

A Middle East  
Librarian's Role on  
the Most Politically  
Active Campus in  
America? Support,  
support, support.

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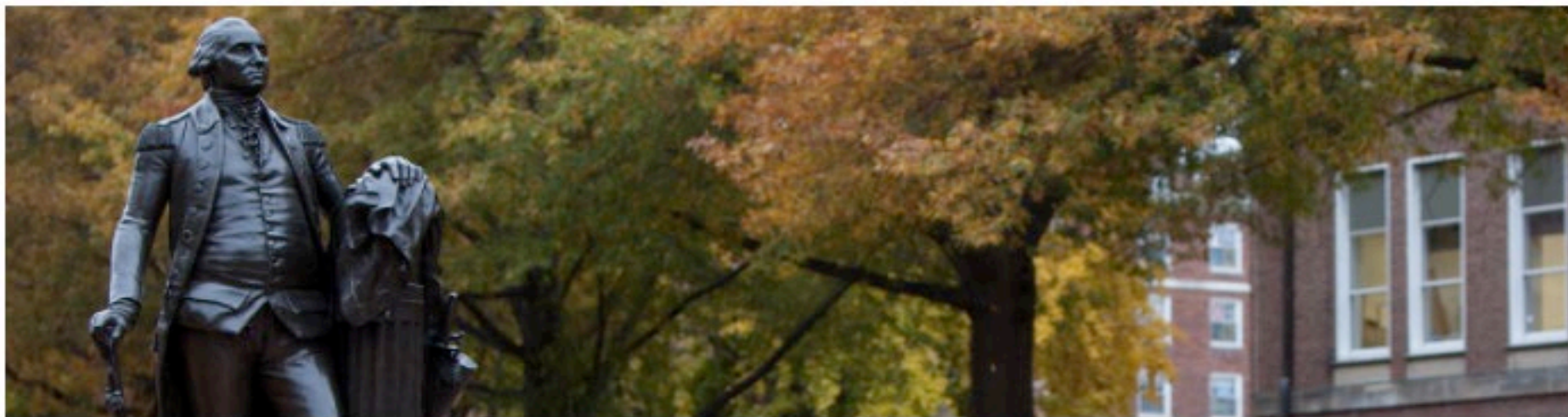
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# Most Politically Active Students

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SHOWING 1 - 20 OF 20 RESULTS



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FEATURED

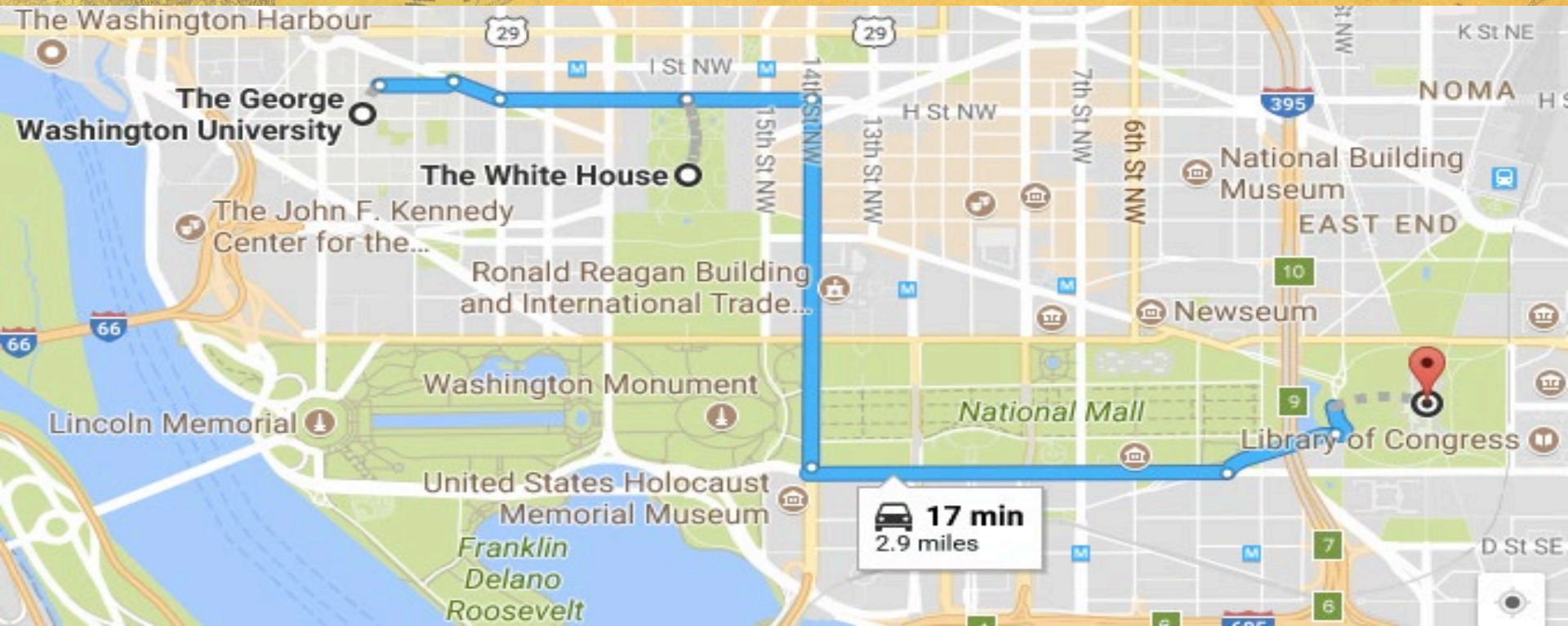
1. [George Washington University](#)  
Washington, DC

11,157 Enrolled



# The George Washington University

- Located four blocks from the White House in downtown Washington, D.C., and a few subway stops from the U.S. Capitol.





- 12,000 internship opportunities every year, with embassies, NGOs, government, and media agencies.

- Elliott School of International Affairs, consistently ranked in the top 10 International Relations Schools in the U.S.



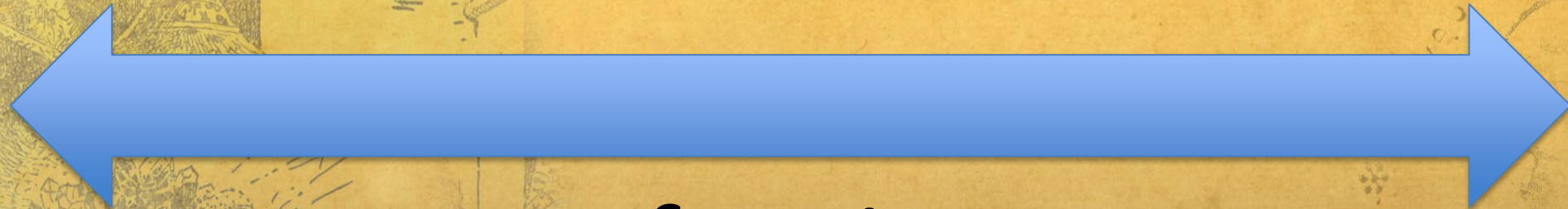
**FP** **Top U.S. Undergraduate Institutions to Study International Relations**

1. Harvard University	46.20%
2. Princeton University	39.14%
3. Yale University	18.07%
8. George Washington University	11.39%
9. American University	9.97%
10. University of California, Berkeley	9.49%

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/03/top-twenty-five-schools-international-relations>



*What are the political  
and/or ethical  
responsibilities of a  
librarian dealing with  
sensitive subjects?*



Neutrality

– Complicity?

**Support**

Activism

--Alienation?  
--Service role?



# <sup>1</sup> support

verb | sup·port | \sə-ˈpɔrt\

Popularity: Top 10% of words

## Definition of SUPPORT

transitive verb

- 1 : to endure bravely or quietly : **BEAR**
- 2 a (1) : to promote the interests or cause of (2) : to uphold or defend as valid or right : **ADVOCATE** • *supports* fair play (3) : to argue or vote for • *supported* the motion to lower taxes  
b (1) : **ASSIST, HELP** • bombers *supported* the ground troops (2) : to act with (a star actor) (3) : to bid in bridge so as to show support for
- c : to provide with substantiation : **CORROBORATE** • *support* an alibi
- 3 a : to pay the costs of : **MAINTAIN** • *support* a family  
b : to provide a basis for the existence or subsistence of
  - the island could probably *support* three — A. B. C. Whipple
  - *support* a habit
- 4 a : to hold up or serve as a foundation or prop for  
b : to maintain (a price) at a desired level by purchases or loans; *also* : to maintain the price of by purchases or loans
- 5 : to keep from fainting, yielding, or losing courage : **COMFORT**
- 6 : to keep (something) going



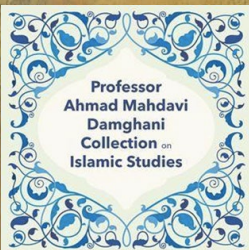
# 1. "To hold up or serve as a foundation/a prop for"

- [GWU Global Resources Center](#)

- Develop specialized collections specifically tailored to the internationally-focused research priorities of GW.
- Open to GWU and outside researchers, policy-makers, etc.
- MENA Resources Center: Foundational collection targeted to accommodate different needs and viewpoints, on very limited budget

- Recent activities:

- 4,000-volume Ahmad Mahdavi Damghani collection on Iranian Studies & Islamic Law
- Digitized primary sources (Cambridge Archive Editions Online)
- Al-Manhal Arabic-language database
- Reference Corporation database for gray literature
- Twitter account to share articles, updates, etc
- "Islamic Studies Reference Shelf" for students





*to keep them  
fainting, yielding, or  
losing courage"*

- Presentations and research appointments start and end with “don’t give up,” or “come see me before you give up”
- Meet students where they are before leading them to where they should be.





### 3. "To provide with *substantiation*"

- Search different databases while together, especially if I'm concerned about the direction of the research.
- Emphasize how multiple perspectives, not just those that agree with preconceived notions, can be helpful, and the need to see the big picture.



# *Conclusions*

1. This structure allows students to feel safe expressing their opinions, while still leaving room for guidance.
1. Support helps balance moral imperatives with need to remain open and helpful to all patrons
1. Allowing politics to enter into my reference interviews, while reminding myself consistently of the need to support, has made me a better librarian and a better citizen, and has led my patrons to more considered conclusions.