

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Picture from Algeria

ELEMENTARY ARABIC (ARB 100Y)

اللغة العربية

FALL 2009 – Smith College

Professor: Abdelkader Berrahmoun

Office: Neilson Library B/15

Tel: 413-585-3628

Class times: M, W, F 08:30-09:50 a.m.

Classroom: Seelye 110

Office Hours: Fri. 12:30-2:30 p.m., and by appointment

E-Mail: aberrahm@smith.edu

Course Materials:

1. Brustad, Kristen, Mahmoud Al-Batal and Abbas Al-Tonsi: *Alif Baa with DVDs; Introduction to Arabic Letters and Sounds*. Georgetown University Press, 2004 (Second Edition)
2. *Answer Key to Alif Baa with DVDs (Second Edition)*

3. Brustad, Kristen, Mahmoud Al-Batal and Abbas Al-Tonsi: *Al-Kitaab Fii Taallum al-Arabiyya with DVDs. Part One*. Georgetown University Press, 2004. (Second Edition)
4. *Answer Key to Al-Kitaab, Part One with DVDs (Second Edition)*

5. Wehr, Hans. *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* Fourth Edition

6. *Recorded MSA dialogues*
<http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/>
<http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu/arabic/msa/dialogues/index.html>

Course Description:

This course is designed for students with no previous knowledge, or very limited knowledge of the Arabic language. It is a yearlong course that focuses on the four communication skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) of the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).

Beginning with a study of Arabic script, sound and writing systems, we will complete the study of the Elementary Arabic book sequence by the end of the academic year. Our central tasks will be building vocabularies and mastering basic grammatical structures. We'll also stress training in reading and writing Arabic sentences and in enhancing spoken skills necessary for a variety of daily activities. As the course progresses, more emphasis will fall on assimilating the language for more complex communicative purposes related to describing self, family members, career plans, and abstract matters like personal feelings and decisions.

Credits

4 credits

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of Arabic 100Y, you will, إِن شاءَ اللّٰهُ, have reached **Novice-High to Intermediate-Low** proficiency in Arabic, which means that you will be able to:

1. Recognize the letters of the Arabic alphabet, to acquire a good pronunciation of basic sounds, and understand the development of the Arabic Writing System.
2. Be able to read texts on familiar topics and understand the main ideas without using the dictionary, and have confidence in your ability to guess the meaning of new words from context.
3. Be able to speak about yourselves and your environment, carry out basic transactions related to daily life orally and in writing, and initiate and sustain conversations on a number of topics.
4. Be able to write brief compositions in Modern Standard Arabic such as your past studies and work experience.
5. Be able to understand many aspects of Arab culture, such as customs and traditions, family life, education systems, and many dealings that take place in contemporary Arab culture.

Course Language:

By the end of the semester we will be conducting most class activities in Arabic. As we learn more vocabulary and grammar it will be possible to ask and answer most of your questions in Arabic. We will be doing many small-group activities in class; it is extremely important to do these activities without using English. Repeated use of English in class during class activities will result in a lower participation grade for the class.

Course Requirements and Grade: (No satisfactory/unsatisfactory grades)

Attendance and Tardiness	20%
Participation	10%
Homework and Preparation	25%
Quizzes	15%
Skits/Video Podcast Project	10%

Final Oral Interview	2.5%
Final Writing Assignment	2.5%
Final Exam	15%

This is a **one-year** course. No credit is granted for one semester only.

1. Attendance and Tardiness (20%):

You are allowed **three unexcused absences** throughout the semester. Beyond this allowed limit, there will be **one percentage point deduction from your final grade for every unexcused absence**. An excused absence means a written note from the appropriate office (doctor, coach, dean) justifying the absence. Please inform your professor of absence as soon as possible before--not after--the class you will miss.

You can earn extra credit by not using up your allotted absences. You will receive 3 extra credits at the end of this course if you were not absent at all, 2 if you were absent once, and 1 if you were absent twice.

2. Participation (10%):

Participation is a key component of this class. You must come prepared to participate fully in class activities. This means listening to DVDs/online material and learning new vocabulary and structure so that you can **actively** use them in class.

3. Homework Assignments and Preparation (25%):

The philosophy of this course is that material is rarely introduced to the student “cold”; in other words, the majority of class time will be devoted to practice as opposed to explanation. It is thus **essential** that you come to class prepared.

There will be written assignments due **every class at the beginning of class**. You are expected to turn these assignments in **on time**. For each assignment **please include the date that it is due as well as the lesson, exercise, and page number**. You are allowed **three free late submissions**. After that, late homework assignments will be accepted and checked but **will not be given any credit**. You are encouraged to study and work on homework assignments together, with the stipulation that everyone must submit her/his own individual paper. Please hand in homework written out on **a separate sheet of paper**. Pages xeroxed out of the book, unless stated otherwise, will not be accepted.

Homework assignments will be graded on a scale from 1 to 4 (4=excellent, 3=very good, 2=good but not your best effort, 1= poor or sloppy work). You will be graded on the overall quality of your work, not on the number of correct or incorrect answers.

If “see me” or something to that effect is written on your homework, it is your responsibility either to make an appointment to see your professor or to come during office hours ASAP. You will not receive credit for that particular homework until we have met.

If “revise” is written on your homework, please make corrections where your professor has indicated in order to receive credit. **You have one week from the original due date to make revisions. You will not receive any credit for your homework until you have made the requested revisions.**

How to prepare for class

Listening: it is essential for you to use the DVDs extensively to listen to vocabulary, text and grammar as part of preparing for class. Listen and repeat as many times as you can.

Vocabulary

When preparing new vocabulary for class, you are expected to listen to the vocabulary and repeat it several times so that your pronunciation will be accurate. Practice the word until you can say it easily. To remember the meaning of the new words it helps to use them in your own sentences and to study in groups. It does not help to write the English word or to use the vocabulary lists in the book to memorize these words. All the vocabulary in this book is recycled constantly throughout the drills, therefore it helps to pay close attention to them as you do them, i.e. make sure that you understand completely all of the sentences in the drills. They are designed not only to help you learn the new vocabulary but to review the old vocabulary as well.

Grammar

There will be very little grammar explanation given during class time. Prepare the grammar by actively reading the explanation, memorizing material in charts and preparing drills assigned. One of the best ways to check if you have understood the grammar is to read the examples given and make sure you understand them. If after preparing in this way you still have questions, you may ask them before or at the beginning of class.

Class time is short so we need to spend it doing activities that will help you internalize and learn to actively use the vocabulary and grammatical structures we are studying.

4. Quizzes (15%):

There will be a short quiz (15-20 minutes each) more or less every week. There are no makeup quizzes or exams. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

5. Skits and Video Podcast Project: (10%)

You will be asked to create skits with a partner and make one video podcast project. You are expected to have **two** of these skits/presentations. You will be notified of the dates in advance.

6. Final Oral Interview: (2.5%)

As part of the final assessment for the course, you will have a 10-15 minute oral interview in Arabic in which you will be asked to talk about aspects of your academic and social life using the vocabulary and structures you have learned throughout the semester.

7. Final Writing Assignment: (2.5%)

8. Arabic Language Academy Award Competition (15%)

To convert points to letter grades, follow this chart:

A 94-100	C+ 77-79	D- 60-62
A- 90-93	C 73-76	F 0-59
B+ 87-89	C- 70-72	
B 83-86	D+ 66-69	
B- 80-82	D 63-65	

How to Do Well in this Class:

To be read in conjunction with pages vii-viii of *Alif Baa*

This class is a group effort! We can make much more progress as a class than as individuals by creating an Arabic-speaking community of which you will be a fully participating member. The following suggestions will help you get the most out of the course:

- 1. Once is not enough.** When you are pronouncing new vocabulary along with the DVD or practicing a new grammatical pattern, you should repeat the activity several times. It is best to pronounce new vocabulary words at least ten times, so that you can say them easily. Remember: if you cannot pronounce a new word easily, you haven't really learned it yet.
- 2. Study out loud.** The only way to train your brain and your mouth to speak this language is by doing. Thinking about it is not enough!
- 3. Study in pairs/groups.** This is a great way to prepare for class and review-as long as you do the work in Arabic as much as possible, of course! Ask each other questions, brainstorm about assignments, go over materials covered together. You are encouraged to collaborate on assignments, as long as each student hands in her/his own paper.
- 4. Personalize vocabulary.** Make words relevant by thinking of what you can say about yourself with them. Write extra sentences that are meaningful to you so that the vocabulary becomes yours.
- 5. Learn to guess.** You are encouraged to use what you know to derive what you do not. Think about how you must have learned your native language: you learned new words by guessing their meaning from context, and you learned how to produce sentences by imitating and using patterns. As adult learners, we can take some shortcuts, but guessing skills remain central to language acquisition. Of course, do not allow yourself to become frustrated: if you have tried to guess but things are still not clear, ask.
- 6. Good language learners learn from their own mistakes and those of others.** Correcting mistakes is an essential part of the learning process. In this class, you will never be penalized for a mistake that you make when trying something new. When your classmates are speaking, be an active listener by listening both to what they are saying and how they are saying it. Think about how you would correct their sentences.
- 7. The first month or so of class requires an extra time investment on your part** while we are doing the alphabet drills. Expect to spend an extra few hours per week during this month. This investment will pay off later: by learning to write what you hear and vice-versa, you will not have spelling problems, you will memorize vocabulary more easily, and you will be better able to speak with and understand native speakers of the language.

أهلاً وسهلاً ومرحباً بكم
فصل دراسي سعيد إن شاء الله

HAPPY LEARNING!