

ARABIC 601C: FIRST YEAR ARABIC I

FALL 2011

Unique # 41055

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COURSE MATERIALS:

1. *Alif Baa, an Introduction to Arabic Letters and Sounds (Third Edition)* by Brustad, Al-Batal & Al-Tonsi. This book comes with DVDs and a companion website and we will be using all three every night. We use this text for the first month of class. The book is available at "Austin TX Books" at 2116 Guadalupe (between The Goodall Wooten and Mattress Firm).
2. In addition to purchasing the *Alif Baa* book, you must enroll in your instructor's course at the companion website for an additional charge of \$24. Please refer to the class Blackboard for detailed instructions on how to do this.
3. *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya, Part 1 (Third Edition)* by Brustad, Al-Batal & Al-Tonsi. Also available at "Austin TX Books" at 2116 Guadalupe (between The Goodall Wooten and Mattress Firm). We will switch to this textbook after finishing *Alif Baa* and will use it for 2 semesters.
4. *Blackboard*: In this class we will use Blackboard—a web-based course management system at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—to distribute course materials, communicate online, post assignments, and post grades. You will receive emails with important course information from your instructor via Blackboard's email tool so be sure to check your email frequently.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of Arabic 601C you will, *in-shaa'a-llaah*:

1. have mastered the Arabic alphabet and sound system, be able to recognize and pronounce correctly all Arabic sounds, and write accurately from dictation;
2. be able to initiate social interactions, ask for basic information, and be aware of basic cultural aspects of social interaction in the Arab world;
3. be able to talk about yourself, your education, and your family with native speakers of Arabic accustomed to interacting with learners;
4. comprehend simple print texts on familiar topics;
5. comprehend simple audio/video texts on familiar topics;
6. be able to compose simple paragraphs about yourself and your family and friends;
7. know about the differences between formal and spoken Arabic, recognize both registers, and be able to use basic expressions in at least one dialect; and
8. have an active vocabulary of about 300 Arabic words

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Attendance and Participation	15%
Homework	15%
Homework Correction	5%
Quizzes	30%
Skit	5%
Culture Portfolio	5%
Oral Interview	5%
Final Exam	20%

Below you will find more detail on each of the above components of your class grade, as well as a section on [final grade calculation and grade policies](#), a section on [how to do well in this class](#) which includes a section on [principles for effective group work](#) and finally, a section on [UT and department policies](#) applicable in the class.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION/COURSE REQUIREMENTS IN DETAIL:

Attendance and Participation (15%):

Class time will be devoted to **activating** the vocabulary and structures that you have prepared at home through your homework. At least 75% of class time will be spent on doing activities in pairs and small groups. Thus, attendance and active participation in class is essential to your making good language proficiency gains and doing well in the class. This part of your grade will be based on a daily “attendance and participation” grade assigned by your instructor and TA according to the following criteria:

- 5- You are **actively** engaged in developing your Arabic proficiency and communicating **in Arabic as much as possible** with your partner/classmates/teachers from the moment you walk into the class until you leave it. Full credit will be given when you,
- are ready to begin class on time
 - are well prepared for the class, which means that you have listened to recorded materials on the companion web site/DVD, learned the new vocabulary well enough to be ready to activate it in class without referring to your book, read the grammar explanations carefully and done the homework drills based on these explanations before coming to class
 - you submit fully completed homework at the beginning of class
 - are alert
 - participate actively when we are working together as a class
 - make maximum use of pair/group work time by
 - understanding the learning objectives of tasks assigned
 - staying focused on those objectives
 - continuing to work with your partner on the task objectives even if you “finish” an assigned task before the allotted time is up (Ask your TA or instructor for additional instructions if you aren’t sure what to do next).
 - maintain the “Arabic as much as possible” policy
- 4- You are present but lacking in one of the above criteria for full credit in participation.
- 3- You are present but lacking in two of the criteria
- 2- You are present but lacking in three of the above criteria.
- 1- You are present but lacking in more than three of the above criteria. For instance, you come late to class, submit incomplete homework, use English to say something that you could say in Arabic and are not focused on the assigned task during group work.
- 0- Absent or more than 20 minutes late

If you come to class but do not submit homework, the most you can get for your participation for that day is a 3/5.

Attendance Policies:

- If you are absent from class you will receive a "0" for that day's attendance and participation. Your **lowest 3 grades for attendance and participation will be dropped for purposes of grade calculation.**
- More than ten absences--whatever the reason--will result in an "F" for the course.
- Please inform your instructor by email of absence as soon as possible *before--not after--*the class you will miss. The absence will not be excused but informing your instructor of an absence helps considerably in planning for daily class activities.

Tardiness Policy

Arriving late to class is disruptive so please make every effort to be in class and ready to start work when class begins. Attendance and participation points will be deducted for tardiness as follows: Arrival during first 5 mins of class: 1 pt; during first 10 mins: 2 pts; during first 15 mins: 3 pts; during first 20 mins: 4 pts. If you arrive more than 20 mins late for class you will receive a "0" for that day's class participation and attendance and it will count as an absence in applying the absence policy.

Classroom Conduct Policies:

- Use of laptops and cell phones is not permitted. Turn your cellphone off **completely** if it is with you.
- Please do not chew gum in class.
- Food is not permitted in the classroom. Drinks in spill-proof mugs and bottles with tops are allowed.

Homework (15%)

Expect to spend about 2 hours on homework for every class session. To prepare for the learning that takes place through practice in class, you will listen, read and study new material at home. This material will not be presented in class. To help you process this material, you will have daily written assignments ***due at the beginning of class on the day designated in the schedule.*** The amount of effort you put into your at-home preparation and your homework is an important part of your homework grade. Pay close attention to your instructor's comments on your assignments, and follow up promptly in office hours or after class if you have questions about your homework grade.

Homework assignments will be graded on a **scale of 1 to 5 (5= excellent; 4= good but not your best effort; 3= mediocre; 2= poor; 1= very poor)**. You will be graded on the overall quality of your work, not merely on the number of correct or incorrect answers. Note that you do not have to have everything 100% correct on your homework in order to get a "5" as long as you have made your best effort. **Your lowest 3 grades for homework will be dropped for purposes of grade calculation.**

On each homework assignment,

1. write your name **in Arabic** as soon as you are able to
2. write **the homework number** (from assignment schedule)
3. **staple pages together**
4. leave room for feedback from your instructors on the homework. Writing on every other line is one good way to do this.

Failure to do any of the above will lower your homework grade by ½ point.

You will not receive full credit for submitting only the words from a fill in the blank exercise or submitting a xeroxed copy of the exercise from the book. The aim of these exercises is not only to build your vocabulary, but also to recycle and reinforce the vocabulary and grammatical structures that you already know. By writing out the exercise in full you notice details of the language (such as spelling and grammatical details) that you may have missed first time round, you incorporate your new vocabulary into a system rather than producing a simple list, and you increase your writing speed. Because a simple list only meets one aim of the exercise, we consider it incomplete, and you may lose up to one point on your homework grade for this reason.

Late homework will not be accepted. However, if there are exceptional extenuating circumstances that will prevent you from turning in homework on time, contact your instructor to discuss the possibility of getting advance permission to submit late homework.

Note that the **assigned homework at the companion website is required** homework. Failure to complete that online portion of the homework will result in points being deducted from your homework grade.

The first month of class requires an extra time investment on your part while we are doing the alphabet drills. ***Expect to spend up to an extra hour per day on homework during this month.*** This investment will pay off later: learning to connect the sounds and letters well helps you memorize vocabulary better, avoid spelling problems, and communicate effectively with native speakers with clear pronunciation.

Using the answer key in doing the homework is a violation of the Honor Code and will be treated accordingly.

Homework Correction (5%)

In the second part of the semester, when we begin the *Al-Kitaab* textbook, you will be asked to make corrections on your written homework. Mistakes on homework are a natural part of the learning process. But for you to really get the benefit of your mistakes you need to go back and correct them. The homework grading system in the class is designed to reward you for doing that. When you submit your homework the first time, your instructor or TA will underline or circle mistakes to be corrected and label them with correction symbols using the correction code (posted on Blackboard). When you get back your homework you are expected to go over it and correct the mistakes **(using a different color ink or pencil)** on the original homework paper and **next to** what you wrote originally, and then resubmit it according to the daily assignment schedule.

To get full credit for your homework corrections you must **attempt to correct every mistake** pointed out to you. If you don't understand why something is wrong, write a note to your TA/teacher on your homework asking for more help.

Homework corrections will receive a separate grade using a **scale of 1 to 5 (5= excellent; 4= good but not your best effort; 3= mediocre; 2= poor; 1= very poor)**. Failure to use a different color of ink on corrections will result in a ½ pt deduction.

Late corrected homework will not be accepted. Your **lowest 2 grades for homework correction will be dropped** for purposes of grade calculation.

Quizzes (30%)

There will be **five quizzes** over the course of the semester, worth a total of 30% of your final grade. If you will miss/have missed a quiz, contact your instructor as soon as you know that you will be missing/have missed it. Requests for make-ups will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you have not contacted your instructor within 24 hours after the test has been given to discuss the possibility of a make-up, you will receive a "0". Quiz dates will be included on the daily homework schedules posted on Blackboard.

Skit (5 %) [Week of November 14th](#)

You will be asked to prepare one skit with a partner (5-6 minutes) and present it in class together. Skits provide you with the opportunity to show what you have learned and what you can create with the language. Further information about the skit's format and evaluation will be provided at least one week before the skit is due.

Culture Portfolio (5%)

In addition to your language work, you will create an electronic Culture Portfolio with five entries. The culture portfolio is your opportunity to engage with Arab culture outside the classroom in order to explore and improve your knowledge of the cultural and social contexts in which Arabic is spoken.

You are required to **post your culture portfolio entry (250 to 300 words) on Blackboard** under the Discussion Board. We hope that you will enjoy reading the Portfolio entries of your classmates in addition to writing your own. More details of this component of the course are posted on Blackboard. The dates for posting Culture Portfolio entries on Blackboard are as follows:

<i>Culture Portfolio</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
<i>Entry # 1</i>	<i>Friday, Sept. 9</i>
<i>Entry # 2</i>	<i>Friday, Sept. 30</i>
<i>Entry # 3</i>	<i>Friday, Oct. 21</i>
<i>Entry # 4</i>	<i>Friday, Nov. 4</i>
<i>Entry # 5</i>	<i>Wednesday, Nov. 23</i>

Oral Interview (5%) **During the last week of classes (Nov. 28th-Dec. 2nd)**

This will be an individual interview (15 minutes) with an instructor or TA from the First Year teaching team. In this interview you will be able to demonstrate your oral skills in Arabic in talking about yourself, family, friends, studies, university and city, likes and dislikes, etc. Further information about the interview format, content, and an evaluation rubric will be distributed through Blackboard by mid-November.

Final Examination (20%)

The final examination will be comprehensive and will test reading, writing, and listening in addition to vocabulary and grammar. The final exam will be given as a Uniform Exam for all sections of ARA 601C on **Thursday, Dec. 8th 7 – 10 pm with a make-up on Friday, Dec. 9th 7 – 10pm**. You are expected to take the final during the uniform scheduled time on Thursday. However, if you have a compelling reason for needing to take the make-up final on Friday, contact your instructor no later than the final day of classes, Friday, Dec. 2nd, to request permission to do so.

Final Grade Calculation and Grade Policies:

Number/Letter grade equivalents are:

Number	Letter	Number	Letter	Number	Letter	Number	Letter
94 - 100	A	87 - 89.9	B+	77 - 79.9	C+	67 - 69.9	D+
		84 - 86.9	B	74 - 76.9	C	64 - 66.9	D
90 - 93.9	A-	80 - 83.9	B-	70 - 73.9	C-	60 - 63.9	D-

(Below 60% F)

- Grades on the border between two letter grades (89.9 for instance) may or may not be rounded up to the next higher letter grade, at the instructor's discretion.
- Your final class grade will be based on your final weighted average in the class (including the final exam grade).
- In order to continue to the next level of Arabic, you must have a grade of C or better. A grade of C- is not sufficient to pass to the next level.
- If you take the course Pass/Fail, you may not register for the next level of Arabic.
- No Incompletes will be given for this course.
- Auditing is not permitted.

HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS CLASS

This class is a group effort! We can make much more progress as a class than as individuals by creating an Arabic-speaking community, of which you will be a fully participating member. The following suggestions will help you get the most out of the course:

- 1. Be an active learner.** The approach we use here at UT depends on you learning new material at home, and encourages you to use analogy and logical thinking to master grammar a little bit at a time. You will learn better and remember more when you are able to answer your own questions. Active learners often have questions that reflect their engagement of the material. Take initiative in class and on homework: this effort will be rewarded both in your grade and in your language ability. Feel free to write us questions on specific language features in your daily homework—just remember to be specific.
- 2. Put yourself out there.** Language learning requires you to make mistakes, both in your assignments and in front of your peers. In this class, you will never be penalized for a mistake that you make when trying something new. You will be corrected in class. Feedback from your instructors is intended to support you as you develop your language proficiency, and not as criticism.
- 3. Personalize vocabulary.** You will remember vocabulary when you “own” it. Make words relevant to your life by thinking of what you can say about yourself with them. Write extra sentences that are meaningful to you so that the vocabulary becomes “yours” and expresses something about your world.
- 4. Prepare for active participation in class by anticipating what you will do.** You should soon be able to predict what kinds of activities will be performed and how. As you study new material and complete assignments before each class, think about how you will use the new material. This will help you to prepare for the activities we’ll be doing in class.
- 5. Develop your memorization skills.** Experiment with different techniques, combining listening, speaking and writing together as much as possible. Cross-train: Try the following and find what combination of techniques works best for you:
 - listening to words and repeating them aloud—not once but ten or twenty times, until the word is easy for you to pronounce
 - using flashcards—but without English definitions, and make yourself say the word aloud and use it in a phrase or sentence
 - writing out vocabulary over and over—but remember to pronounce it out loud while you write!
 - putting the words in sentences or a paragraph or story
 - studying in groups and quizzing each other
 - using word association techniques
- 6. Study out loud, and repeat new words many times.** The only way to train your brain and your mouth to speak this language is by doing it aloud. Certain muscles need to be strengthened before they’ll be able to produce some Arabic sounds correctly; studying aloud and exaggerating these sounds will help your muscles develop! Pronounce new vocabulary words at least fifteen times, until you can say them easily and it feels natural.
- 7. Guess.** Think about how you acquired your native language: you did not use a dictionary. Rather, you learned new words by guessing their meaning from context, and you learned how to produce sentences by imitating and using patterns. As adult learners, we can take some shortcuts, but guessing skills remain central to language acquisition. Do not leave blanks on the homework, but do not allow yourself to become frustrated; give it your best shot, and move on. If you are not sure you have understood a sentence in the homework, you may write a translation or a question on your homework for your instructor to check or answer.

8. **Correct yourself.** Good language learners learn from their own successes and mistakes and those of others. Correcting mistakes is an essential part of the learning process. In this class, you will never be penalized for a mistake that you make when trying something new. When your instructors and classmates are speaking, be an active listener by listening both to what they are saying and how they are saying it. Correcting the mistakes of others in your head or in your notebook is also good practice.
9. **Extend language learning beyond the classroom.** Practice Arabic as much as possible. Study with classmates: ask each other questions, brainstorm about assignments, go over materials –and do this in Arabic as much as possible. Look out for films and cultural activities on campus and around town and go attend them.

Principles for Group Activities

There can be no language without community. In our class community, respect for each other at all times will ensure a positive and fruitful learning experience. We will spend at least 75% of class time in small group or pair activities so that each one of you gets the maximum possible time to participate and practice. During these activities, the instructor plays the role of personal trainer. Learning a language is a lot like going to the gym: the personal trainer guides you and pushes you to do your best, but you have to do the work to get the benefit. Please keep in mind the following principles for group work:

- Help and encourage your colleagues, and accept help from them: each of you can learn with and from everyone else.
- Work with different people on a regular basis.
- Come prepared. Don't be someone who slows down colleagues by not being able to fully participate in the work. If you are not prepared for class let your instructor know beforehand and s/he will arrange for you to learn by listening on that day.
- Stay focused on the task at hand and do not rush to finish. Most activities are designed to elicit creative play with vocabulary and structures on which we are working. If you do the minimum, you will get only minimum benefit. Take advantage of class time by pushing yourself to be creative and say and write as much as you can.
- Speak in Arabic while you are engaged in the activity. If you feel frustrated, raise your hand and ask for help.
- When your group finishes the task, raise your hand to let the instructor know.
- The instructor may call time before everyone is finished. If your group does not finish, you may want to take a few minutes after class to study the rest of the exercise.

IMPORTANT UT AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS THAT APPLY TO THIS COURSE

Important Dates

Monday, August 29th is the last day of the official add/drop period; after this date, changes in registration require the approval of the department chair and usually the student's dean.

Wednesday, September 21st is the last day a student enrolled in graduate school or professional school may drop a class without a possible academic penalty.

Wednesday, October 19th is the last day a graduate student may change registration in a class to or from a credit/no credit basis.

Tuesday, November 1 is 1) the last day an undergraduate student may, with the dean's approval, withdraw from the University or drop a class except for urgent and substantiated, nonacademic reasons and 2) is the last day an undergraduate student may change registration in a class to or from a pass/fail basis.

UT Honor Code and Academic Integrity

The UT Honor code is in effect in this class. Submitting any assignment or exam that is not your own, or that you did not participate fully in doing, is a violation of that code.

All students with 1) an Arabic-speaking parent or 2) who have had schooling in an Arabic-speaking country or 3) who have undertaken any formal study of Arabic other than at UT prior to enrollment in this course must take the departmental placement examination for Arabic before beginning their study of Arabic at UT. Failure to do so constitutes an act of academic dishonesty.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed. See website below for more information: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>

Religious holy days. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

Use of Blackboard

This course uses Blackboard, a Web-based course management system in which a password-protected site is created for each course. You are responsible for checking the Blackboard course site regularly for class work and announcements. Blackboard is available at <http://courses.utexas.edu>. Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 Monday through Friday 8 am to 6 pm.

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Q drop (drop without academic penalty) Policy

The State of Texas enacted a law limiting the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). Senate Bill 1231: "Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number."

أهلاً وسهلاً في صف اللغة العربية!

ahlan wa sahan to Arabic class!