

## ARABIC 601C: FIRST YEAR ARABIC I FALL 2010

MWF 11:00-12:00

TTH 11:00-12:30

### 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 web companion and we will be using it 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. *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-`Arabiyya, Part 1* (Second 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 three semesters.
3. *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	20%
Homework	20%
Homework Correction	5%
Quizzes	25%
Skit	5%
Culture Portfolio	5%
Oral Interview	5%
Final Exam	15%

## GRADE DISTRIBUTION/COURSE REQUIREMENTS IN DETAIL:

### 1. Attendance and Participation (20%):

Class time will be devoted to **activating** the vocabulary and structures that you have prepared at home through your homework. You should expect to spend at least 75% of class time 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,

- i. arrive to class on time
- ii. are well prepared for the class, which means that you have listened to recorded materials on the accompanying web site/DVD, learned the new vocabulary, read the grammar explanations carefully and done the homework drills based on these explanations before coming to class
- iii. you submit fully completed homework at the beginning of class
- iv. are alert
- v. participate actively when we are working together as a class
- vi. make maximum use of pair/group work time by
  - a) understanding the learning objectives of tasks assigned
  - b) staying focused on those objectives
  - c) 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).

**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

#### **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 us by email of absence as soon as possible *before--not after--*the class you will miss. This helps us considerably in planning for daily class activities.

#### **Classroom Conduct Policies:**

- Use of laptops and cell phones is not permitted.
- Please do not chew gum in class.
- If you bring food, proper cultural etiquette dictates that you offer some to others in the room.

### 2. Homework Assignments (20%)

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 rated on a **scale of 1 to 5 (5= excellent; 4= good but not your best effort; 3= mediocre; 2= poor; 1= very poor work)**. You will be rated 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.

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

Xerox copies from the textbook will not be accepted unless noted in your homework schedule.

Late homework assignments 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.

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.**

### **3. 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 are a natural part of the learning process, but you can only truly benefit from them when you take the time to revise your work and correct your mistakes. Your instructors will use a simple code to mark errors in writing/spelling, and grammar, and you will correct the errors on the same sheet of paper *using a different color ink*. More information will be provided when we begin using *Al-Kitaab*.

### **4. Periodic Quizzes (25%)**

There will be **five quizzes** over the course of the semester. If you will miss/have missed a test, contact your instructor as soon as you know that you will be missing/have missed it. 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". Requests for make-ups will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The **tentative** dates for these quizzes are:

<b>Quizzes</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Quiz 1</b>	<b>Wednesday, Sept. 15</b>
<b>Quiz 2</b>	<b>Friday, Oct. 1st</b>
<b>Quiz 3</b>	<b>Wednesday, Oct. 13</b>
<b>Quiz 4</b>	<b>Wednesday, Oct. 27</b>
<b>Quiz 5</b>	<b>Friday, November 19</b>

**5. Skit (5 %) Due on Tuesday, November 16:**

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 method of evaluation will be provided before the first skit is due.

**6. Culture Portfolio (5%)**

In addition to your language work, you will keep a Culture Portfolio with five entries, each of which reflects an aspect of Arabic culture that you explore outside of class. You can watch a film (film screenings on campus will be announced), attend a lecture on a topic related to Arab culture, explore websites, or research a topic of interest to you. Some portfolio entry topics will be assigned by the instructors (no later than one week before the due date). Each entry should contain a minimum of 250 words (typed) in English. You are required to **post your culture entry on Blackboard** under the Discussion Board. We hope that you will enjoy reading the Portfolio entries of your classmates.

The dates for posting the Culture Portfolio Entries on Bb are the following:

<i>Culture Portfolio</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
<i>Entry # 1</i>	<i>Wednesday, Sept. 8</i>
<i>Entry # 2</i>	<i>Friday, Sept. 24</i>
<i>Entry # 3</i>	<i>Wednesday, Oct. 20</i>
<i>Entry # 4</i>	<i>Tuesday, November 9</i>
<i>Entry # 5</i>	<i>Tuesday, November 23</i>

**7. Oral Interview: (5%) Conducted during the last week of classes (Nov. 29th-Dec. 3rd)**

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 evaluation rubric will be distributed to all students by mid November.

**8. Final Examination: (15%)**

The final examination will be comprehensive and will test the following skills: 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 December 9<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 10 p.m.** with a makeup on Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup> also from 7 to 10 p.m. 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 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 addition to a consideration of your grade on the final exam. Your final grade in the class will be the letter grade equivalent of your final weighted average unless your final exam grade is more than 10 pts below the minimum for that letter grade, in which case your final grade in the class will be the letter grade equivalent of your grade on the final + 10pts. Thus, for example, if your weighted class average is 82% but your final exam score is 68, you would receive a C+ for your final grade, not a B-. The rationale for this policy is to ensure that you keep up your effort right through to the end of the semester and that your final grade is an accurate reflection of the extent to which you have met the learning objectives of the class and how prepared you are for the next level Arabic class.
- Quiz grades are usually a good indicator of how you will do on the final. If you are not doing well on quizzes, talk to your instructor to get suggestions for strategies to improve your performance.
- In order to continue to the next level of Arabic, you must have a grade of C- or better. 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, 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.

أهلاً وسهلاً في صف اللغة العربية!

***ahlan wa sahlan to Arabic class!***