

## Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic

ARAB-2006-2506 (6 credits)

### Morocco: Human Rights, Social Justice, and Cultural Transformations

*This syllabus is representative of a typical 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. Intermediate Arabic provides students a more in-depth background in daily life issues, enabling them to master critical language skills necessary for performing everyday activities.

The objectives of this level are to review and expand on topics including:

- Traveling
- Relationships
- Ceremonies
- Services (especially public administration)
- Speaking about one's career (personal achievements)
- Biography/autobiography
- Functions of speech
- Cultural and literary subjects

Intermediate Arabic covers grammar and syntactic structures to teach students how to create correct sentences, enabling them to both discuss and write about various topics of study. The main focus, however, is on vocabulary related to themes of culture, literature, and authentic everyday situations. Students participate in field exercises and other activities to gain confidence in interacting with Moroccans and immersing in society. Students are responsible for finding new vocabulary words and expressions matching the assigned field exercises—by using dictionaries, using additional texts including newspapers and magazines, and conducting interviews.

#### Moroccan Arabic: *Darija*

Immediately after arriving in Rabat and during the first week of orientation, students participate in a total of 15 hours introduction to Moroccan Colloquial Arabic, *Darija*, which 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. After the orientation week, students are introduced to words, expressions, grammar, and structures used frequently in everyday life throughout the program. They will be able to practice them in class once a week before they are given assignments to carry out with native speakers in real situations. Evaluation combines performance in class and successful interaction with Moroccans. By the end of the course, students are able to ask essential questions and understand the responses, express basic facts and opinions in simple sentences, and engage in basic conversations in Moroccan Arabic with native speakers. Living with a Moroccan family provides daily opportunity for practice.

### **Language Levels and Placement**

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

### **Course Objectives**

Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic has an interdisciplinary and experiential focus, its main objectives are:

- To expand and strengthen proficiency in spoken Arabic;
- To further develop strong oral/written comprehension and writing skills;
- To use the language confidently and effectively in everyday situations and to address a broad range of topics;
- To acquire insight into the role of Arabic within Moroccan life and culture.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic, students will be able to:

- Master the grammatical rules, structures, and linguistic functions;
- Be empowered with proficiency and mastery of the language skills that enhance their academic pursuits in Arabic;
- Develop various learning skills to meet needs and expectations regarding fluency in Arabic language and therefore Arab culture.

### **Instructional Methods**

SIT's teaching and learning philosophy is grounded in the experiential learning theory developed by Kolb (1984; 2015) and informed by various scholars, such as Dewey, Piaget, Lewin, among others. Experiential learning theory recognizes that learning is an active process that is not confined to the formal curriculum; "knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 2015, p. 49). Learning involves both content and process. Learning is holistic and happens through various life experiences upon which students draw to generate new ways of knowing and being. Learning involves a community and is a lifelong endeavor. Learning is transformational. The suggested four step-cycle of a *concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation* embedded in the experiential learning model is not linear and might not

always happen in that specific order, as any learning is highly context dependent. These stages of taking part in a shared experience; reflecting on that experience by describing and interpreting it; challenging their own assumptions and beliefs to generate new knowledge; and ultimately applying new knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes in a variety of situations and contexts are important for students to engage in to become empowered lifelong learners.

### **Course Requirements**

Students in this course will develop an intermediate level competency in reading and aural comprehension skills and increase their abilities to express ideas in writing. They will be able to understand the main ideas in texts dealing with basic personal and social needs. These texts will involve description and narration in different timeframes, including present, past, habitual, and imperfective.

This course adopts a multi-level methodology integrating the skills of reading, writing, listening, grammar, vocabulary, and conversation. 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. The size of classes is also kept small.

#### For an interactive and creative learning environment, the class will include:

- Useful daily life situations in Moroccan Arabic
- Field trips and exercises involving language practice in *souks*, cafés, restaurants, museums, etc.
- Arabic lecture series and experiential sessions reflecting different aspects about life in Morocco
- Group discussions with Moroccan university students

#### To strengthen the following skills, the class will emphasize:

- Conversation:
  - To enrich students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds to better talk about daily life issues related to the Arab world in general and Morocco particular
  - To perform oral presentations on themes of interest
- Writing:
  - To master composition techniques
  - To summarize texts and express point of views while writing
- Reading:
  - To master texts on culture, literature, and authentic real life situations
  - To get an insight into how some abstract topics are tackled in Arabic writings as a more advanced introduction to culture and literature
- Listening:
  - To immerse smoothly and effectively in Morocco's society and culture mainly through the assigned field exercises and audio-video materials selected by the instructors
  - To enable the students to develop their listening techniques during the Arabic lecture series

## Required Texts

You are responsible for all the required readings and should be prepared to bring them to 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 must bring a laptop to complete homework assignments and individual Arabic writing seminar projects.

Brustad, K., Al-Batal, M., & Al-Tonsi, A. (2013). *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya: A Textbook for Arabic (Part Two, Third Edition)*. Georgetown University Press. ISBN: 978-1589019621.

## Other Pedagogical Supports

"كراس فصحي مركز تواصل الثقافات" *"Fus'ha Merkez Tawasul Athaqafat"* (a series of lessons prepared and adapted by CCCL instructors, first published in 1996 and revised and edited in 2013).

## Overview of Course Syllabus\*

*\*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.*

*\* Please note that the following course topics are to be divided based on the three proficiency levels of Beginner. A detailed schedule of each will be given to you after your placement tests and prior to the beginning of your Arabic classes.*

## Overview of Course Syllabus\*

*\* Please note that the following course topics are to be divided based on the three proficiency levels of Intermediate. 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

- Studies and hobbies
- Describe countries and cities
- Express opinions
- National and religious celebrations
- Arab press
- Colleges
- Arabic literature: poets and novelists
- Pioneers of Arab women movements
- Social history of Arab and Islamic culture
- Multilingualism in the Arab world
- Marriages in the Arab world
- Proverbs

## Grammar Topics:

- General review of Arabic grammar
- Dual and plural
- Relative and demonstrative pronouns
- Modals
- Complex sentences
- Composition techniques
- Patterns using the dictionary
- Imperative
- Direct and indirect objects
- Different adverbs and conjunctions: المفعول المطلق، المفعول لأجله، المفعول فيه
- Irregular verbs
- Passive voice
- Idiomatic expressions
- Case endings and categorizations of words and sentences

## Assignments and Evaluation

### Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

#### 1) Attendance (25%)

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.

#### 2) Homework (25%)

Reinforcement exercises are assigned daily, with students expected to spend an average of two hours of homework every day. Exercises will consist of written and oral assignments and may include finding new vocabulary items and expressions and listening to 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 *Al-Kitaab*, presented in English, outside class time to avoid using the foreign language in class.

#### 3) Participation (20%)

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.

#### 4) Written Examination (15%)

The course includes a mid-term and a final assessment that last one hour and a half each. Each week, around 20 minutes are devoted to reviewing the vocabulary and grammar covered.

### 5) Oral Presentation (15%)

Two oral presentations are scheduled during the program. Students are given the choice of subjects with total awareness to use vocabulary and linguistic skills acquired in their language class. The time of this presentation ranges from 10 to 20 minutes. 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.

### Assessment

- Attendance - 25%
- Homework - 25%
- Participation - 20%
- Written Examination - 15%
- Oral Presentation - 15%

### Grading Scale

The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

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 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 to 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

### 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 semester.

### 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 semester.

Mid-term evaluation: This assessment first checks whether the methodology used was effective and helped the participant progress and improve language skills. Second, the purpose is to implement the participants' suggestions and recommendations in the rest of the semester 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 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.

Oral Proficiency Exam: At the end of the course, students will be given an oral proficiency exam to provide a measurement of students' overall linguistic progress. The exam consists of a brief (25-30 minute) oral interview designed to evaluate student speaking abilities and comprehension of Modern Standard Arabic. Students do not receive a numeric or alphabetical grade for the oral proficiency exam, but are instead described by an estimated qualitative score of: "Novice High," "Intermediate Low," etc. Thus, course grades provide an assessment of students' performance in meeting the requirements of the language class while qualitative scores provide an assessment of students' linguistic competence in the host language.

### **Program Expectations**

Participation in class, including attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active engagement in all 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.

### **SIT Policies and Resources**

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.