

FIRST YEAR ARABIC COURSE DESCRIPTION

(PART OF MTP)

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ARABIC COURSE:

Quran, Hadith (The Prophet's and Ahlul-Bayt's sayings and traditions) and genuine Islamic knowledge cannot be properly understood without authentic knowledge of the aspects of fus'ha Arabic.

AIM OF THE COURSE:

- To develop skills in understanding, reading, communicating and writing in Arabic, so that students will be ready to start in-depth study of the Qur'an and its exegesis, Prophetic Traditions, Jurisprudence, Reasoning critical thinking and other intellectual studies, History, Islamic Creed and Theology and Islamic Ethics in their Arabic text sources.

OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of the Arabic course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate comprehension of clear standard discourse related to self, family, community, academic work and basic religious knowledge.
2. Demonstrate comprehension of authentic texts, such as clear hadiths (the Prophet's and Ahlul Bayt's traditions and Sayings), brief narratives, etc.
3. Demonstrate basic reasoning, draw logical conclusions and infer moral lessons from authentic moral and literary authentic texts which put forward arguments and different points of view.

4. Formulate and express opinions on familiar matters as well as on Arabic topics related to Islam, Arabic culture, history, current events and daily life
5. Demonstrate correction of common mistakes of classical and conventional conception of some Arabic terms, important words, expressions and their use in meaningful contexts with their equivalents in English.
6. Demonstrate precise translation of significant words, terms and expressions into the mother language especially English.
7. Communicate using a series of connected sentences to describe self, family, and academic, work, and social experiences
8. Create connected text on topics which are familiar and of personal interest as well as describe experiences and impressions in short articles and letters.
9. Describe and analyse, with sensitivity and appreciation, the clear relationship between language, culture and the world view as well as the similarities and differences between specific cultural practices and perspectives.
10. Students will also learn various other unique and innovative information and skills related to secrets of Arabic sounds, words, expressions and system in different ways.

CHALLENGES

Arabic language may be considered the most comprehensive and ancient language in the world, which is still alive, being broadly used and considered the source language of the Qur'an, Islamic knowledge, huge literature and cultural corpus.

However, There are no sufficient and efficient courses of teaching Arabic as a foreign language available for the increasing need to learn Arabic in the world. Most of the available courses do not consider the structural and logical

system of the language and levels of its difficulty. In addition, the available courses are not designed for Arabic for specific purposes and for the learners' specific needs. Recent research in modern Applied linguistics and theories of foreign language learning and teaching are not clearly taken into consideration in most of the available courses. Thus we have found that many learners of Arabic were not successful, mainly because of the defective courses and methods being applied to teach the language rather than learner himself. In addition, the efficient and interactive methods are rarely being used in the world to teach Arabic.

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES

In a trial to handle this problem scientifically, we've adopted a communicative and interactive teaching approach, using interactive method to achieve the teaching objectives through authentic situational and linguistic sources, focusing mainly on the language in use and meaningful situations.

The new method of teaching Arabic as a foreign language and for specific purposes also meets the needs and requirements of the religious learners as well as their linguistic, cultural and religious background. The four following factors are crucial for the students: these are readiness to learn Fus'ha Arabic, real interest, seriousness and patience. These factors help a great deal to achieve all the objectives efficiently and successfully.

COURSE MATERIALS

The major part of the course materials is the general Arabic textbook for students of Arabic as a foreign language (4 volumes) designed for three levels (basic, intermediate & advanced). It was successfully applied many times for 5 years in real classroom situations. Crucial modifications, additions and revisions have been made recently. In addition, other specially designed textbooks are available for the course such as Arabic listening & reading comprehension, Arabic Composition, Dictation and Arabic writing system, Hadith for

Arabic, etc which have been also applied for 2 years in successful classroom situations.

All materials used in this course are periodically reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate for students' needs and levels.

COURSE CONTENT

Lectures, class practice, and tutorials are dedicated to the development of receptive skills (listening and reading) and communicative skills (speaking and writing) at the three levels. Both receptive and communicative skills are to be enhanced by an increased emphasis on the reading of authentic materials in Arabic. The topics are presented in an appropriate order and are reintroduced frequently throughout the practical hours as well as in homework assignments. Given the fact that in the foreign language acquisition process, comprehension precedes productive skills, more emphasis is placed on the development of receptive skills than of communicative skills and a higher level of competence will be expected in this area. The basic structural and grammatical patterns necessary for the effective communication are integrated throughout the contents of the course.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Methods of instruction used to achieve student learning outputs may include, but are not limited to:

- Presenting interactive classes in Arabic (this may include teacher-talk supplemented with various illustrative actions, pictures, gestures and sound effects) in order to increase students' ability to comprehend the spoken language; reinforce targeted cultural, semantic, grammatical and morphological terms; and guide students in the application of listening, reading, speaking and writing strategies

- Showing/playing videos, interactive DVD's, flash animation, power-point presentations and selections, taped from TV or the Internet in order to help students improve their ability to comprehend Arabic spoken at native speed; provide them with virtual access to Arab communities, cultures and their products; stimulate discussion about Arab life, culture and history; and encourage the expression of opinions.
- Presenting reading activities, which may include cultural selections and anecdotes, clear Hadiths, sayings, narratives, authentic poems and stories, children's literature, Web articles and grammatical explanations in order to guide students in the application of reading strategies, help them draw logical conclusions from their reading materials and lead them in a sensitive comparison and contrast between the culture, history, current events and daily life of Arab communities and their own.
- Creating and assigning communicative activities such as post-reading activities, dialogues, descriptions, oral composition, conclusions and opinion statements, skits, problem-solving puzzles, and other oral/aural communicative activities in order to help students practise receptive and productive strategies and skills in the context of the target language, vocabulary and grammar by using cultural, Islamic topics and familiar situations.
- Developing and assigning writing activities, which may include creative in-class sentences, short descriptions, paragraphs, compositions, written exercises from workbook and textbook and close activities in order to aid students in mastering syntax, semantics and morphology, and to help them in writing well-structured compositions.
- Aiding students with computer-based language programs.

- Looking forward to developing and assigning written and oral discussion board postings; viewing of Power-point presentations; listening, viewing, reading and writing tasks; interactive vocabulary, grammar and culture games; participating in an interactive Arabic website forum in order to practice, writing topics in Arabic, discussing matters related to their fields of study and sharing opinions with others especially their teachers, as this will reinforce targeted cultural, semantic, grammatical and morphological items; provide an opportunity for the practice of listening, reading and writing strategies and skills; and stimulate and guide oral and written interactive communication

METHODS OF EVALUATION AND ASSESMENT

Students will be evaluated for progress in the mastery of learning outcomes by methods of evaluation which may include, but are not limited to:

- Oral reports/presentations/performances designed to evaluate students' ability to express personal opinions on targeted cultural and personal topics
- Participation in class discussions and activities designed to evaluate competency in and understanding of assigned material
- Written assignments designed to assess progress in the ability to construct composition that expresses a personal point of view.
- Listening, reading and essay-type quizzes/examinations designed to evaluate student ability to understand and draw logical conclusions from conversations and authentic cultural materials on targeted topics
- Student workbook and textbook assignments designed to evaluate student mastery of specific vocabulary, grammatical and cultural topics
- Final examination designed to evaluate student learning outcomes and readiness for the next level.

