

ARABIC HOUSE, MODERN LANGUAGES PROGRAM

Gregory College House - Fall 2018

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ARABIC HOUSE, ARAB 180 – Arabic in Residence

The Arabic House is dedicated to practicing Modern Standard Arabic outside of the classroom setting. The group meets two evenings per week for an hour of conversation practice, often with snacks and tea. Conversations are both casual and group-led and will sometimes be split according to student's conversation levels. Most activities are held in the Greenhouse of the Gregory Class of 1925 building located at 3941 Irving Street. Additional cultural activities may take place in Gregory (films will usually be shown in the Class of '25 basement), elsewhere at Penn or throughout Philadelphia. The program welcomes both beginners and advanced speakers. Dedicated undergraduate students may choose to enroll for credit (Arabic 180), but there is also a non-credit option.

CLASS STRUCTURE: Arabic Culture One session every week is devoted to learning more about the culture surrounding the Arabic language. As part of this endeavor, we will be hosting movie nights several times during the semester. We will also be going on group trips to a museum, a musical performance, and a cultural show. **Conversation Hour** The second session is devoted to discussing a thematic topic in an informal conversation. This will often be connected to the cultural activity pf the week. In weeks where the cultural session is a film + film discussion or an outing (and thus takes a full two hours) one session will be replaced with an optional homework assistance/ conversation hour. As a reward for your enthusiastic participation, we will be going on an **end of semester dinner** together.

LOCATION AND TIME: Classes take place from 8:30-9:30 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Greenhouse of the Class of 1925 building. Movie nights will take place in the film lounge in the basement of Class of '25. The locations of other cultural events are listed below and several take place off campus.

CREDIT OPTION: The Arabic House offers undergraduate students the option of earning a half credit unit for the semester. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their attendance and participation. Note that students with no Arabic background must enroll in Arab 031 to receive credit.

EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING:

Students enrolled in 2nd-4th year Arabic (or with the equivalent background):

A Missing no more than 3 sessions* and enthusiastic participation in conversations and events

A- Missing 4 sessions and enthusiastic participation in conversations and events

B+ Missing 4 sessions and moderate participation in conversations and events

B Missing more than 4 sessions and moderate participation in conversations and events

I do not expect grades to fall below this level, but I will lower grades further based on attendance/ if there is a lack of effort to speak Arabic. Note that film showings and the concert count as two sessions!

Students enrolled in **1st year Arabic**: The grading follows the same rubric, but you are not required to participate in conversation. I would of course love you to practice your Arabic, but your attentive listening is all I require this first semester. You will be amazed at how much you learn by listening, even if you think you are not getting anything!

Students with **four or more years of Arabic experience or students who speak Arabic at home** (regardless of what class Penn's placement has put you in) are also required to lead at least half of a session in Arabic to receive an A or A-. This session can be on a topic of your choice (you will discuss it with the instructor). Additionally, advanced speakers should attempt to speak in MSA (*fusha*) as much as possible as that will be easier to follow for beginner and intermediate students while offering more of a challenge for you!

*Note that sessions that take up two hours count as two absences.

Week 1:

8/28 – Information meeting – Greenhouse (absence not recorded)

Week 2:

9/4 – Introductions, Discussion – What is “Arabic Culture?” – [Greenhouse](#)

9/6 – Arabic Music (instruments, traditions, etc.) In preparation for the concert – [Class of '25 basement film lounge](#)

Week 3:

9/11 – Optional HW session/ come chat with me in Arabic (because of concert) – [Greenhouse](#)

9/13 – Optional HW session/ come chat with me in Arabic (because of concert) – [Greenhouse](#)

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 16 @ 7-9 PM - Mandatory

“Virtuoso oud prodigy Mohamed Abozekry convenes Egypt’s popular and classical music traditions, Sufi calls, and secular poetry with a new instrumental project, Karkadé.”

LOCATION: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 19 South 10th Street. I will leave Gregory **@6:15PM** but you are welcome to meet us there. However, you need to let me know in advance (as the tickets are expensive and I don't want them to go to waste) and make sure to be there before 7PM.

Week 4:

9/18 – Discussion of Arabic Calligraphy and the works of eL Seed, a French-Tunisian street artist whose works incorporate traditional Arabic calligraphy (and who completed a mural in West Philly last year!) – [Greenhouse](#)

HW (Your only homework of the semester, I promise!) – Walk to eL Seed’s Mural “Soul of the Black Bottom” in West Philadelphia at the corner of Market and N Preston Street. It is a 9 min walk from

Gregory. (Walk down 40th street to Market and take a left. It is on the corner at the first intersection on your right). I will walk over on **Wednesday 9/19 @NOON**, but if you cannot make the group time, then walk there by yourself (or with a friend) and send me a selfie demonstrating that you were there!

9/20 – Middle Eastern Politics – Student led session: Andrew and Kamel – **Greenhouse**

Week 5:

9/25 – Screening and discussion of *Theeb* – **Class of '25 basement film lounge (8:30-10:30)**

9/27 – Optional HW session/ come chat with me in Arabic (because of film) – **Greenhouse**

Week 6:

10/2 – **Trivia Night** – Student led session: Rianne – **Greenhouse**

Fall break

Week 7:

10/9 – Arabic Literature – Read and discuss Arabic short stories – **Greenhouse**

10/11 – Optional HW session/ come chat with me in Arabic (because of “Ahlan 2018”) – **Greenhouse**

SATURDAY OCTOBER 13th – Mandatory – Al Bustan Seeds of Culture “Ahlan 2018” “Come experience an afternoon of Arab arts and culture featuring comedy, dance, drumming, art, and food. Our annual event takes place at Trinity Center for Urban Life and is Free/Open to the Public.”

TIME: The event is from 2-5PM, but you are just required to attend for an hour. I will go at 2PM and encourage whoever can make it then to come with me (so depart around 1:30PM). However, if you need to go later that is OK. If you don’t see me there (though I do plan on staying for most of it) take a selfie to document your attendance and stay for an hour (or close to an hour) please. In previous years this event has included *dabkeh* (a dance), a drumming circle, henna, Arabic poetry, crafts etc.

LOCATION: 2212 Spruce St (SW corner of Spruce and 22nd)

Week 8:

10/16 – Screening and discussion of *The Nightingale’s Prayer* – **Class of '25 basement film lounge (8:30-10:30)**

10/18 – Optional HW session/ come chat with me in Arabic (because of film) – **Greenhouse**

Week 9:

10/23 – TBD – **Greenhouse**

10/25 – **Depictions of Arabs in media/ music videos etc.** – Student led session: Nancy and Zahra – **Class of '25 basement film lounge**

Week 10:

SUNDAY OCTOBER 27th @NOON – Mandatory – *Cultures in the Crossfire: Stories From Syria and Iraq*. We will go together to the Penn Museum. This exhibition “sheds light on the ongoing destruction of cultural heritage in the Middle East by showing what’s at stake—the rich history of the region and the diversity of its people—and what’s being done to prevent the loss of this history and cultural identity.” If you cannot make the group time, then go there on your own before our Thursday session. Take a selfie to show that you were there and be ready to discuss the exhibition!

10/30 – Optional HW session/ come chat with me in Arabic (because of museum trip) – [Greenhouse](#)

11/1 – War in the Middle East. Discuss visit to *Cultures in the Crossfire: Stories From Syria and Iraq*. Watch and discuss *From the Sky* (15 min) – [Class of '25 basement film lounge](#)

Week 11:

11/6 – Arabic Literature – Read and discuss Arabic poetry – [Greenhouse](#)

11/8 – TBD – [Greenhouse](#)

Week 12:

11/13 – Screening and discussion of *Wajda* – [Class of '25 basement film lounge \(8:30-10:30\)](#)

11/15 – No class

Week 13:

11/20 – [Arabic language activities \(old Arabic script etc.\)](#) – Student led session: Wassim – [Greenhouse](#)

Thanksgiving

Week 14:

11/27 – What is “Arabic Food”? Does everyone in the Arabic speaking world have the same cuisine? – [Greenhouse](#)

11/29 – Cooking – item(s) TBD – [Class of '25 Kitchen + Greenhouse](#)

Week 15:

12/4 – Wrap up/ feedback session – [Greenhouse](#)

12/6 - End of year dinner. Location TBD