Course Syllabus

Course Prefix / Number: ARA 1120 C  
Course Title: Beginning Arabic Language and Culture I  
Credit Hours: 4 semester hours

Instructor Name and Contact Information:

- Cynthia Brandenburg, MA Arabic Language and Literature (The American University in Cairo), BA Honours Arabic (SOAS, London, UK)  
- Email: cbrandenburg@uwf.edu

Prerequisites:

ARA 1120 C, Arabic Language and Culture I, is the prerequisite to ARA 1121 C, Arabic Language and Culture II. Students should also have an open mind, a commitment to full participation, and the desire to have fun while learning.

Course Description:

The course objective is to “communicate in Arabic for understanding”. This will be accomplished by learning Modern Standard Arabic as a beginner and gaining exposure to Egyptian colloquial Arabic (as well as other colloquial registers).

This course will be focused on mastering the Arabic alphabet and pronouncing sounds correctly using the Alif Baa textbook, 3rd edition, and DVDs. Throughout the course, the student will also be exposed to commonly-used Arabic phrases and sentence structures. Attention will then be turned to conversations, grammar development, and vocabulary building at the introductory level so that by the end of the course, the student will be able to have simple conversations and write simple sentences that express basic information about him- or herself.

Students will hear and practice dialogues using Egyptian and Levantine colloquial Arabic in addition to learning the higher register of educated Arabic speakers. Students will thus gain exposure to and familiarity with more formal and less formal Arabic registers and regional variations.
Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- read, write, and articulate the letters of the Arabic alphabet with associated diacritical marks;
- listen to Arabic sounds and aurally distinguish between sounds;
- write words and simple phrases and sentences correctly from dictation;
- speak in Arabic on familiar topics at first-semester level;
- talk in Arabic about themselves and their interests with Arabic-speakers at first-semester level;
- initiate social interactions, ask for basic information, and discuss basic cultural aspects of social interactions among Arabs;
- use culturally appropriate expressions, proverbs, and greetings at first-semester level;
- converse in Arabic about first-semester level audio/video texts on familiar topics;
- write short paragraphs at first-semester level in Arabic expressing basic information about him- or herself and others;
- explain some of the differences between formal and spoken Arabic and begin code-switching between these registers when contextually appropriate; and
- display competence using basic Arabic grammar such as in the construction of noun/adjective phrases, use of prepositions, simple verb conjugations, and asking yes/no questions.

How to Excel in This Class:

1. **Actively participate!** You can prepare in advance by thinking about the questions that may be asked during office hours and the activities that may be performed so that you can practice beforehand. Prepare a list of questions regarding difficulties you may have to post on message boards or bring up during office hours.

2. **Repeat, Repeat, Repeat!** A once-over review of vocabulary and grammar will not be sufficient for success. Practice new words, phrases, and dialogues throughout your day. Remember to LOOK, LISTEN, SAY, and WRITE!

3. **Say It Out Loud!** Don’t just think Arabic … say it out loud.

4. **Depend on Learning Partners!** Post issues in discussion areas and support each other during office hours. Others will have encountered many of the same issues and will be happy to share their knowledge. Learning Arabic is about building a social group of speakers. Talk to each other and depend on each other.

5. **Own The Vocabulary!** Make new words meaningful to you. Think about how you may use them to express something about you/others in your daily life. Create sentences to practice saying and writing.
Make flash cards with useful vocabulary, verb forms, expressions, synonyms, antonyms, and even sentences that you want to use successfully. Carry them with you and do 1-5 minute study sessions throughout the day.

6. **Guess!** All language acquisition involves guesswork. Practice filling in gaps based on your best judgment.

7. **Make mistakes!** It’s absolutely OK to make mistakes in learning a language. Learn from your own and others’ mistakes. Remember the only true mistake is to be afraid to make one!

8. **Get exposure/develop an “ear” for the language!** Join online networking groups, listen to Arabic radio stations, watch Arabic films, and welcome any opportunity to speak with fellow students and native speakers.

9. **Take good notes and organize!** Writing good notes helps in reinforcing learning and capturing information for study/recall. Make a separate binder so that you can organize according to such headings as: Alphabet/Diacritical Marks; Vocabulary; Synonyms; Antonyms; Grammar; Writing Practice; and Essays.

10. **Invest in Yourself!** Language helps develop creativity and facilitates learning in other areas of your life. Invest **two to three hours of self-study** for every hour of class. This means that you should plan on spending a minimum of **12 hours/week** dedicated to learning Arabic. Master each new building block of knowledge so that new material will make sense.

**Textbooks:**

- **Required texts:**

**Internet Access and Email Requirements:**

- Periodic Internet Access - it is recommended that you access the online version of the course through eLearning (https://elearning.uwf.edu/) at least once a week to accomplish certain tasks such as the following:
  - Interacting with the instructor and other students
  - Posting to discussion threads
  - Performing oral assessments
  - Taking online tests
  - Getting individualized attention
• UWF E-mail Account

Grading / Evaluation:

Your grade in this course will consist of the following elements:

Quizzes

You will have one attempt for every quiz. Quizzes are open-book and so one attempt should be sufficient. Times will vary for completion of quizzes so you should check each quiz for the time allowance.

• 7 Language quizzes @ 20 points each for a total of 140 points.

Participation

Office Hours (synchronous) and Asynchronous Activities:

You will need to attend a minimum of four (4) out of the seven (7) office hours for each lesson and make-up any office hours that you miss. You may make-up remaining office hours (up to a maximum of 3) by listening to the office hour recording (the link will be found in the ‘News Item’ section in elearning), writing a report about the information covered, and submitting it in the ‘Office Hour Make-up’ dropbox.

• 7 Office hours @ 20 points each for a total of 140 points. These may be in the form of synchronous office hours or asynchronous activities as directed by the instructor (see above).

Discussions:

• 7 Discussions @ 20 points each for a total of 140 points.

Homework Assignments

• 7 Assignments @ 20 points each for a total of 140 points.

Final Paper

• 1 Final Paper @ 40 points

Total Course Points

The total number of points available in the course is 600 points.
Grading Scales:

Letter grades will be awarded based upon the following scale:

- **A:** 543-600 points
- **B:** 482-542 points
- **C:** 422-481 points
- **D:** 362-421 points
- **F:** 361 and below

Special Technology Utilized by Students:

Students in the Military

This course is a combination of self-contained delivery through the fully loaded ultra-portable "Fujitsu Lifebook" or the "Acer Aspire One" (military only) and online activities. Instructional interaction takes place through the Internet. In addition to baseline word processing skills and sending/receiving email with attachments, students will be expected to upload and download audio and text files.

Civilian Students

Civilian students will access the course through elearning via the Internet and do not need to concern themselves with the special technology provided to students in the military. Students will need the same skills described for military students including the use of email, word processing skills, and the ability to upload and download audio and text files.

Technical Support:

For questions or technical issues please contact John Carey: arabic@uwf.edu, or

Phone: 1-888-529-1823 or 1-850-473-7209.

Expectations for Academic Conduct/Plagiarism Policy:

- Academic Conduct Policy: (PDF Format)
- Plagiarism Policy: (PDF Format)
- Student Handbook: (PDF Format)
  - Withdrawal deadline from all courses for term with partial refund; automatic grade of “WR” **February 3, 2012.** Withdrawal deadline from individual course or all courses for term; automatic grade of “W” (no individual course withdrawals after this date) **March 16, 2012.** Withdrawal deadline from all courses for term; “W” or “WF” at instructor’s discretion, **April 27, 2012.** Please discuss any academic concerns with me prior to withdrawing. Withdrawals after the deadline will not be approved except for:
1. Death in the immediate family.
2. Serious illness of the student or an immediate family member.
3. A situation deemed similar to categories 1 and 2 by all in the approval process.
4. Withdrawal due to Military Service (Florida Statute 1004.07)
5. National Guard Troops Ordered into Active Service (Florida Statute 250.482)

Students who do not officially withdraw will be assigned a standard letter grade. Late withdraws must be approved by the students advisor, instructor of the course, department chairperson, and finally, the University Academic Appeals Committee. Students who withdraw are not enrolled as of the date the withdrawal is processed.

ASSISTANCE:

- Students with special needs who require specific examination-related or other course-related accommodations should contact the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC), sdrc@uwf.edu, 850.474.2387. SDRC will send an email to the instructor that specifies any recommended accommodations.
- Please check http://www.uwf.edu/sdrc/index.cfm.