

Arabic through the Texts
AR A4420/001D - Spring 2020

Professor Sarra Tlili

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Office: 354 Pugh Hall

Office hours: Thursday 10:00 am -12:00 pm

Class times and locations:

Tuesday: Periods 8 – 9 (3:00 PM – 4:55 PM), AND 101

Thursday: Period 9 (4:05 PM – 4:55 PM), AND 101

Course Materials:

Readings for this course will be posted on Canvas or distributed in class. Please bring your dictionary every class session.

Course Description:

The focus of this course is on reading. Upon successful completion you will acquire useful reading skills and become faster and more efficient readers in Arabic. We will do this using the following strategies:

1. **Skimming and scanning:** we will use quick surveys of the text to obtain main ideas, identify structures and major difficulties;
2. **Guessing from context:** we will use prior knowledge of the subject, knowledge of words' roots and form, parallelism, and other clues to guess the meanings of unknown words;
3. **Paraphrasing:** when we are dealing with longer texts we will pause to paraphrase and restate the covered sections;
4. **Zooming in the text:** We will pay close attention to paragraph and sentence structure, consider how prepositions change meaning of verbs; pay close attention to definite articles, gender, number, and case agreements; and other important details to reach accurate understanding of the studied texts.

Course objectives:

By the end of this course, successful students will reach the ACTFEL Advanced Low level in reading. Here is the description of this level:

Advanced Low

At the Advanced Low sublevel, readers are able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven. These texts predominantly contain high-frequency vocabulary and structures. Readers understand the main ideas, and some supporting details. Comprehension may often derive primarily from situational and subject-matter knowledge. Readers at this level will be challenged to comprehend more complex texts.

Successful students will be able read, discuss, explain and paraphrase Arabic texts striving for accuracy through close study of the following structural and grammatical points:

1. **Sentence Structure:** Besides reading for general meaning, we will spend considerable time studying verbal and nominal sentences closely by identifying their various components and how they generate meaning.
2. **Jumlat al-ṣifa** and **al-jumla al-mawṣūla** (adjectival and relative clauses): These two types of clauses are very frequent in both modern and pre-modern texts. We will see them almost in every text. By the end of the semester students are expected to recognize and understand them without difficulty.
3. **Iḍāfa** and **ism wa-ṣifa**: These basic phrases are among the major sources of reading confusion for non-native speakers of Arabic. Students' attention will be drawn to these constructions frequently.
4. **Verb forms** and **patterns**: we will use this feature in combination of context to guess the meaning of new words and general meaning of longer passages.
5. **Agreement:** Arabic observes more types of agreement than many other languages, including, gender, number, and case agreements. We will pay close attention to this feature to have more accurate understanding of the studied materials.
6. **Prepositions:** Similar to English, prepositions change the meaning of verbs in Arabic. When we learn new verbs we will develop the habit of learning them with their prepositions.

Successful students will also be able to describe orally and in writing several aspects of Arab culture.

Prerequisites

Five semesters of Arabic with a grade of C or higher, or consent of the instructor.

Course Format and Assignments

On a weekly basis you will be assigned readings with accompanying written assignments, often involving translation, *tashkīl* (internal vowels and inflection). Make sure to always have your dictionary (Hans Wehr), your mind, and your enthusiasm 😊.

Written assignments must be:

- **Neat and legible:** Please type your written assignments. If you are unable to do so let me know at the beginning of the semester to discuss alternative options. With both Arabic and English assignments pay close attention to stylistic and grammatical details.
- **Translated assignments must be meaningful:** This means that you need to go over your translation at least three times at various intervals. The last time you should read it without referring to the original Arabic text to make sure that it is meaningful in English.

Note: Using "Google translate" or other apps to translate your assignment is considered unethical in this class. Please read the "Academic Honesty" section below for more information on this point.

Tests and Quizzes

There will be 2 midterms and a final exam, as well as occasional pop quizzes.

Attendance

Attendance and participation are mandatory. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>. Except for religious holidays, for which you only need to give prior notice, all absences must be documented. You are allowed two absences without need to provide justification. Each additional non-excused absence will cause your course grade to drop by one degree (A becomes A-, A- becomes B+, and so forth). Every three late arrivals equal one absence. Students who do not miss class at all will earn 5 extra-credit points toward the final exam.

Should you miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to be informed of the material covered. Make-up options for missed

exams and assignments are available only for excused absences.
For more information, refer to the following website:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx#absences>

Expected homework time (Approximate):

On average about 2 to 3 hours of homework per hour spent in class. Note that some weeks may require more work than others.

Late and Make-Up Work:

No late work will be accepted or make-ups will be offered unless the student offers a legitimate documented excuse. See **Attendance** above.

Grading

Midterms and Final:	50%
Homework:	10%
Quizzes:	10%
Writing assignments:	10%
Readings:	10%

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

93-100	A	73-76.99	C
90-92.99	A-	70-72.99	C-
87-89.99	B+	67-69.99	D+
83-86.99	B	63-66.99	D
80-82.99	B-	60-62.99	D-
77-79.99	C+	LESS THAN 60	E

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

A C- grade will not be sufficient for Majors or Minors or count towards a GE or Gordon Rule Credit or College Basic Distribution Credit. See UF website on grading policy:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Canvas

All assignments, announcements, exercises, study guides, grades, etc. will be posted on the course website on Canvas. It is your responsibility to check the website regularly and keep up to date with the class.

Cell phones and other electronic devices:

Students are expected to turn off - or put on silent - and put away all cell phones during class sessions. Laptops and tablets can only be used when needed for class activities and only with teacher's authorization.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. An academic honesty offense is defined as the act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. Violations of the honor code include, but are not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, bribery, misrepresentation, fabrication, and conspiracy. Such violations may result in the following: lowering of grades, mandatory 0 on assignments, redoing assignments, a final failing grade in the course, expulsion from the course, referral to the student-run Honor Court. The Honor Code states: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment. For more information, refer to: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/Academic_Honesty.html

Students with Special Needs

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. More information can be found at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Final Points:

- When you email me allow 24 hours to receive a reply.
- Although I have planned the readings for each session, we may make changes depending on class needs.
- If you miss class, for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to catch up on the material you missed, learn about assignments and class announcements.
- I look forward to an exciting and fulfilling semester!

Tentative Dates for Midterms and Final:

First Midterm: February 4th
Second Midterm: March 10th
Final: April 14th