

INTRODUCTION TO MODERN STANDARD ARABIC (MSA)

Michael Guggenheimer

Spring Semester 2021

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Course Credits: 3 TAU Semester Credits (minimum 40 academic content hours; at TAU 1 academic content hour is equivalent to 44 in-class minutes)

For course times/days and location, please visit the TAU International web site ([Study Abroad Course Offerings and Schedules](#)). Please note that all information below is subject to change and/or adjustment as necessary.

Course Description (Summary)

The Arabic language consists of a number of varieties: Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is the official language of 26 states and used mainly in written texts and formal settings, and various dialects of colloquial Arabic, one of which is the native language of every Arab. This course teaches the fundamentals of MSA. The goal of this course is to familiarize students with the Arabic alphabet, provide a basic vocabulary in MSA, and introduce the rudiments of Arabic grammar.

Emphasis is on basic reading comprehension in MSA.

Course Requirements and Expectations

- Attendance, quizzes, assignments and class participation
- Midterm exam (the Arabic writing system)
- Final Exam (take-home)

Learning Outcomes

Students will be trained to acquire the following skills:

1. Familiarity with the Arabic alphabet and reading words in the Arabic script, including all vowels and other added signs.
2. Arabic typing and using online Arabic-English dictionaries.
3. Basic grammar and vocabulary of MSA.
4. Reading and understanding simple sentences.

Evaluation Criteria

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| Quizzes | 25% |
| Attendance, homework and class participation | 25% |
| Midterm exam (Arabic alphabet proficiency exam) | 30% |
| Final exam (take-home) | 20% |

Absence Policy

See next page.

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Course Schedule

Weeks 1-5: Arabic alphabet, writing the letters, vowel and other signs, reading and typing. After the first lesson, every lesson will begin with a dictation.

Weeks 6-10: Arabic grammar, reading comprehension, writing Arabic, vocabulary acquisition. Vocabulary quizzes, at the beginning of every second or third lesson.

Each session (two academic hours) will consist of four main elements: (i) A quiz (dictation in the first part of the course, and a vocabulary exam in the second); (ii) Review of the homework; (iii) Learning and practicing elements of the Arabic alphabet (in the first part of the course) and basic aspects of MSA grammar (in the second part of the course); (iv) Using basic vocabulary to form simple expressions and sentences (in the second part of the course).

Course Readings and/or Required Materials

The course has no required readings. All the necessary materials will be provided online or in print. However, for students who wish to pursue the course's subject matter further the following textbooks are recommended:

The Arabic Alphabet

1. **Easy Arabic Script**, 1st Edition, by Jane Wightwick and Mahmoud Gaafar, McGraw-Hill Education, 2005 (Paperback).

This book teaches the Arabic alphabet in a way that is quite similar to your course.

2. **Write It in Arabic: A Workbook and Step-by-Step Guide to Writing the Arabic Alphabet**, 2nd Edition, by Naglaa Ghali, Fun with Arabic, 2009 (Paperback and Kindle).

This book uses a different system to teach the alphabet than your course, but is user-friendly and can be used for review.

Basic Grammar

Easy Arabic Grammar, 1st Edition, by Jane Wightwick and Mahmoud Gaafar, McGraw-Hill Education, 2005 (Paperback).

A very useful book, which covers much of the same grammatical material as the course (gender, pronouns, demonstratives, nominal sentences, possession and verbs in the past), although not in the same order. Very useful for review.

Instructor Biography

Mr. Guggenheimer has a BA degree in Semitic Languages and in Arabic Language and Literature. He served for many years in the IDF and has taught Arabic for more than thirty years. In addition, he is a translator, copyeditor and tour guide.



TAU International Academic Guidelines

Students may only attend classes which they are officially registered for. No auditing of courses is permitted. Students are responsible for reading and adhering to all policies and procedures in the TAU International Academic Handbook [posted here](#) at all times. Below is a summary of some of these relevant policies and procedures.

Learning Accommodations

In accordance to University guidelines, TAU International may be able to accommodate students with learning disabilities or accommodation requests if these requests are also honored at the student's home university or home school. To be considered, students must submit official documentation from their home school or university (if not in English, a notarized official copy translated into English is required) to TAU International in advance of arrival describing in detail any specific needs and how these are accommodated at the home school or university. Students must also bring a copy of this documentation with them on-site and give it to their faculty on the first day of class while introducing themselves so that the faculty know who they are and what sorts of needs or accommodations they may have. **Without official documentation from the home school submitted on or before the first day of courses, TAU will not be able to honor accommodation support.**

With supporting documentation and by following the correct procedure as outlined above, TAU International and its faculty will do the best it can to make any suitable accommodations possible. However, we cannot guarantee that all accommodations received at the home school can be similarly met at TAU. For example, TAU is usually not able to offer note-taking services in English, private testing rooms, or advance viewing of classroom presentations, exams, or assignments.

It may be an option to provide a student with additional tutoring or support outside the classroom as needed. Students should be aware that this additional support cannot be guaranteed and is based on teacher availability in the subject as well as the specific student level. If available, the cost of additional tutoring or support will be the sole responsibility of the student.

In-Class Exams

TAU does not permit, under any circumstances, taking any in-class (including mid or final) exams early or later than the scheduled exam day. When selecting courses, it is thus very important to note if there is an in-class midterm or final exam as this date/exam cannot be changed. It is also the student's responsibility to clarify exam dates with the professors at the beginning of a course, with the understanding that not all exam dates can be decided up front as it can sometimes depend on the pace of the course and class learning. It is the student responsibility to plan to be present for all courses including the final day of class for this reason. Early departures from the program are not approved, nor are early or exception in-class exams.

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TAU International Absence Policy

Attendance is mandatory in all of the courses including Hebrew Ulpan. Faculty can and will take attendance regularly. Missing classes will be reflected in the final grade of the course. Up to three justified and properly documented absences from classes may be accepted (for example: emergency matter or illness, both of which will require a doctor's note). Such cases of absence should be reported to the faculty immediately and again, a doctor's note is required. Teachers are entitled to treat any lateness or absence without documentation as unexcused. Some of our courses such as Service Learning or the Internship Seminar require more practical in-class work; thus, attendance policies may be stricter in some courses and students then must adhere to the stricter attendance policy as outlined by the faculty/syllabus.

Students are required to arrive on time for classes. Teachers are entitled to treat any single case of lateness and/or repeated lateness as an unjustified absence.

Please note that according to official TAU Academic Policy, if a student's behavior or attendance during is disagreeable his/her course participation may be cancelled at the discretion of TAU with no due refund.

Grade Appeals

Students are responsible for checking grades once posted or distributed by faculty. The limited grade appeals window and the detailed procedure for appealing a grade – whether a graded assignment, exam or final grade – is outlined clearly in the policies and procedures in the TAU International Academic Handbook [posted here](#).

