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Leading expert on Middle East to speak at Ohio State

COLUMBUS — Recent changes in Islamist militancy and the future of the movement will be among the topics discussed by frequent commentator and Middle East expert Fawaz Gerges this week.

Gerges, Christian A. Johnson Chair in International Affairs and Arab and Muslim Politics at Sarah Lawrence College, will speak on "The Future of Islamist Militancy: A Theoretical and Historical Footnote" at noon on Thursday, April 3, at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave.

Gerges, a current Carnegie Scholar, has just returned from a 15-month field study in the Middle East, where he interviewed scores of Iraqi activists and fighters who have either fought in Iraq or are trying to join the battlefield there.

Gerges is currently working on two books. The first compares what he calls the "Iraq generation" of jihadis with earlier generations, particularly the "Afghan Arabs." The second investigates the role of religion in the construction of Muslim political identity and foreign affairs.

Among his recent publications are *Journey of the Jihadist: Inside Muslim Militancy* (Harcourt Press, 2007) and *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge University Press, 2005). *The Washington Post* selected *The Far Enemy* as one of the best 15 books published in the field in 2005. *Journey of the Jihadist* was on the best-selling list of Barnes and Noble and *Foreign Affairs Magazine* for four months.

Gerges has given hundreds of interviews for various media outlets throughout the world, including ABC, CNN, BBC, PBS, CBS, NPR, CBC, and Al-Jazeera. He was a senior ABC television news analyst from 2000 until 2006.



Fawaz Gerges
Christian A. Johnson
Chair in International
Affairs and Arab and
Muslim Politics
Sarah Lawrence College

The event is sponsored by The Ohio State University's Mershon Center for International Security Studies, which advances the understanding of national security in a global context.

About the Mershon Center for International Security Studies

The Mershon Center for International Security Studies at The Ohio State University advances the understanding of national security in a global context by fostering interdisciplinary faculty and student research in three areas of focus: the use of force and diplomacy; the ideas, identities, and decisional processes that affect security; and the institutions that manage violent conflict. For more information, please see the center's website at <http://mershoncenter.osu.edu>.

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