

## Advanced Modern Standard Arabic

ARAB 3006-3506 (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 further 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 improve and enhance 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. Advanced Arabic addresses increasingly complex issues related to culture, literature, politics, society, sociological studies, and gender, among other topics. The structural and grammatical usages of Arabic are emphasized as necessary linguistic tools for the improvement of the learner's proficiency and fluency. The overall intended learning objective is to enable students to critically analyze Arabic texts and discourses and express ideas in Arabic at an appropriate level. Advanced Arabic focuses on reading extracts of articles from journals, magazines, and newspapers while incorporating music, advanced texts, and film/television. Written assignments aim to reinforce the stylistic and structural competences.

#### 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

Advanced Arabic has an interdisciplinary and experiential focus, its main objectives are:

- To gain advanced proficiency in spoken Arabic;
- To use the language confidently and effectively in everyday situations and in addressing a broad range of specialized topics;
- To explore a variety of media, its representations, and its attendant effects in Morocco;
- To acquire insight into the role and specificities of Arabic within Moroccan life and culture.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of Advanced Arabic, students will be able to:

- Master the grammatical rules and structures as well as the linguistic functions of clauses and sentences
- Improve proficiency and mastery of the language skills for better academic pursuits in Arabic
- Develop students' various learning skills to meet the needs and expectations of students in order to address and analyze themes related to advanced levels
- Address the very advanced issues related to abstract topics of culture, literature, politics, society, sociological studies, and gender.
- Be empowered with an ability and a sense of critical and analytical thinking through the use of different language functions

## 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

This course will focus exclusively on Modern Standard Arabic, *Fus'ha*, and enable students to attain a level of proficiency in all Arabic skills. Students will refine and expand their knowledge of grammar and sentence structure. The course adopts a multi-level methodology that integrates the skills of reading, writing, listening, grammar, vocabulary, and conversation. There will be more emphasis on composition and oral discussions. All skills are reinforced at all levels and Arabic is the *only* teaching language used in class. 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 develop communication skills
  - To talk about and analyze daily life issues related to the Arab world in general and Morocco in particular
  - To perform oral presentations on themes of interest
  - To present and discuss certain aspects of Moroccan and Arab culture with classmates using Arabic only
- Writing:
  - To carry out library and field research in order to write essays in Arabic
  - To master composition techniques
  - To summarize texts and express point of views while writing
- Reading:
  - To understand and master texts on culture and literature
  - To read articles from Arabic newspapers and magazines
  - To get an insight on how some literary and philosophical issues are tackled in Arabic writings as an advanced introduction to culture and literature
- Listening:
  - To immerse effectively in Morocco's society and Arab culture mainly through the assigned field exercises and audio-video materials selected by the instructors
  - To interact linguistically and intellectually (using Arabic only) with the lecturers 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. If you do not have a laptop, you should have a DVD player for your homework.

Brustad, K., Al-Batal, M., & Tunisi, A. (2007). *Al-Kitaab with DVD and MP3 CD: a textbook for Arabic*. Georgetown University Press. ISBN: 978-1589011496.

### Other Pedagogical Supports

Articles from newspapers, magazines, authentic texts, audio-video, and internet resources.

### **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.*

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### **Content Topics:**

- Islam and politics
- Current events in Morocco
- Moroccan and Arab mass media
- Classical and popular patrimony
- Youth culture in Morocco
- The Arabs and the West
- Poetry in the Arab world
- Progress and development in Arab societies
- NGOs in Arab societies
- Religion and society
- Literature and arts
- Aspect of Arab identities
- Feminine perspectives
- Notion of nostalgia in the Arab world

### **Grammar Topics:**

- مراجعة القواعد والنحو
- الإعراب
- إسماء الإشارة بعد المثنى إليه
- الفعل الأجوف والمضعف والناقص
- الفعل المبني للمجهول
- كان وكاد وأخواتهما
- استخراج اسم الفاعل و اسم المفعول للفعل الناقص
- الاستثناء(المستثنى، المستثنى منه، أداة الاستثناء)
- "ذو" والأسماء الخمسة
- علم العروض والأوزان الشعرية

- أوزان المؤنث والمذكر
- الشرط
- الحال

## Evaluation and Grading Criteria

### Description of Assignments

Grades are assigned by the language instructors based on the following evaluation 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 midterm 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 presentations (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

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 a qualitative score: "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.