

CET Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Jordan

Course Code / Title: (AM/LANG 150) Novice Modern Standard Arabic

Total Hours: 105

Recommended Credits: 6

Primary Discipline: Arabic Language

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Prerequisites/Requirements: None. Final placement at discretion of Academic Director

Description

This course is offered to students with no previous Arabic language study. The course lays the framework for developing the four skills of reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Students learn the Arabic script and sounds, practicing handwriting and typing. The course covers elementary grammar (including sentence structure, gender and plural agreement, tenses, and negation), and basic vocabulary.

The course focuses on Arabic sound and writing systems and builds an understanding of the basic grammatical structures as a means to compose sentences and short paragraphs related to survival needs and daily life, primarily in the present tense. This course focuses on reading and comprehending basic Arabic texts with familiar vocabulary and simple discourse and utilizing limited vocabulary in simple contexts with improved subject-verb agreement, adjective agreement, and tenses. The course rotates through high-frequency vocabulary and expressions, enabling students to ask and answer simple questions and describe themselves. Course themes aim to support students in their day-to-day life in Amman and open the door to Jordanian society. Special attention is given to cultural and social themes which demonstrate the diversity of local perspectives and highlight the power dynamics that help shape them.

Driven by the concept of communicative proficiency and the goal of functional competency, CET Jordan programs treat Arabic language as one system of communication, guiding students to employ the appropriate register to perform a variety of real-life communicative functions. CET's Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Jordanian dialect courses focus on their respective registers. In novice-level courses, a limited degree of integration is encouraged to prepare students for the diglossic nature of the Arabic-speaking world.

The course employs a student-centered approach and focuses on communicative competence through the completion of concrete tasks, both in and outside the classroom, including interaction with native Arabic speakers. In order to introduce new vocabulary and increasingly complex grammatical structures, the course supplements materials designed for language instruction with listening and reading samples intended for native speakers. Students practice interactive functional skills such as listening comprehension and conversation strategies to communicate effectively on an increasing range of subjects.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, students can:

- Understand the basics of the Arabic sound and writing systems
- Understand elementary grammatical structures
- Utilize limited vocabulary in simple contexts with proper subject-verb agreement, adjective agreement and tenses

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- Compose sentences and short paragraphs related to survival needs and daily life, primarily in the present tense
- Use the present and future tenses comfortably and without error
- Read and comprehend basic Arabic texts with familiar vocabulary and simple discourse
- Understand and participate in short and simple conversations about predictable daily life situations and topics of limited complexity
- Progress from the ACTFL Novice-low level to the Novice-high or Intermediate-Low level

Course Requirements

The pace of instruction is intensive. Students are expected to thoroughly prepare for each class and to actively participate. In-class activities and homework may include listening to audio materials, memorizing new patterns and vocabulary, reading and writing short paragraphs and texts, reviewing material learned the previous day, and activating new vocabulary. Class attendance, as outlined in the CET Attendance Policy, is critical for success in the course, as is learning how to engage and navigate Jordan's cultural environment. The course may also include field-based components like special lectures, site visits, or structured dialogues.

All homework assignments are due at the beginning of class and late assignments are not accepted. For the mid-term project, students assume the role of the teacher for a 20-minute presentation on one of the four skills: reading, writing, listening, or speaking. The final written exam is comprehensive and includes all vocabulary and grammatical structures covered during the semester. The final oral interview exam covers the depth and breadth of course material. Individual interviews last approximately 15 minutes. The final assignment is a written paper of no less than three pages which includes a description of themselves, their studies and experience in Jordan, and reflection on what they have learned. Students are required to present a three-minute in-class presentation on the subject of their final assignment using 90% of the vocabulary learned in class.

Grading

Students are evaluated in the four language areas (speaking, listening, reading and writing) through quizzes, written and oral exams and class participation.

The final grade is determined as follows:

- Participation: 20%
- Homework: 15%
- Presentations: 5%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Mid-Term Project: 10%
- Mid-Term Exam 5%
- Final Exam: 5%
- Final Oral Interview Exam: 10%
- Final Assignment 20%

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Readings

يوسف، منال. لغتي العربية المستوى ١ - ٢.

Yosef, Manal. *My Arabic Language, Levels 1-2*. Publication forthcoming.

Additional Resources

The class incorporates the use of short video clips (maximum 1 minute) from popular news channels such as Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera that reflect the issues being discussed in the class.

Outline of Course Content

During the semester, approximately two weeks are dedicated to each topic. In the summer term, topics are covered in one week at an accelerated pace.

Topic 1: The Alphabet and Writing System

- Letter
- Words
- Arabic vowels, short and long

Topic 2: Introducing myself

- Pronouns
- Indefinite and definite articles
- Pronoun and verb agreement
- Greetings and cultural phrases

Topic 3: Family and Relationships

- عندي | ما عندي
- The plural and the dual
- Plural verb conjugation
- Power and inter-family dynamics
- Family influence on hobbies, studies, work and partners
- Gender roles

Topic 4: Building a simple discussion

- Question words
- Nominal and verbal sentences
- Subject-verb agreement in verbal sentences
- Present tense
- Negation of the present tense

Topic 5: Expressing Needs in Varying Environments

- Colors and numbers
- Past tense
- Vegetables and fruits
- Clothing, gender and religion

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- Directions
- The marketplace
- The street – culture, privilege, and power

Topic 6: Work, Study and Travel

- Conditionals, the comparative and prepositions
- Superlatives and gender agreement
- Study and work
- Culture of comparison and youth decisions about education and marriage
- Travel and Seasons