like to invite graduate students to participate in the 2018 UC Berkeley Near Eastern Studies Graduate Student Conference.

Please find our full Call for Papers on our website (jagnesjournal.wordpress.com).

The title of this year's symposium is, *Hard Times: Critical Approaches to Crisis and its Aftermath*. From our perspective as students and scholars of the Near East, hard times have become an uncritical staple of contemporary discourse regarding the Middle East. In the news, in the streets and even in our classrooms, the Middle East is often framed as an outworldly difficult place, defined by its hardships and catastrophes. In our conference, we wish not to deny this notion (at least, not offhandedly), but to complicate it by considering it from a diverse array of critical perspectives.

To that end, the Near Eastern Studies Department and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, invite papers situated within, working against and expanding on the question of hard times in related fields of the Near East. Individual paper topics may include (but are not limited to) the following: Opposition and counter-narratives, The future(s) of Near Eastern Studies, Borders and border politics, Resistance in the Ancient World, Crisis and Archaeological Cultural Heritage, Persistence of instability as a trope in Near Eastern and Middle Eastern Studies, Precarity and its poetics, Beyond the geopolitical narrative of crisis (environmental, social, existential crises), and Representation of crisis in aesthetics (literature, plastic art, etc.).

The conference will take place on April 27-28th, 2018 at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) on the UC Berkeley campus, consisting of two days of thematically-organized panel sessions. Faculty will serve as the respondents for each of the panels. On Friday evening, Professor Miriam Cooke will give the keynote lecture addressing the conference theme.

Applicants should submit an abstract of no more than 250 words by December 15th, 2017. Please fill out the abstract submission form on our website. Paper presentations should be approximately 20 minutes in length, which will be followed by a short, discussant-led question and answer session.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any additional questions. For more information about registration, travel & accommodation, please visit our website. Questions about the conference should be directed to jagnes@berkeley.edu.