



**Wayne State University Student Senate
4 April 2024**

Resolution 2324-23

SPONSORS: Gabriel Shamam (*Director of Public Affairs, Member-At-Large*)

A resolution to integrate and add Suraye history to Wayne State University's history and culture courses.

THE WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT SENATE ENACT:

WHEREAS, the Chaldean-Assyrian population, which includes those of the Assyrian Church of the East, Chaldean Catholic Church, and Syriac Orthodox/Catholic Churches has had a long history in the Metro Detroit community since first arriving in the 1910s, as shown by Wayne State's data metrics from 2004.¹

WHEREAS, Wayne State University has committed in the past to creating meaningful engagement with society, and its mission is to "positively impact local and global community"² and,

WHEREAS, President Espy is committed to creating a more equitable society, and our academic community at Wayne State aspires to be a national model in this shared work. Wayne State's Social Justice Action Committee³ was convened in June 2020 and presented its findings, recommendations, and action steps in March 2021, which are being progressively implemented across campus with the support of the DEI Council.⁴

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https://web.archive.org/web/20131109050605/http://www.cus.wayne.edu/content/publications/Arab_Factsheet1.pdf

² <https://wayne.edu/about/mission>

³ <https://diversity.wayne.edu/social-justice-action-committee>

⁴ <https://president.wayne.edu/committees>

WHEREAS, The Wayne State University Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion mission “recognizes, acknowledges, and affirms the many ways in which people of different backgrounds, identities, and experiences contribute to a rich, vibrant campus community, and creates spaces - physical and virtual - where people see and feel included in and belonging to the Wayne State University community,”⁵

WHEREAS, the continuous persecution of Assyrians is in danger of being forgotten due to not being taught at higher levels of education, including the Assyrian genocide,⁶ the Simele Massacre⁷ (having as of yet been internationally unrecognized by any United Nations member state), and recent events involving ISIS and Kurdish oppression.

WHEREAS, the history of the Chaldean-Assyrian population comprises a lengthy period, going back to the ancient Assyrian empires, to the rise of Syriac Christianity, to the present-day persecution they face and their exodus into the diaspora, and deserves to be taught considering the population of the community that attends Wayne State University.

RESOLVED, that Wayne State University, should they be unable to put out a statement recognizing prior genocides of the Assyrians, that they instead invest resources into creating a course on genocides that can be incorporated into History and other applicable departments.

RESOLVED, that we ask the Departments of History, Anthropology, and Classical and Modern Languages (with its additional Near Eastern Studies department) to invest in educational resources teaching modern Suraye⁸ history and identity in their West Asian (Middle Eastern) curriculum.

RESOLVED, that Wayne State University recognizes the Chaldean-Assyrians of Metro Detroit, with differing Church affiliations of the Assyrian Church of the East, Chaldean Catholic Church, and Syriac Orthodox/Catholic Churches as a separate ethnicity from their Arab counterparts while continuing to respect both their individual identities and religious freedoms.

RESOLVED, that Wayne State University acknowledges the tremendous impact that the Chaldean-Assyrian population of Metro Detroit has had and will continue to have on their heterogeneous student body.

⁵ <https://diversity.wayne.edu/about/mission>

⁶ “[Diaspora Coalition-building for Genocide Recognition: Armenians, Assyrians and Kurds](#)”, pp. 15-16

⁷ Husry, Khaldun S. “The Assyrian Affair of 1933 (I).” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1974, pp. 161–76. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/162587>.

⁸ The term Suraye is an umbrella term to describe people of ethnic Assyrian origin, which includes Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Syriacs

RESOLVED, that Student Senate, as well as voting on this resolution, can simultaneously make a vote to add their logo to the list of student organizations who support this initiative, as well as the SWANA committee after a potential vote for “yes”.

MOVED to approve *Resolution 2324-23* as presented by Senator **ROUGNY AND**
SECONDED by Senator **CULHANE**.

ACTION	<u> X </u>	<u> 24-0-0 </u>	<u> APRIL 4 2024 </u>	
	PASSED	FAILED	VOTE	DATE

VOTE APPROVED BY:



PRESIDENT: Hayden Johnson



SECRETARY: Rabika Ali



