

Georgia Institute of Technology
ARBC 1001 (4 hours)
Summer 2020

Instructor: Ahmed Ahmed

Class Times: MTWR 12:30 - 3:15 PM

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Prerequisites and target audience: *Ahlan wa sahlán!* This intensive course in modern Arabic is designed for students with no previous knowledge of written or spoken Arabic. In addition to these “true beginners,” the course is also appropriate for those with some previous exposure, such as heritage Arabic speakers who speak some dialect but have no knowledge of الفصحى (Formal Arabic). We also have students who can read Arabic script but do not speak it. These three different communities come together in ARBC1001 to form a learning community with a variety of perspectives on the language and the culture, and the class is richer for it. *Note: a placement test is available for students who desire to test in to a more advanced Arabic class; please contact Dr. Marcus at dmarcus7@gatech.edu, if interested.*

Description: This first semester of the GT Arabic sequence will teach you to read, write, speak, and understand Formal Arabic (*al-fuṣḥā*) and a small amount of Egyptian Spoken Arabic (ESA), mainly social courtesies, as taught in the ten Units of the *Alif Baa* textbook, and in Ch. 1, 2, and parts of Ch. 3 (plurals) of the *Al-Kitaab, Part One* textbook. You will use the web materials that accompany these book chapters. By the end of the semester, you will be able to not only use the Arabic alphabet correctly, but you will be able to converse on simple topics, with a basic vocabulary of over 300 words. You will be able to read simple questions in Arabic and write a few sentences on topics such as family and where people live and work. We also will compare Formal and Colloquial Arabic as we go (*qahwa / ahwa*), in spite of a focus on Formal. If students are interested, we may also delve into Arabic culture - concepts of courtesy and politeness, or the Arabic names of the countries of the Middle East, etc. *Ahlan biikou!*

Note: although you will purchase two textbooks for this class, the second book (*Al-Kitaab Part One*) lasts for all of ARBC1002 and 2001; no further purchases needed. The first semester’s materials are expensive, but they cover three semesters of Arabic courses.

The successful student will spend up to 7 hours per week studying outside of class, so that class time may be devoted to Arabic discussion, acting out scenes we have viewed, and communicating freely in Arabic! It is intended that we predominantly communicate in Arabic by the end of the semester.

Learning Outcomes for ARBC1001.

By semester’s end you will be able to

- orally describe pictures provided in the Alif Baa website
- use common social courtesies when greeting, meeting, or saying goodbye, from *Alif Baa*
- name all the Arab countries on a map and spell them in Arabic.
- correctly use all 28 letters and 13 diacritic symbols in Arabic, including initial, medial, and final forms
- write simple Arabic sentences in both printed and handwritten forms of the alphabet.
- add short vowels to unvocalized Arabic texts, as a dictation exercise
- have active control of approximately 300 words in Arabic from both textbooks, including numbers 1-100
- orally describe (1) where you live and study (2) your family, and (3) some of your interests.

- answer simple questions on these topics (in writing and orally)
- recount the fictional story of an immigrant Arab family in Brooklyn (from *Al-Kitaab Part One* Ch. 1 & 2)
- use *al* (the) correctly, in both *Idaafa* and *noun-adjective* phrases
- conjugate present tense verbs in *Fus-Ha* and *'Ammiyya* (Formal and Egyptian Spoken)
- discuss in English how Formal and Spoken Arabic are used in the Arab world today
- identify root letters in some Arabic words

Our curriculum, textbook, and website treat Arabic *diglossia* as a richness to be embraced and a necessary skill to acquire, from Day One. Although we will emphasize *Fus-Haa* over *'Ammiyya*, the listening comprehension videos from our curriculum are in both. As students continually use both varieties of the language in parallel, they acquire a practical fluency in “code-switching” that Arabic native speakers unconsciously possess. (Actually, the grammatical structures we cover during the first year of Arabic are those that are most similar between Formal and Spoken Arabic, and we avoid at first those Formal structures that are never part of Spoken Arabic, such as the final vowels known as *i'raab*). As a result of this approach, by including Arabic’s variety from the beginning of the curriculum and focusing on communication and vocabulary rather than on Formal-only grammar, the student can achieve Intermediate proficiency within two years of study.

For those who wish to advance further in Arabic, Georgia Tech now offers a summer language program in Rabat, Morocco, as well as a new 15-credit Middle East and North Africa Studies Minor. See www.modlangs.gatech.edu for further info about these programs.

Required Text and Materials:

1. *Alif Baa, Introduction to Arabic Letters and Sounds*, 3rd Edition (Al-Batal, et al). Georgetown University Press. Bundled w/companion book key at GT Barnes and Noble.
2. *Al-Kitaab Textbook for Beginning Arabic, Part One*, 3rd Edition (Al-Batal, et al). Georgetown University Press. Bundled w/companion book key at GT Barnes and Noble.

Grades:

Homework	30% -- Alif Baa dictations, free compositions, dialogues
Attendance, Participation	20% -- includes conversation drills
Two quizzes	30% -- (1) Alif Baa 1-5 & (2) AB 1-9
Final Exam	20% -- cumulative

These exams may include graded Oral interviews as well as Written portions.

Arabic as a language of communication and the participation Grade. Regular, prepared practice in class gives students the opportunity to use Arabic to communicate. We intend to use Arabic as the language of communication in class, especially in the second half of the semester. By establishing this from the beginning, it is possible to achieve oral proficiency within the first semester. For this reason, before-class prepare new vocabulary before class, attend consistently and promptly, and always have required course materials with you. You will be assigned an Attendance/Preparation/Participation grade in Week 14 of the semester.

Before-class preparation: It is expected that students will have studied and drilled the appropriate material listed on the course schedule *before* coming to class each day, in the course textbook and in the required Companion Website. Practice writing the new letters of the alphabet before coming to class,

drill new vocabulary extensively before we attempt to use it in conversation, and study assigned grammar concepts prior to their use in class.

Practice: Regular practice with the audio and written materials should be combined with both in-class and out-of-class spoken practice. The more time students spend engaged in the language, both through study and involvement in Arabic culture outside of class, the more likely they are to retain what they've learned.

Studying Arabic: Mastery of the spoken and written vocabulary, grammar structures, and communicative content taught in this course requires a great deal of practice. The following activities are expected for each lesson covered in *Alif Baa* and in *Al-Kitaab*.

1. Study the assigned textbook pages, and listen to all assigned Listening Exercises and Drills *prior to coming to class*.
2. Orally repeat the phrases you hear, using the onscreen pause button, to develop both your ear and your pronunciation.
3. Complete all written drills in textbooks, including the Dictations, *prior to coming to class*.
4. Begin to memorize new vocabulary *prior to coming to class*. Work especially on the conversational drills (*Alif Baa* picture drills and the Ask Your Colleagues sections in *Al-Kitaab*), also on Oral Exams.

Typing in Arabic: You also will learn to type in Arabic for some of the online drills towards semester's end, and we will discuss how to download Arabic fonts and enable an Arabic keyboard in class.

Final Exam Day: June 15th, 2020