



## **Middle Eastern Dinner & Movie Night**

### **Event Planning Guide for Campus Organizations**

#### ➤ **Event Outline**

Although the Internet and 24-hour cable news have shrunk the world, sometimes the Middle East seems like a faraway place. Members of Students For Victory are compassionate, aware people, but it is always beneficial to gain more understanding of the context of American foreign policy. So, treat the members of SFV to a night of Afghan or Iraqi food and a film about the importance of our Middle Eastern policy!

There are a couple fun ways you and SFV can experience Middle Eastern cuisine. If your campus is in or near a large city, there may be a distinctly Iraqi or Afghan restaurant a short drive away. There may also be a few in certain smaller cities, such as Nashville, with significant populations of Americans of Middle Eastern descent. Organize a night that is convenient for most members, and head over for a dinner on the chapter! The restaurant may offer hookah smoking as well, which is completely legal for those 18 and over. Hookah is a shared part of many Middle Eastern cultures and you may enjoy trying the flavored, almost effervescent smoke.

If there are no Iraqi or Afghan restaurants in your area, you can still get a taste of the region's cuisine at your local Middle Eastern restaurant. The food of Middle Eastern countries is generally a regional blend of Mediterranean flavors and spices with those of India. A good rule of thumb is the further west a Near East nation is, the more like Greek/Egyptian cuisine its food will be, and the further east, the more like India's it will be. Therefore, even if you and SFV go to Middle Eastern restaurant that does not specialize in Iraqi or Afghan food, no matter what you order you will still have a good approximation.

If you and SFV want a more hands-on experience, you can prepare your own banquet in the kitchen of a member's apartment. Meet there in the early evening and decide what you would like to prepare. There are many cooking websites with delicious Iraqi and Afghan recipes that are not hard to find. I suggest <http://iraqifamilycookbook.blogspot.com> and <http://www.afghan-web.com/culture/cooking>, but you can try others as well. Make a list of what you need, including any necessary paper plates, cups, and plasticware, and go obtain these things at your local grocery store. When you return, take turns making the various

components of the dishes you have selected. Then, enjoy eating your own American-prepared Middle Eastern food!

After dinner, wherever you eat it, gather around the large TV of a member and watch a documentary or fiction film that is supportive of strong American foreign policy in the Middle East. I'd suggest the movie *Charlie Wilson's War*, which is based on a true story about American foreign policy in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Afterwards, relax or discuss how the events of the movie relate to the American missions in Afghanistan and Iraq today.