

Arabic through the Texts  
ARA4420 - Spring 2022

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**Class information:**

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**Instructor:** Dr Sarra Tlili  
**Phone number:** (352) 392-8678  
**E-mail address:** satlili@ufl.edu  
**Office:** Pugh Hall, 354  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 10-11  
**Zoom link to**  
**Office hours:** <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/97069629010>  
**Class periods:** Tuesday, 5 – 6 (11:45 AM – 1:40 PM) MAT 0051  
Thursday, 5 (11:45 AM – 12: 35 PM) MAT 0051

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**Course overview:**

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This is a language course with a particular focus on reading. It consists of three units each revolving around one major theme and a variety of cultural, grammatical, and structural points. The course requires out-of-class preparation and review and in-class practice and group work.

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**Student Learning Outcomes:**

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The main aim of this course is to improve students' reading, speaking, and listening skills with some attention to writing.

In **reading**, successful students should be able to reach the **advance low** ACTFL level, described as follows:

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.

In **speaking**, successful students should be able to reach the **advance low** ACTFL level, described as follows:

Speakers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks. They are able to participate in most informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, and leisure activities. They can also speak about some topics related to employment, current events, and matters of public and community interest.

Advanced Low speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future in paragraph-length discourse with some control of aspect. In these narrations and descriptions, Advanced Low speakers combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length, although these narrations and descriptions tend to be handled separately rather than interwoven. They can handle appropriately the essential linguistic challenges presented by a complication or an unexpected turn of events.

Responses produced by Advanced Low speakers are typically not longer than a single paragraph. The speaker's dominant language may be evident in the use of false cognates, literal translations, or the oral paragraph structure of that language. At times their discourse may be minimal for the level, marked by an irregular flow, and containing noticeable self-correction. More generally, the performance of Advanced Low speakers tends to be uneven.

Advanced Low speech is typically marked by a certain grammatical roughness (e.g., inconsistent control of verb endings), but the overall performance of the Advanced-level tasks is sustained, albeit minimally. The vocabulary of Advanced Low speakers often lacks specificity. Nevertheless, Advanced Low speakers are able to use communicative strategies such as rephrasing and circumlocution.

Advanced Low speakers contribute to the conversation with sufficient accuracy, clarity, and precision to convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. Their speech can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, even though this may require some repetition or restatement. When attempting to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the linguistic quality and quantity of their speech will deteriorate significantly

In **writing**, successful students should be able to reach the **Intermediate Mid** ACTFL level, described as follows:

Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel are able to meet a number of practical

writing needs. They can write short, simple communications, compositions, and requests for information in loosely connected texts about personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics. Their writing is framed in present time but may contain references to other time frames. The writing style closely resembles oral discourse. Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel show evidence of control of basic sentence structure and verb forms. This writing is best defined as a collection of discrete sentences and/or questions loosely strung together. There is little evidence of deliberate organization. Intermediate Mid writers can be understood readily by natives used to the writing of non-natives. When Intermediate Mid writers attempt Advanced-level writing tasks, the quality and/or quantity of their writing declines and the message may be unclear.

In **listening**, successful students should be able to reach the **Intermediate Mid** ACTFL level, described as follows:

At the Intermediate Mid sublevel, listeners are able to understand simple, sentence-length speech, one utterance at a time, in a variety of basic personal and social contexts. Comprehension is most often accurate with highly familiar and predictable topics although a few misunderstandings may occur. Intermediate Mid listeners may get some meaning from oral texts typically understood by Advanced-level listeners.

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### Prerequisites

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

### COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

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#### Weekly homework assignments (10%)

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For nearly each class session there will be a homework assignment based on a short article or another type of reading material. The assignment consists of vocabulary preparation, answering comprehension questions, translating short passages, and/or close grammatical analysis and is due on the eve of class. Your answers will be graded based on the following criteria:

- **Correctness, effort, and accuracy.**
- **Neatness and legibility:** 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.

- **Meaningfulness of translated materials:** This means that you need to go over your translation several times at various intervals to make sure it makes sense to you.

**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.

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### Reading aloud (5%)

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There are many reading aloud assignments aimed at the improvement of your reading fluency and polishing of your pronunciation. There will be instructions highlighting the features on which you need to focus and a recording to serve as a reading model.

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### Midterms (15 % each) and final exam (20%)

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There are two midterms and one final exam following each thematic section of the semester. The midterms will cover the materials studied in the first and second sections, respectively. The final will cover all the entire semester's material.

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### Quizzes (10%)

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These are mostly pop quizzes about newly acquired vocabulary items and grammatical points.

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### End-of-the-year project (15%)

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This is a role-play project recorded and submitted on or before April 5<sup>th</sup>. Students may choose to work on this project individually or in groups, but the speaking time should be around 15 to 20 minutes per student. Note the following deadlines:

February 1<sup>st</sup>: Inform me of the nature of your project and the that you will work with

**March 1<sup>st</sup>**: submit the first draft of your script.

**March 15<sup>th</sup>**: submit the final draft of your script.

**April 5<sup>th</sup>**: Submit your recording

Here are some possible ideas:

**Museum tour to Arabic native speakers (1 student):**

Serve as a real-life tour guide for one or more native speakers of Arabic at the Harn Museum: describe the sections of the museum (preferably ones pertaining to the Arab world) and provide historical details about various items. Prepare and memorize your script, find guests and accompany them to the museum, give them the tour entirely in Arabic. Have someone record the entire tour then submit it.

**TV show: news or talk show, comedy, interview, cooking show (1 to 4 students)**

Choose your topic and distribute the roles. Prepare script jointly and memorize your part of it. Find suitable setting, and, if possible, anything that can help reproduce an authentically Arab experience. Have someone record the event.

**Play (2 to 4 students)**

Using a play in Arabic or English as a foundation, write a play and memorize your part of the script. To the extent of your ability, produce right costumes and décor. Have someone record the play.

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Class participation

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This is the main in-class activity. To receive full or high credit you must participate in a thoughtful and focused manner during each class session.

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Expected homework time (Approximate):

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

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## Attendance

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All students are expected to attend class regularly. Except for religious holidays, for which you only need to give prior notice, all non-excused absences must be documented. You are allowed three absences (equivalent of one week) 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 earn 5 extra-credit points toward one midterm.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work are consistent with university policies specified at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

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## Late homework policy:

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The homework is due on the eve of classes by 11:59pm. However, I recognize that sometimes “life happens.” In these instances, you are allowed two flex days which you may divide into hourly chunks and use to avoid penalty for late homework. In this case you are required to inform me that you are using this option and let me know how many hours you are using (note: once you exceed the hour by even a minute it counts as a full hour. For example: 3:01 hours count as 4 hours).

Once you have exhausted your flex days, late homework submitted before class begins will be eligible for 80% of the maximum number of points allotted. If you experience extenuating circumstances (e.g., you are hospitalized) that prohibit you from submitting your assignments on time, please let me know at your earliest convenience and provide supporting documentation. I will evaluate these instances on a case-by-case basis.

Homework that is submitted after class begins will not be graded since on most days we will go over it in class. Again, because “life happens”, I will drop your lowest three homework grades.

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## Grading

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Homework assignments	10%
Read aloud assignments:	05%
Midterms:	30%
Final:	20%
Quizzes:	10%
Class participation:	10%
End-of-the-year project:	15%

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## GRADE DISTRIBUTION

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Letter Grade	Range:	
A	100 %	to 94.0%
A-	< 94.0 %	to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0 %	to 87.0%
B	< 87.0 %	to 84.0%
B-	< 84.0 %	to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0 %	to 77.0%
C	< 77.0 %	to 74.0%
C-	< 74.0 %	to 70.0%
D+	< 70.0 %	to 67.0%
D	< 67.0 %	to 64.0%
D-	< 64.0 %	to 61.0%
E	< 61.0 %	to 0.0%

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## GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

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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>

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### Academic Honesty

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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](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/Academic_Honesty.html)

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### Students with Special Needs

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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/>

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### Final Points:

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- 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!

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Tentative Dates for Midterms and Final:

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First Midterm: February 8<sup>th</sup>  
Second Midterm: March 15<sup>th</sup>  
Final: April 12<sup>th</sup>