

Beginning Modern Standard Arabic

ARAB 1003-1503 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Tunisia and Italy: Politics and Religious Integration in the Mediterranean

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

This course is designed to develop student proficiency and communication in Modern Standard Arabic. While emphasis is placed primarily upon oral comprehension and conversational skills (i.e. listening and speaking), reading and writing are highlighted as crucial to the reinforcement of those skills. Thus, the course is designed not only to help students acquire Arabic, but also to grasp cultural practices in the Arab world. Cultural context is built into the course and introduced through audiovisual materials and experiential activities accompanying the textbook. Beginning Arabic introduces students to pronunciation and writing systems of basic grammar, basic vocabulary, and sentence structure. Emphasis is placed on the functional use of the language to enable students to participate in basic conversational exchanges, understand native speakers of Arabic accustomed to dealing with non-native Arabic speakers, complete written compositions describing daily events or personal experiences, and read basic texts on familiar topics such as weather, seasons, food, family, studies, and friends.

Tunisian Arabic

Immediately after arriving in Tunis and during the first week of orientation, students are offered a two-session introductory course on Tunisian Arabic (totaling fifteen hours) that ranges from basic vocabulary and sentence structure to easy dialogues and interactive exercises. The objective of these sessions is to provide students with an elementary background and early familiarity with Tunisian Arabic in preparation for the homestay experience.

Language Levels and Placement

Non-beginning participants are placed into appropriate language course levels based on estimated-ACTFL oral proficiency interviews and written exams (placement tests) conducted during orientation in Tunisia.

Course Objectives

Beginning Arabic has an interdisciplinary and experiential focus, encompassing 45 hours (3 credits). Its main objectives are to:

- Develop emergent proficiency in spoken Arabic;
- Strengthen listening, comprehension, and communication skills;

- Use the language confidently and effectively in everyday situations;
- Acquire insight into the role of Arabic within Tunisian life and culture.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the program, students will be able to complete the following linguistic tasks:

- Perform greetings and introduce self and others formally and informally
- Identify objects and items in the classroom
- Order entities sequentially and count numbers from 1-100
- Respond to requests and instructions related to teaching/learning activities
- Respond to requests and instructions appropriately and courteously
- Name days of the week, significant dates, and months
- Identify Arab countries, capital cities, and main cities
- Identify one's nationality and that of others
- Quantify entities in response to questions how much/how many
- Ask and respond to factual questions
- Describe objects
- Ask and answer questions about weather and seasons

In addition, students will be able to ask about and indicate ownership, identify academic disciplines, express feelings, accept/decline invitations, understand street/store signs, narrate texts and conversations explained in class (units 1-9), and converse with classmates about topics discussed and practiced in class. Students will also be able to master essential linguistic structures such as: feminine/masculine, demonstratives (singular/plural, feminine/masculine), definite article, Wh- questions, possessive pronouns, plural (regular/irregular), nominal sentences, negation with «laysa» (nouns and adjectives), verbal sentences, present tense (feminine/masculine, singular/plural pronouns), prepositions and pronouns, verb patterns (Form I, Form II, Form III, Form IV), *nunation* (adverbs), noun-adjective phrases, verbal nouns, quantification expressions, comparative, superlative, past tense, the dual, *Idhaafa*«of», and possessive constructions.

Course Requirements

You are responsible for all the required readings and should be prepared to bring them to bear on discussions in class. The readings will help you place the classes in their context, challenge and engage lecturers, generate questions for class discussions, and deepen your knowledge of particular aspects discussed in class.

Required Readings:

Brustad, K., Al-Batal, M., & Al-Tonsi, A. (2004). *Alif Baa: Introduction to Arabic Letters and Sounds (Third Edition)*. Georgetown University Press: Washington, D.C. ISBN: 978-1589011021.

Brustad, K., Al-Batal, M., & Al-Tonsi, A. (2004). *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-Arabiyya with DVDs: A Textbook for Beginning Arabic (Part One, Second Edition)*. Georgetown University Press: Washington, D.C. ISBN: 978-1589011045.

Supplementary teaching materials include:

- textbook designed by instructors for SIT students
- audiovisual materials
- magazines and newspapers

Course Schedule

This Arabic language course is designed to give equal weight to developing four skills: reading, writing, listening, and conversation. All of the skills will be covered in the Standard Arabic class, and dialect will be taught through listening and the conversation class.

Week 1

This week, students will:

- Be introduced to different varieties of the Arabic language, including classical, standard, and colloquial Arabic;
- Learn basic daily dialogue to communicate.

By the end of this week, students will be able to:

- Greet and be greeted;
- Start recognizing the letters of the Arabic alphabet in different positions within words;
- Communicate on a day-to-day level (students will have approximately 25 pages of essential vocabulary with words related to daily expressions, prepositions, numbers, and verbs).

Week 2

This week, students will:

- Cover Alkitaab 1, Unit 1;
- Learn how to form nominal sentences, gender in nouns and adjectives, and Alnisba;
- Learn to write using the Arabic alphabet;
- Practice reading and writing;
- Learn lists of vocabulary and expressions related to health and daily life.

By the end of this week, students will be able to:

- Give directions to taxi drivers in Arabic;
- Introduce themselves and others in Arabic;

Week 3

This week, students will:

- Cover Alkitaab 1, Unit 2;
- Learn how to form short sentences and questions.

By the end of this week, students will be able to:

- Understand plural forms and subject pronouns;
- Use some main verb conjugations, like, to want, and to have;
- Relate verbs to cultural and health contexts;
- Talk about their families and friends.

Week 4

This week, students will:

- Cover Alkitaab 1, Unit 3;
- Learn alidaafa and possessive pronoun rules;
- Take the midterm exam.

By the end of this week, students will be able to:

- Form polite requests and conjugate some essential verbs;
- Speak in more depth about food, drinks, body parts, and health-related terms.

Week 5

This week, students will:

- Cover Alkitaab 1, Unit 4;
- Learn how to conjugate the present tense and to negate sentences;
- Learn Arabic numbers in relation to counting, time, and shopping;
- Learn in a café, restaurant, and a grocery shop.

By the end of this week, students will be able to:

- Express likes and dislikes;
- Talk about their hobbies;
- Learn how to fix an appointment with someone (applicable to the ISP project).

*At the end of the course, students will present their Final Arabic projects and have Arabic Final Exam.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Timely completion of all Arabic assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, and depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence. Tests will not be repeated for absentees. Only certifiable and verifiable absences from tests will be accepted.

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|------------------------------------|-----|
| Regular Tests | 20% |
| Class Attendance and Participation | 20% |
| Final Examination | 60% |

Grading Scale

The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

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|-----------|----|
| 94-100% | A |
| 90-93% | A- |
| 87-89% | B+ |
| 84-86% | B |
| 80-83% | B- |
| 77-79% | C+ |
| 74-76% | C |
| 70-73% | C- |
| 67-69% | D+ |
| 64-66% | D |
| Below 64% | F |

Grading Criteria

An "A" grade for an assignment entails superior (not just "very good") performance in terms of structure and organization of assignments, analysis, logical argumentation, and consistency, and the provision of factual, numerical, and/or historical evidence. In terms of class participation, an "A" grade refers to full attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active engagement in all academic seminar lectures, discussions, field trips, and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of student participation will be monitored and taken into account.

Additional Information

Homestays

As a complement to the language classes, homestays provide students with the opportunity to learn from different people and to use their language skills continually in a multilingual learning environment. Our goal is to help students develop the necessary communication tools which they can use with their host families, neighbors, and Tunisians on the street.

Field Exercises

Once a week, through field assignments, students enrich their classroom learning experience and their ability to function in real life language situations, assimilate everyday life issues, and immerse in the host culture. Field assignments are done both individually and in groups.

Field assignments may include visits to the following places:

- Souks: to practice bargaining skills and interact with community members
- Cafés and restaurants: to experience ordering drinks and food
- Museums and monuments: to learn about historical sites and handicrafts

Student Expectations

Class Participation

Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active engagement in all Arabic language lectures, discussions, educational excursions, assignments, and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. An absent student is responsible for contacting the instructor, the tutor, and/or fellow students to be prepared for the assignments s/he missed and the ones scheduled for the next class.

Please note that the syllabus, course content, lecturers, and readings may be **modified by the academic director in order to better suit the needs of the course and its participants**. Should any change of class topics or lecturers be necessary, students will be promptly notified.

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done according to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates, lecturers, local constituents we engage with on site visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Academic Policies: SIT prides itself on providing students with an experientially based program; we hold ourselves, and our students, to the highest of academic standards. Students are asked to refer to the **SIT Study Abroad Handbook** for policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.