



Course Outline - Fez, Morocco

The below information is to assist students and teachers who wish to receive credit for this program via their College or University.

ARABIC DEPARTMENT, CREDIT INFORMATION (if applying for credit)

This course is intended for students who want to receive University credits for Arabic Language courses. The chief goals are to expand vocabulary and conversational skills, strengthen grammar and to introduce key social issues and culture. The course, taught entirely in Arabic, introduces new vocabulary and emphasizes grammatical rules within the context of specific themes chosen to enhance students' familiarity of customs or cultural institution that shape daily life.

Colloquial Moroccan Arabic courses

CMA 050 (Basic Moroccan Arabic): Presents the rudiments of the spoken dialect in a three-week format with an emphasis on functional aspects of the dialect in day-to-day interactions with Moroccans. Emphasis on drilling important phrases. No prior background in either CMA or MSA is assumed. May be taught with or without recourse to the Arabic script depending on student interest. (Three weeks, 60 hours)

CMA 050X (Basic Moroccan Arabic Accelerated): Presents rudiments of the spoken dialect in a three-week, crash-course format with an emphasis on the functional aspects of the dialect in day-to-day interactions with Moroccans. Emphasis on drilling important phrases. Taught using Arabic script; Minimal prior background in MSA required. (Three weeks, 60 hours)

CMA 100 (Elementary Level): Provides a sound basis for the development of oral/aural skills in CMA for students with no prior background in Arabic. Curriculum includes training in Arabic script. Empowers students to function in a wide variety of day-to-day situations with Moroccans. (Six weeks, 120 hours)

CMA 100X (Elementary Level Accelerated): Provides a basis for rapid acquisition of the capacity to engage in complex discussions by harnessing students' existing MSA vocabulary and knowledge. Intensive oral drills are supplemented by vocabulary exercises designed to delineate distinctions between CMA and MSA usage and vocabulary. Prior background in MSA assumed. (Six weeks, 120 hours)

CMA 200 (Intermediate Level): Covers complex grammatical structures with further expansion of students' vocabulary mastery. Prerequisite: CMA 100 or language coordinator's approval. (Six weeks, 120 hours)

CMA 250 (Proverbs and Stories): Exposes the post-elementary CMA student to a wide range of the rich, traditional lore of Moroccan culture. Prerequisite: CMA 200 or language coordinator's approval. (Three weeks, 60 hours)

Modern Standard Arabic courses

MSA 050 (Introductory Course): An entry-level course that employs student-centered methods to teach mastery of script, pronunciation and the nominal sentence. No prior background in Arabic required. (Three weeks, 60 hours)

MSA 100 (Beginning Level): An entry-level course which uses a student-centered approach to introduce basic grammatical structures & sound patterns of Arabic, with attention to mastery of script, pronunciation and listening comprehension. No prior background in Arabic required. (Six weeks, 120 hours) Text: Alif Baa, complete book for learning script and sounds. Al-Kitaab, Vol. 1, Units 1-8

MSA 200 (Lower Intermediate Level): Aims to expand vocabulary and to further develop the four skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Lessons focus on reading comprehension and introducing more complex grammatical structures. Prerequisite: MSA 100 or Language Coordinator's approval. (Six weeks, 120 hours) Text: Al-Kitaab, Vol. 1, 9- End plus additional 20% teacher selected materials

MSA 250 (Introduction to the Arabic Newspaper): Exposes students to basic newspaper vocabulary and structure starting with analysis of headlines. Sequel course: Media Arabic, MSA 350. Prerequisite: MSA 200 or Language Coordinator's approval. (Three weeks, 45 hours)

MSA 300 (Upper Intermediate Level): Further expands students' vocabulary base to permit reading of increasingly authentic texts from newspapers, journals, and other sources such as Al-Kitaab Al-Assasi, while introducing controlled writing assignments. Focuses on listening comprehension and reading to facilitate interactive conversations on complex subjects. Prerequisite: MSA 200 or Language Coordinator's approval. (Six weeks, 120 hours) Text: Al-Kitaab, Vol. 2, 1-6 plus 50% teacher selected materials

MSA 350 (Media Arabic): Seeks to build a media vocabulary sufficient for students to grasp the gist of a newspaper article or news broadcast with minimal intervention of the dictionary. Includes graded newspaper readings from Middle Eastern dailies & taped material from Moroccan television and radio. Prerequisite: MSA 300 or Language Coordinator's approval. (Three weeks, 45 hours)

MSA 400 (Advanced Level): Prepares students for independent study in MSA focusing on stylistic devices, vocabulary refinement, and communicative skills. Ideal for scholars wishing to hone their ability to comprehend Arabic university lectures and to express themselves on technical subjects in speech and in writing. This course also makes use of additional texts and short stories from various sources in order to reinforce the student's ability to read and comprehend complex writings. Prerequisite: MSA 300 or Language Coordinator's approval. (Six weeks, 120 hours) Text: AL-Kitaab, Vol. 2, 7- End, plus 50% additional teacher selected materials

MSA 450 (Advanced Readings in Contemporary Maghrebi Literature): Survey of modern Arabic literature by major North African authors focusing on the short story genre with discussion of the cultural underpinnings of this literature as well as schools of criticism dealing with the authors in question. Knowledge of French and Maghrebi dialect(s) is helpful but not obligatory. Prerequisite: MSA 400 or Language Coordinator's approval. (Three weeks, 45 hours)

MSA 460A (Advanced Readings in Islamic Texts I): An introduction to the Quran and the sciences related to it. Includes a survey of the history of the revelation (asbâb at-tanzîl), compilation (tadwîn) of the Quran, principles of correct recitation (tajwîd) and discussion of exegesis (tafsîr). Prerequisite: MSA 400 or Language Coordinator's approval. (Three weeks, 45 hours)

MSA 460B (Advanced Readings in Islamic Texts II): This three-week course consists of a broad introduction to the study of hadîth, including historical background on the major compilations, and a broad overview of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) focusing on the 4 main schools (madhâhib) of Sunni law. Authentic Islamic manuscripts are used as central texts and emphasis is placed on stylistic aspects and essential terminology. Prerequisite: MSA 400 or Language Coordinator's approval. (Three weeks, 45 hours)

MSA 500 (Upper Advanced Level): Focusing on stylistic aspects of different literary genres, this course uses a sampling of authentic texts drawn from both contemporary and classical sources, and involves substantial writing assignments. While Al-Kitaab Al-Assasi, Volume III, and Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya, Volume III, are used as central texts, emphasis of course material may be adjusted according to student interests. Prerequisite: MSA 400 or Language Coordinator's approval. (Six weeks, 120 hours) Text: Al-Kitaab Al-Assasi, Vol. 3 plus teacher selected materials

Instructors:

The Moroccan faculty at our school teaches both Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Colloquial Moroccan Arabic (CMA). MSA instructors hail from prestigious modern state universities, such as Mohammed V in Rabat, and traditional institutions such as the Qarawiyyin University, an Islamic institution of higher learning in Fez which ranks with Al-Azhar in Cairo as one of the oldest universities in the world. The rigorous grammatical training imparted at the Qarawiyyin University produces MSA instructors of exceptional caliber whose grasp of the structure and vocabulary of the Arabic language would be hard to duplicate even in the foremost Western universities.

In teaching CMA, instructors have developed a highly interactive teaching approach designed to get students conversing almost immediately with native speakers in a variety of increasingly challenging topics of discussion. The school's program coordinator is also one of the few CMA experts worldwide certified by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton to administer oral examinations in Moroccan Arabic.

Transfer Credits:

For transfer purposes, our school can provide credit recommendations and any other relevant information needed by the student's home institution; however, that institution determines the allocation of credits for school coursework.

Whether the student applies directly to the school or indirectly through a university with which the school possesses an overseas study partnership, such as the University of Florida at Gainesville, it is the student's responsibility to negotiate with their home institutions the appropriate number of credits to be awarded for their program at our school. Students wishing to obtain university credit may be required to take a proficiency examination at the end of their studies. Our school provides ACTFL proficiency examinations for a fee of approx. 300 Dhs, and upon request can calculate a grade-point average.

Courses:

We offer intensive MSA and CMA courses throughout the year. Most courses consist of six-week sessions (120 hours of classroom instruction given four hours per day). Special content-based courses are three weeks in length (three to four hours of instruction per day). Students may enroll for the first three weeks of any six-week course, but must indicate this clearly on their application forms.

Language of instruction is Arabic in all but the most elementary courses, where use of English is kept to a minimum. The core textbook for regular six-week MSA courses is Al-Kitâb fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya (MSA 100 & 200 = Vol. 1; MSA 300 & 400 = Vol. 2). All course materials for CMA are ALIF productions. Enrollment & Placement: Students are requested to indicate their preferred course and level on the accompanying application form. The Arabic language coordinator may adjust placement according to the student's Arabic background. The language coordinator may conduct an oral interview for placement purposes upon arrival.

The Linguistic Situation in Morocco

For those students who have never lived or studied Arabic abroad before, and even for some of those who have, a word of explanation is in order: as our course offerings indicate, it is more appropriate to speak of "Arabics" rather than "Arabic". While both Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Colloquial Moroccan Arabic (CMA) are largely derived from the same basic source (so-called "Classical Arabic"), they are in many ways two distinct languages.

MSA is the language of the news media, written correspondence, official documents, literature and formal speeches. As strange as it might sound, MSA is not a language spoken fluently by the majority of Moroccans (or Arabs, for that matter). Though few educated Moroccans have difficulty reading Arabic and understanding Arabic news broadcasts, few of them feel truly confident in using it as a means of oral communication. To further complicate matters for students wishing to practice their MSA outside of class, many Moroccan professionals have been educated in France or in a French mold, so that in discussing more intellectual or technical topics they may have difficulty expressing themselves without turning to French. It is not uncommon for a foreign student trying to make conversation with a Moroccan in MSA to be answered in French.

Obviously, if you don't know French or (wisely) pretend not to know it, the Moroccan in question will be forced to struggle to express himself or herself in as correct a variety of MSA as he/she can muster. There are, happily, exceptions to this generalization, even some very articulate ones, especially in a city like Fez which prides itself as being Morocco's "Intellectual Capital"; however, on the whole, students of MSA should not have unrealistic expectations about chatting in literary Arabic with the corner grocer - whose native language may well be Berber anyway! It bears pointing out that for most Moroccans MSA spoken in day-to-day situations has an almost comical quality about it, comparable perhaps to the effect of speaking Shakespearean English with a small-town grocer.

Concerning the local dialect, this is much easier to practice outside the classroom. However, even when initiating a conversation in CMA, a student may get a response in French from a Moroccan. This may be due to their not believing their ears and having an automatic reaction of conversing in French with foreigners, or it may be due to your own lack of mastery of the dialect. Persistence pays off in such situations and a pretended or real ignorance of French often opens the door to fruitful conversational practice. At the same time, it should be remembered that CMA has many (Arabized) French loan words and that Moroccans frequently intersperse their speech in CMA with additional vocabulary, phrases and expressions from French, even when speaking to each other.

On a different plane, students should be cognizant of the limitations inherent in studying CMA, since sooner or later (usually after 3 six-week sessions) they reach a plateau in their ability to discuss more intellectual topics (economics, religion, etc.) beyond which they can only proceed by studying MSA from which vocabulary and phraseology are drawn. Without formally studying MSA they will never gain an adequate ability to comprehend news broadcasts or read newspapers. Students should also be aware of the typical Moroccan attitude towards CMA: it is not regarded as a "language" in the formal sense of the word and Moroccans may be quite bewildered by the fact that you are studying it formally. For them, only MSA is a written language with formal rules and conventions. They may express astonishment if they see you studying one of CMA coursebooks, and even make remarks suggesting that CMA is not "real" Arabic. Finally, students of CMA should accept the fact that their hard-earned knowledge of CMA will be of very little value beyond the confines of North Africa. To illustrate this point, it should suffice to note that the common every day words for "bread", "want", "need" and "go" are totally different in CMA and the Egyptian dialect. Concerning the latter, Cairene colloquial Arabic is passively understood by many Moroccans thanks to the diffusion of Egyptian-made films on Moroccan television.

Background Reading

It is highly recommended that you do some select background reading before coming to Morocco. The titles listed below should also be available in the school library. (Library privileges require a resource center fee of 300 Dh which is usually paid with your initial registration, and book borrowing privileges require a refundable 200 Dh deposit.) The following recommended books are grouped according to subject area/discipline:

General History:

- | A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period, Jamil M. Abu-Nasr (1987: Cambridge U.P.).
- | A History of the Arab Peoples, Albert Hourani (1991: Faber & Faber).
- | The History of the Maghrib: An Interpretive Essay, Abdallah Laroui (1977: Princeton U.P.).

Politics:

- | The Commander of the Faithful: The Moroccan Political Elite, John Waterbury (1970: Columbia U.P.).
- | The Political Economy of Morocco, William Zartman (Ed.) (1987: Praeger).

Islam:

- | Ideals and Realities of Islam, Seyyed Hussein Nasr (1985: Unwin Hyman).
- | Muhammed: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources, Martin Lings (1983: Unwin).
- | Moroccan Islam: Tradition and Society in a Pilgrimage Center, Dale Eickelman (1976: University of Texas Press).

Fez:

- | Fez: City of Islam, Titus Burkhardt (1992: Islamic Texts Society, Cambridge, U.K.).
- | Fez in the Age of the Marinids, Roger Le Tourneau (1961: Norman, Oklahoma).
- | A Practical Guide to Islamic Monuments in Morocco, Richard Parker (1981: Baraka Press, Charlottesville, USA).
- | The Spider's House, (fiction set in Fez) Paul Bowles (1955: Random House).

Travelogues:

- | Their Heads are Green and Their Hands are Blue, Paul Bowles.
- | The Land of the Moors, Budgett Meakin (1901: Macmillan; recently republished by State Mutual Bank).

Travel Guides:

- | The Rough Guide to Morocco, Marc Ellingham & Shaun McVeigh.
- | Cadogan Guide to Morocco, Barnaby Rogerson.
- | The Lonely Planet Guide to Morocco, Frances Gordon, Dorinda Talbot, & Damien Simonis.

School Facilities

The Library

The school maintains a library for the exclusive use of its students. The catalogued collection includes works on the Arabic language, linguistics, North African and Arab studies, Arabic literature, and Islamic studies. Books are listed in the card catalogue and cassette listings are posted. All students wishing to check books out of the library are required to pay a refundable 200 Dh book-borrowing deposit. Books are to be checked out from the librarian, who can also provide you with headphones and cassettes for use in the library.

Computer Use

If you intend to bring a computer with you to Fez, be sure you have an appropriate transformer. Electricity in Fez varies between 220v and 110v, even within the same room. Transformers for many laptop computers automatically convert from 110v to 220v, but check yours before you get here. Almost all computers (and printers) require that you use the manufacturer's transformer, which will be much easier (and cheaper!) to get before coming to Morocco.

If customs officials see that you are carrying a computer into Morocco, you may be asked to pay a customs duty or have your computer recorded in your passport as you arrive in the country. The customs duty may be exorbitantly high. Rather than paying customs, it is generally preferable to have the machine recorded in your passport. This ensures that you will not sell it in Morocco, and you will be required to show the machine and have it marked again in your passport as you leave the country.

The school does have several PC computers available for student use, which are located in the computer lab. Please provide your own 3.5" disk for your personal documents. There is a 2 Dh/page charge for printing documents. Macintosh users can print documents at Satellite, a nearby computer service shop. Students also have access to a shared e-mail account on one of the computers in the lab. Realize that usage will be heavy at times since everyone will be using the same terminal. Those students who would like to surf the net, telnet back to their e-mail accounts at home, or open a private e-mail account can do so at CasaNet or Gardenet, both only five minute walks from the school, for very reasonable rates.

Recent Additions

The school has recently acquired several items of interest to its students. It now has a small film-viewing area for students who wish to take advantage of the Arabic video collection. Second, the Residence is now equipped with a satellite television that receives over 16 Arabic stations. Non-Resident students have access to this resource daily from 2:00-6:00 PM, Mon.-Fri. Lastly, it has acquired rights to a centuries-old, traditional Moroccan house in the old-city, or Medina, or Fez. This building will hopefully be used as a residence and venue for cultural events.

Instructional Materials*

I CMA 100 & 200 regular course books (required) 100 Dh/each
I CMA 100 "accelerated" course book (required) 150 Dh
I MSA 100 & 200 course book "al-Kitâb fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya, vol. 1" (req'd.) . . 420-500 Dh
I MSA 300 & 400 course book "al-Kitâb fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya, vol. 2" (req'd) . . 420-500 Dh
I MSA 500 assorted texts from "al-Kitâb al-Asâsi, vol. 3" and
"al-Kitâb fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya, vol. 3" (required) 300 Dh
I Harrell's Moroccan Arabic/English Dictionary (optional) 410 Dh
I Hans Wehr's MSA/English Dictionary (optional) 180 Dh

*Due to the high cost of "al-Kitâb fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya," in Morocco, students may wish to purchase their own copies at home and bring them along.

Optional fees. In an attempt to keep tuition to a minimum, some services are not included in the overall tuition, but require an additional fee for those students who wish to take advantage of them

I Library Book-Borrowing Privileges 200 Dh
I Photocopying 1 Dh/page
I Telephone/Fax use (see "Telephone Use at ALIF" page 25)

Approximate weekly living expenses

In addition to the housing expenses as outlined above, individual student living expenses will depend on several factors, not the least of which is the student's individual lifestyle. The following estimates are based on experience, but they should be taken only as guidelines.

I Miscellaneous expenses for all students: 200-250 Dh/week, including reading material, stationery, postage stamps, minimal local transportation, snacks, etc.

I Transportation expenses for homestay participants and apartment dwellers not within walking distance from ALIF: Moroccan homestay includes all meals but if the home is not within walking distance of the school the expense of bus fares (normally 2.20 Dh per ride) and/or taxi fares (the average fare is 10 Dh) must be kept in mind. Some days students may have split schedules and will need to make the commute twice a day.

I Meals for students residing in apartments or hotels: Food/meals will average 40 - 120 Dh/day depending on how often one eats out or if one takes advantage of ALIF's meal plan (outlined above). Breakfast in a cafe averages 7 - 15 Dh/day. Lunches and dinners eaten in modest restaurants average 20 - 60 Dh/meal.

I Food bought for meals prepared in apartments: Produce and foodstuffs in general are inexpensive in Morocco, especially if you shop around a bit. The weekly average for ingredients bought for all meals is about 300 - 600 Dh depending on how often one buys meat. Fish is also excellent and usually slightly cheaper than meat, but be sure to ask which days the fish arrives.

I Laundry: Some families will volunteer to do a student's clothes washing, but this is not expected of host families. There are numerous laundry/dry cleaners in Fez, but self-service laundromats do not (yet) exist. Prices are only slightly cheaper than U.S. or European rates for laundry service. Students residing in the ALIF Residence have access to a washing machine.