

Middle Eastern Studies in America: Past, Present, and Future

by [Martin Kramer \(/experts/martin-kramer\)](/experts/martin-kramer), [Gary Samore \(/experts/gary-samore\)](/experts/gary-samore), [Rachel Fish \(/experts/rachel-fish\)](/experts/rachel-fish), [Robert Satloff \(/experts/robert-satloff\)](/experts/robert-satloff)

October 13, 2026, starting at 12 noon EDT (1600 GMT)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



[Martin Kramer \(/experts/martin-kramer\)](/experts/martin-kramer)

Martin Kramer is The Washington Institute's Walter P. Stern Fellow and author of one of its most widely read monographs, *Ivory Towers on Sand: The Failure of Middle Eastern Studies in America*.

[Gary Samore \(/experts/gary-samore\)](/experts/gary-samore)

Gary Samore is the director of the Crown Center for Middle East Studies at Brandeis University and former White House coordinator for arms control and weapons of mass destruction.

[Rachel Fish \(/experts/rachel-fish\)](/experts/rachel-fish)

Rachel Fish is the CEO of the Israel Institute and director of Brandeis University's Initiative on Antisemitism.



[Robert Satloff \(/experts/robert-satloff\)](/experts/robert-satloff)

Robert Satloff is the Segal Executive Director of The Washington Institute, a post he assumed in January 1993.



Brief Analysis

Join us for a special webcast on the state of Middle Eastern studies in America. Watch live starting at 12:00 p.m. EDT (1600 GMT) on Tuesday, October 13, 2026.

A quarter-century ago, The Washington Institute published *Ivory Towers on Sand* (<https://martinkramer.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/ivorytowers.pdf>), Dr. Martin Kramer's scathing critique on the state of Middle Eastern studies in American higher education. Coming just days after the September 11 attack, his assessment touched a nerve and became a bestseller featured in media across the country. The academic situation only worsened in later years as creeping politicization became widespread and almost mainstream, only to reach new depths in the wake of Hamas's October 7, 2023, attack on Israel. At the same time, however, bright spots emerged as innovators considered new ways to reform and even remake the field.

To discuss the evolution and future of Middle Eastern studies, The Washington Institute is pleased to announce a virtual Policy Forum with:

Dr. Martin Kramer, the Institute's Walter P. Stern Fellow, a Middle East historian at Tel Aviv University, and founding president of Shalem College in Jerusalem

Dr. Gary Samore, director of the Crown Center for Middle East Studies at Brandeis University, a senior fellow with Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, and the former White House coordinator for arms control and weapons of mass destruction

Dr. Rachel Fish, the new CEO of the Israel Institute, director of Brandeis University's Initiative on Antisemitism, and an associate research professor at the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

Dr. Robert Satloff, The Washington Institute's Segal Executive Director and Howard P. Berkowitz Chair in U.S. Middle East Policy, and founder of its joint initiative with Pepperdine University establishing a new, Washington-based master's program in Middle East policy studies.

The Policy Forum series is made possible through the generosity of the Winkler Lowy Foundation. ❖

RECOMMENDED



BRIEF ANALYSIS

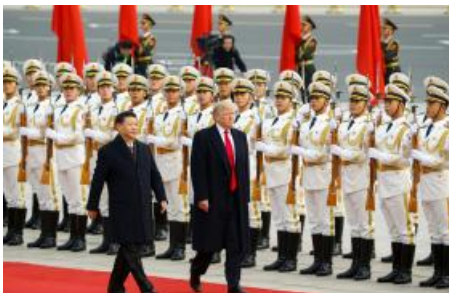
A Conversation with Samir Geagea:

How to End Lebanon's Cycle of War and Build a Sovereign State

October 6, 2026, starting at 12 noon EDT (1600 GMT)

◆
Samir Geagea,
David Schenker,
Hanin Ghaddar,
Robert Satloff

(/policy-analysis/conversation-samir-geagea-how-end-lebanons-cycle-war-and-build-sovereign-state)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

What Will Trump and Xi Have to Say About the Middle East?

Sep 22, 2026

◆
Grant Rumley,
Elizabeth Dent



BRIEF ANALYSIS

Trump’s GCC Meeting: A Path Out of the Conflict

Sep 21, 2026

James Jeffrey

(/policy-analysis/trumps-gcc-meeting-path-out-conflict)

TOPICS

Democracy & Reform (/policy-analysis/democracy-reform)

U.S. Policy (/policy-analysis/us-policy)