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Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic

ARAB 2006-2506 (6 Credits)

Jordan: Geopolitics, International Relations, and the Future of the Middle East

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 intensive Arabic course provides a structured survey of major concepts in Arabic language and culture, designed to develop students' proficiency in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Jordanian Colloquial Arabic. Instruction emphasizes the four core skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—with outcomes aligned to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines at the Novice–Intermediate levels.

Students will acquire foundational knowledge of Arabic grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure, while simultaneously exploring the cultural contexts in which the language is used. Particular attention is given to the interaction between linguistic forms and Jordanian cultural norms, enabling learners to critically examine how language reflects and shapes everyday life in Jordanian society.

Through a functional-communicative, task-based approach, students engage in role-plays, dialogues, and authentic communicative tasks that simulate real-world situations such as shopping, dining, transportation, and social introductions. These linguistic skills are reinforced by cultural immersion activities that highlight Jordanian customs, expressions, and social practices.

Jordanian Arabic

Immediately after arriving in Amman and during the first week of orientation, students participate in an introduction to Jordanian Colloquial Arabic, which is part of the broader Levantine colloquial dialect. The sessions cover basic vocabulary and sentence structure, in addition to simple dialogues and interactive exercises. The objective of these sessions is to provide students with an elementary background and early familiarity with Jordanian/Levantine Colloquial Arabic in preparation for the homestay experience and for navigating daily life in Jordan.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Read short authentic texts (150–200 words) such as news briefs, advertisements, or cultural narratives with 75% comprehension.
- Comprehend and give directions, negotiate prices, and manage transportation needs in Jordanian Colloquial Arabic.
- Conduct everyday transactions such as shopping, paying for items, and ordering meals, using culturally appropriate language.
- Provide personal information and respond to demographic questions (e.g., nationality, marital status, occupation) with confidence.
- Introduce themselves and others in both formal and informal contexts, employing appropriate greetings, leave-taking, and social etiquette.
- Engage in extended conversations about family, hobbies, studies, and daily routines, using present, past, and future tense verbs.
- Write short essays (8–10 sentences) expressing personal experiences, opinions, or cultural reflections
- Differentiate between nominal and verbal sentences, producing at least 15 examples in context.
- Actively use a minimum of 600–800 high-frequency words across daily life, social interaction, and cultural topics.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught primarily in Arabic. Students are immersed in Modern Standard Arabic and Jordanian Colloquial Arabic from the outset, with English used only for occasional clarification or linguistic comparison. Instruction is delivered through Arabic-language materials, classroom interaction, and experiential learning activities. Students develop their language proficiency through Arabic-based lectures, guided practice, and cultural engagement, enabling them to build confidence and fluency in real-life contexts.

Instructional Methods

This intermediate-level course is grounded in experiential and communicative language teaching methodologies, aligned with ACTFL proficiency guidelines for the Intermediate level. It is designed to create an immersive, student-centered environment that fosters meaningful language acquisition through real-world application and cultural.

Instructional methods include:

- **Experiential Learning:** Students engage in authentic communicative tasks—such as navigating transportation, ordering food, and interacting with host families—that connect classroom content to lived experiences.
- **Task-Based and Functional Instruction:** Lessons are structured around real-life functions (e.g., introducing oneself, asking for directions), enabling students to use Arabic purposefully and confidently in daily interactions.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Pair and group activities promote peer interaction, dialogue practice, and cooperative problem-solving, reinforcing both linguistic skills and intercultural awareness.
- **Cultural Activities:** Students participate in hands-on cultural experiences that deepen their understanding of Jordanian society and enhance language use in context. These include

preparing traditional meals with host families, learning dabke (Jordanian folk dance), practicing Arabic calligraphy, and engaging in local customs and rituals such as weddings and family celebrations.

This integrated approach ensures that students not only develop foundational skills in Modern Standard Arabic and Jordanian Colloquial Arabic, but also cultivate the confidence, adaptability, and cultural sensitivity essential for effective communication in Arabic-speaking environments.

Required Texts

Brustad, K., Al-Batal, M., & Al-Tonsi, A. (2011). *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya: A Textbook for Beginning Arabic, Part One* (3rd ed.). Georgetown University Press.

Al-Batal, M., Brustad, K., & Al-Tonsi, A. (2010). *Alif Baa: Introduction to Arabic Letters and Sounds* (3rd ed.). Georgetown University Press.

Additional worksheets, audio recordings, and vocabulary lists will be provided by the instructor throughout the course. Supplementary readings and cultural materials may be assigned based on weekly themes and field activities

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1. Interactive Language Tasks and Cultural Engagement (15%)

Students will complete weekly communicative tasks that integrate language and culture, such as role-playing daily scenarios (e.g., shopping, dining, asking for directions), participating in cultural activities (e.g., cooking traditional meals, learning dabke, practicing Arabic calligraphy), and engaging with host families. Assignments will be assessed based on linguistic accuracy, cultural relevance, and active participation.

2. Vocabulary and Grammar Quizzes (20%)

Short quizzes will be administered regularly to assess students' mastery of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and script recognition. These quizzes are designed to reinforce classroom learning and track individual progress.

3. Midterm Examination (15%)

The midterm exam will evaluate students' progress at the halfway point of the course. It will cover vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and short oral/written tasks. The exam is worth 15 marks (15%) and provides feedback on areas of strength and improvement before the final project and final exam.

4. Final Arabic Project (15%)

Students will prepare and present a final project in Arabic, demonstrating their ability to use learned vocabulary and structures to describe personal experiences, cultural observations, or thematic topics. Projects may include oral presentations, visual posters, or short written compositions. Evaluation will consider clarity, creativity, and linguistic competence.

5. Final Examination (25%)

The final exam will assess students' proficiency across all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It will include comprehension tasks, sentence formation, short dialogues, and script-based exercises. The exam reflects cumulative learning and prepares students for continued Arabic study.

6. Attendance and Participation (10%)

Active involvement in all course components is essential. Students are expected to attend all sessions, arrive on time, and engage respectfully and consistently in classroom discussions, group work, and cultural excursions.

Attendance and Participation

Due to the immersive and experiential nature of SIT Study Abroad language programs, full attendance and active participation in all class sessions, cultural activities, and program excursions are mandatory. Student performance is evaluated not only through academic assignments but also through consistent engagement in all components of the course.

Students are expected to contribute meaningfully to classroom discussions, language practice, and cultural interactions.

Participation includes punctuality, respectful behavior, and a willingness to communicate in Arabic to the best of one's ability. Absences—whether from class, field visits, or scheduled cultural events—must be communicated in advance and approved by the academic director or designated staff. Unexcused absences may negatively affect academic standing, final grades, and overall program continuity. Students may not opt out of required activities, as each component is integral to the learning experience and language development.

Late Assignments

SIT Study Abroad language programs combine classroom instruction with experiential learning, cultural immersion, and field-based activities. The curriculum is designed to build sequentially toward key outcomes such as final projects, presentations, and applied language tasks. Timely completion of assignments is essential to ensure students benefit from the cumulative nature of the course and maintain consistent progress in language acquisition.

Students may request a justified extension for one assignment during the semester. Requests must be submitted in writing at least 12 hours before the posted deadline. If the reason is accepted, an extension of up to one week may be granted. No additional extensions will be approved. Assignments not submitted within the extension period will receive a failing grade ('F'). Late submissions without prior approval will be penalized and may affect the final course grade.

Grading Scale:

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

Program Expectations

Students enrolled in Beginning Modern Standard Arabic are expected to prepare for class by completing readings, arriving on time, and coming ready to engage thoughtfully. Assignments must be submitted on schedule, and all work must reflect the student's own effort, as plagiarism or any form of unethical behavior will not be tolerated. Active participation in discussions, interactions with guest speakers, and engagement with cultural partners are essential for language development, and students are expected to show respect for diverse perspectives at all times. Personal devices may be used only for class-related purposes, and off-task use will be counted as an absence. All course materials and updates will be posted on OneDrive, which students should check regularly, and any access issues must be reported promptly. Some topics may involve sensitive or challenging content, and students are encouraged to engage respectfully and seek support if needed.

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](#), [Accessibility Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

Course Schedule

Please note that weekly topics and cultural excursions may shift to accommodate emerging opportunities, guest availability, or safety considerations. Students will be notified of any changes in advance.

This 90-hour intensive course is delivered through daily sessions that combine structured classroom instruction with immersive practice and cultural engagement. The accelerated format ensures that students remain fully immersed in the Arabic language, reinforcing their skills through consistent exposure and active use each day.

Students attend class five days per week, with each session designed to integrate the four core language skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—into thematic modules that reflect authentic Jordanian contexts. Beyond classroom learning, participants engage in guided practice, interactive activities, and cultural immersion experiences that strengthen both linguistic competence and sociolinguistic awareness.

The daily rhythm of study and practice fosters rapid progress, enabling learners to build confidence, fluency, and cultural understanding in a short period of time. By the end of the program, students will have completed 90 hours of intensive training that balances academic rigor with experiential learning, preparing them to use Arabic effectively in real-world settings.

Week 1: Introduction to Arabic Varieties, and Review

This week, students will:

- Be introduced to different varieties of the Arabic language, including classical, standard, and colloquial Arabic

- Learn more detailed greetings
- Learn how to form sentences, questions, and answers
- Review the first part of *Alkitaab, Part 1* (Units 1-4)
- Review verb conjugation, demonstrative nouns, the dual and plural forms
- Review lists of vocabulary and colloquial expressions to prepare students for their stay in rural Jordan
 - Demonstrate the ability to correctly conjugate at least 10 high-frequency verbs in both singular and plural forms with 80% accuracy.
- Engage in a 2-4 minute role-play using greetings and simple question–answer exchanges, showing appropriate use of colloquial expressions.

Week 2 : From Grammar to the Streets

This week, students will:

- Learn from *Alkitaab, Part 1*, Unit 5 and 6
- Learn verb conjugation for the imperative and present tenses
- Learn the different endings for present tense
- Study *Alidaafa*
- Study the ordinal numbers
- Begin to understand a rural Jordanian accent (in preparation for one-week stay in rural Jordan)
- Learn how to give directions and more useful words regarding transportation
- Correctly conjugate verbs in the present and imperative tenses.
- Perform a 2–3 minute role-play giving and following directions in Jordanian Colloquial Arabic, using at least 10 transportation-related vocabulary items and demonstrating comprehension by reaching the intended destination in the task.

Week 3 : Numbers and Time Expressions

This week, students will:

- Learn from *Alkitaab, Part 1*, Unit 7
- Study the numbers and their relation to time and money
- Learn adverbs of time.
- Accurately use numbers 1–100 in oral and written exercises, including telling time and handling money transactions, with at least 80% accuracy.
- Construct and present 5–7 sentences that integrate adverbs of time (e.g., today, tomorrow, yesterday, now, later) to describe daily routines or schedules, demonstrating correct word order and usage.

Week 4 : Advanced Sentence Structures and Grammar Week

This week, students will:

- Learn from *Alkitaab, Part 1*, Unit 8
- Study sentence structure
- Study grammatical rules concerning: comparatives, adverbs, sentences with numbers, and active and passive participles.
- Construct at least 10 sentences using comparatives and superlatives (e.g., bigger, more beautiful, the best) with 80% grammatical accuracy.

- Apply comparatives in both descriptive contexts (e.g., describing people, places) and functional tasks (e.g., comparing prices, preferences).

Week 5 : Arabic Grammar: Present, Past, and Future

This week, students will:

- Learn from *Alkitaab, Part 1*, Unit 9
- Learn how to conjugate the present tense, negate sentences, and form sentences
- Learn how to conjugate verbs in the past and future tense
- Further study the structure of nominal sentences, and verb forms
- Study the infinitive forms by examining excerpts from the media and Arabic literature
- Form and negate 10 sentences in both MSA and Jordanian Colloquial Arabic, demonstrating correct word order and agreement.
- Write a short paragraph (6–8 sentences) incorporating 5 infinitives to express abilities, desires, or ongoing actions.

Week 6: Review and Final Assessment

This week is dedicated to review, final presentations, and assessment. Students will:

- Consolidate key linguistic and cultural concepts covered throughout the course
- Apply cultural knowledge by correctly identifying and using at least 10 Jordanian colloquial expressions in appropriate social contexts during review tasks.
- Prepare and deliver their final Arabic language presentations.
- Participate in structured review sessions to reinforce vocabulary, grammar, and communicative functions.

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