

Beginning Modern Standard Arabic

ARAB 1003-1503 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Morocco: Arabic Language and Community Service

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 to read basic texts on familiar topics such as weather, seasons, food, family, studies, and friends.

Moroccan Arabic

Immediately after arriving in Rabat and during the first week of orientation, students participate in a 3-hour introduction to Moroccan Colloquial Arabic, "*darija*," that ranges from basic vocabulary and sentence structure to easy dialogues and interactive exercises as well as useful expressions. The objective of these sessions is to provide students with an elementary background and early familiarity with Moroccan Colloquial Arabic in preparation for the homestay experience.

Language Levels and Placement

Non-beginning participants are placed into appropriate language course levels based on oral proficiency interviews conducted during orientation in Morocco.

Course Objectives

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

- To develop proficiency in spoken and functional Arabic;
- To strengthen listening, comprehension, and communication skills;
- To use the language confidently and effectively in everyday situations;
- To acquire insight into the role of Arabic within Moroccan life and culture.

Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of the program, students will be able:

- To distinguish and pronounce all Arabic sounds and write correctly from dictation;
- To master the basic grammatical structures and vocabulary to write and express oneself correctly;
- To immerse in the host culture via constant use of the space outside class through field exercises involving the use of Arabic in daily life situations;
- To understand and come up with simple written texts on familiar topics;
- To comprehend simple audio/video texts on familiar topics.

Course Requirements

This Arabic program focuses exclusively on Modern Standard Arabic—*Fus’ha*. This level is designed as a basic introduction to the Arabic language and focuses on vocabulary and basic grammatical structures. Effective communication and participation in daily activities will be emphasized. This course adopts a multi-level methodology integrating the skills of reading, writing, listening, grammar, vocabulary, and conversation. For total immersion, Arabic is the **only** teaching language used in class—except when it is necessary to facilitate the explanation of a grammatical rule or lexical phrase. It is the best method as it forces **the student** to think, learn, and speak **only** Arabic. The size of classes is also kept small.

In the first part of the course, students become familiar with the Arabic alphabet (script and sound system). Basic grammatical structures, such as masculine versus feminine, ‘*nisba*’ adjectives, asking questions, subject pronouns, possessives, plural, etc., will be introduced. Students will also learn some basic functions, such as greetings and introducing and talking about oneself and one’s family. In addition, students will get acquainted with *Maha*, one of the central characters of the story in *Al-Kitaab Part I*.

For an interactive and unique cultural immersion experience, the course includes:

- Survival Moroccan Arabic (additional to the 45 contact hours of MSA)
- Field exercises involving language practice in “souks,” cafes, restaurants, museums, etc.

To strengthen the following skills, the class will emphasize:

Conversation:

- Simulate dialogues about real life situations to produce simple and correct sentences in Standard Arabic

Writing:

- Assimilate the letter positions and combine them into words to acquire a set of vocabulary items, form meaningful sentences, and write and read simple texts

Reading:

- Be able to master script; focus on articulation and pronunciation of sounds

Listening:

- Aurally understand basic texts, conversations, and audio/video materials with expressions acquired in class

Readings

You are responsible for all the required readings, and should be prepared to bring them for the Arabic classes.

Required readings:

All students are required to bring the following Arabic textbooks with them to Morocco. **These texts are not available in Morocco. Please make sure you have the latest versions of the following items. Students are required to bring a laptop to complete homework assignments and individual Arabic writing seminar projects.**

Brustad, K., M. Al-Batal and A. Al-Tonsi. *Alif Baa: Introduction to Arabic Letters and Sounds*. K. Georgetown University Press: Washington, D.C. Third Edition (July 1, 2010). ISBN-10:1589016327 or 13:978-1589016323

Brustad, K., M. Al-Batal and A. Al-Tonsi. *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-Arabiyya with DVDs: A Textbook for Beginning Arabic, Part One* Third Edition (July 15, 2011). ISBN-10:1589017366 or 13:978-1589017368

Other Pedagogical Supports

- "العربية تواصل و ثقافات" "Al Arabiya Tawassul wa Thaqafat" (a series of lessons prepared and adapted by CCCL instructors, first published in 1996 and revised and edited in 2013).
- *Al AArabiya almuaassira*, Part I and II, Institute Bourguiba, Tunis

*Please be aware that course contents, lecturers, and readings may be modified as needed. Should any changes of class topics or lecturers be necessary, students will be promptly notified.

Overview of Course Syllabus*

* Please note that the following course topics are to be divided based on the 3 proficiency levels of Beginner (Low, Mid, and High). A detailed schedule of each will be given to you after your placement tests and prior to the beginning of your Arabic classes.

Content Topics

- Acquaintance
- Jobs
- Nationality and belonging
- Numbers
- Family and friends
- Parts of the house
- Directions
- Food and restaurants
- Clothes and colours
- Weather
- Headlines in Arabic of Moroccan newspapers
- Describe places
- Describe feelings

Grammar Topics

- Alphabets and vowels
- Personal pronouns
- Feminine and masculine

- Possessive pronouns
- Definite and indefinite articles
- Nominal phrases
- Prepositions
- Affirmative, negative and interrogative sentences
- Singular, dual and plural
- Present and past tenses
- Adverbs
- Gerund
- Patterns
- Modals
- Quantifiers

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:

Attendance / Participation: Class attendance is mandatory and absences are penalized by reducing the language grade, except for illness cases, when the student is expected to provide a medical certificate. In addition, two repetitive and unjustified delays are also counted as an absence and may impact the student's participation grade.

The aim of class participation is to:

- 1) Express your views;
- 2) Ask questions;
- 3) Make suggestions;
- 4) Read the assigned lessons ahead of class time to familiarize yourself with the specific vocabulary and content of the course and thus be able to follow class discussions and rehearse your vocabulary.

Homework: Reinforcement exercises are assigned daily, with students expected to complete an average of 2 hours of homework every day. Exercises will consist of written and oral assignments, and may include finding new vocabulary items and expressions, listening and watching TV programs with the aim of rehearsing strategies of picking up and understanding sounds. Participants are supposed to submit the exercises within the indicated deadlines; otherwise the exercise is not accepted, which will affect the course grade. Part of the learner's tasks is also to read the grammar section of the *Al-Kitaab* textbook, presented in English, outside class time to avoid using the foreign language in class.

Quizzes: Quizzes are scheduled at the end of each week of the Arabic program to prepare the students for both the written and the oral exams. They aim at keeping up with the previously covered issues related to different skills: grammar, vocabulary, expressions, conversations, listening, reading, and writing.

Written Examination: The course includes final assessments that last one hour and a half. Each week, about 20 minutes are devoted to reviewing the vocabulary and grammar covered.

Oral Presentations: An oral presentation is scheduled during the program: Students are given the choice of subjects with total awareness to use only Arabic utilizing vocabulary and linguistic skills acquired in their language class. The time of this presentation ranges around 10 to 20 minutes maximum. The students can have the option to present individually or in a group where

they are free to join students from other levels. Oral presentations are moments of celebration as students perform and engage in creative activities. Students will be graded not only at the vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure level, but also at the pronunciation and proficiency level.

Assessment:

Grades are assigned by the language instructors based on the following evaluation criteria:

Attendance/ participation	25%
Homework	25%
Quizzes	20%
Written Examination	15%
Oral Presentation	15%

Grading Scale:

The grading scale for all classes is as follow:

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

Homestay

As a complement to the language classes, homestay provides 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 Moroccans 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 or restaurants: to experience ordering drinks and food
- Museums and monuments: to learn about historical sites and handicrafts

Office Hours

Office hours are scheduled for one hour per week. The teacher may also have additional office hours for students who need further support.

For the most effective and constructive management of the language course, students have the opportunity to give their feedback on course content and methodology through written and oral assessments scheduled throughout the term.

Written Assessment

First week evaluation: The purpose of this first evaluation is to make sure the students are placed in the appropriate level and that they understand the teaching methodology to be used for the term.

Mid-term evaluation: This assessment first checks whether the methodology used was effective and helped the participant’s progress and improve their language skills. Second, the purpose is also to implement the participants’ suggestions and recommendations in the rest of the term for better quality teaching.

Final evaluation: This evaluation assesses the language program as a whole and checks to what extent it met the intended learning objectives and expectations of participants.

Oral Assessment

This is based on the students’ feedback either in class or during the office hours. It is the teacher’s responsibility to maintain a daily channel of communication with students to find out about their needs and concerns.

Expectations and Policies

Class Participation

Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active engagement in all lectures, discussions, educational excursion, 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.

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>.

