

**THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY  
PROGRAM APPROVAL/CHANGE FORM**

**Minor**

**7-course concentration**

**9 course concentration**

Items in *Italics* have "drop down" menus. Please click on the box to select a response. Shaded boxes are live.

Program Name:

Sponsoring Faculty:

Host department:

Term effective date:  School: Culture and Society

Are there co-requisites?  Yes  No If Yes Specify:

Does this replace a previous program?  Yes  No  
If yes, indicate program name:

\*Comments:

Approvals:  
Regina M... 2/25/08  
Department Chair Date

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Faculty Date

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Appropriate Comm. Date  
W... 4/23/08

Regina M... 4/23/08  
Dean Date

return completed form to Office of Academic Services, Green Hall 118

## Arabic Minor Proposal

Sponsoring Faculty: Lillian Farhat (farhat@tcnj.edu)

Hosting Department: Modern Languages

### I. Requirements

Students must meet or exceed the foreign language requirement for Liberal Learning. All language minors consist of five courses, three of which must be taken at TCNJ. A minimum grade of C is required in all courses taken to fulfill minor requirements. Students may take 5 of the following courses, at least one of which must be at the 300 level:

Required core courses:

- ARA103 (Arabic for Beginners III)
- ARA 201, 202 (Intermediate Arabic I, II)

Required 1 elective from the following courses:

- ARA 216, Media Arabic (To be developed)
- ARA 245, Modern Arabic Society and the Media (Arabic language option)
- ARA370 (Topics in Arabic)

Required 1 elective from the following courses:

- ARA301 (Advanced Arabic I), ARA 302 (Advanced Arabic II)
- ARA391 (Independent Study in Arabic)

Advanced courses ARA 301 and 302 were approved by the Culture and Society Curriculum Committee in Fall 2007. There are currently a sufficient number of courses listed in our regular offerings to constitute an Arabic Minor.

Studying abroad is not required; however, students interested in the Arabic minor are strongly encouraged to study in an Arab country such as Egypt or Jordan for at least one semester. Both countries provide the student with an immersion experience with the spoken Arabic they are taught. Already one of our students took the opportunity offered by Global Programs to study in Cairo, Egypt. Jordanian universities offer programs in Amman, the capital, and in smaller cities. Many American universities and the American Government have on-going programs in Jordan. Taking two classes abroad, assessed on an individual basis, may satisfy two requirements for the minor.

## II. Description of Arabic Minor

The minor in Arabic offers students the opportunity to study the Arabic language and culture structurally and functionally. Our curriculum reflects the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (1999) which describes the five C's of language acquisition: *communication, culture, comparisons, connections, and community*. Students in the Arabic minor have the opportunity to practice the three modes of communication (interpersonal, interpretive and presentational), to learn about Arabic culture (products, practices and perspectives), and to make comparisons between their first language and culture and the Arabic language and culture. In addition, students make connections to other fields of study unavailable to them through their native language. As such, a minor in Arabic will provide students the opportunity to:

1. Communicate in Arabic:
  - a) Engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and exchange opinions.
  - b) Understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.
  - c) Present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.
  - d) Practice the interpersonal, interpretive and presentational modes of communication.
2. Gain knowledge and understanding of Arabic culture:
  - a) Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of Arabic culture.
  - b) Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of Arabic culture.
3. Connect with other disciplines and acquire information:
  - a) Reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through use of the Arabic language.
  - b) Acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through Arabic language and culture.
4. Develop insight into the nature of the Arabic language and culture
  - a) Demonstrate understanding of the nature of the Arabic language through comparisons with the students' own language.
  - b) Demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the Arabic culture and the students' own culture.
5. Participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world.
  - a) Use the Arabic language both within and beyond the school setting.
  - b) Show evidence of becoming life-long learners of Arabic by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Each Arabic course emphasizes how to understand and gain further knowledge of Arabic culture. Through the use of the language and of Arabic-language materials such as articles and videos, students in the Arabic minor will come to know perspectives and practices of Arab people, including their attitudes, values, ideas, and social interactions. In addition, Arabic products such as books, newspapers, foods, films, and music illustrate and reflect Arab culture as they are integrated into Arabic language instruction. Opportunities will be created for students to interact with the local Arab community through participation in events such as shopping at the Middle Eastern grocery stores in North Brunswick, going to Middle Eastern restaurants where the food and the table conversation are in Arabic and attending seminars and cultural events in Arabic at nearby Princeton.

Over the past several years, the Arabic curriculum has been built on a proficiency-based model that emphasizes meaningful student exposure to the language and culture, developing all four components (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) of the Arabic language in a context-based learning environment. The Arabic minor at The College of New Jersey will present an attempt to further enrich student learning by allowing more opportunities for active practice of the language, and exposure to and interaction with the culture.

### III. Performance Goals and Outcomes

The goal of the courses in the Arabic Minor is to produce students with an observable and definable degree of Arabic language proficiency. Proficiency is measured by the achievement of particular benchmarks as defined by ACTFL in the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and supported by the five C's. ARA 201 and ARA 202 take the student from Intermediate Low to Intermediate Mid and by the end of ARA 301 and ARA 302 students should be at the Advanced Low benchmark. The student may aspire to build on the Advanced level by taking more of our content based courses and Independent Study.

Through an enriched context-based language experience inside and outside of the classroom, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate progress in developing their skills in the three modes of communication in Arabic through the consistent use of student-based activities inside and outside the classroom.
- Demonstrate a growing knowledge of the components of Arabic culture obtained through readings, films, and in-class discussions.
- Demonstrate the ability to make comparisons between Arabic and Arabic culture and their first language and their own culture.
- Develop the familiarity with the Arabic language and Arabic culture they need in order to locate and access bodies of knowledge—both general and specific to their professional and personal interests—not immediately available to them through English.
- Make efforts to come in contact with the Arabic-speaking community through optional excursions.

#### IV. Need and Demand for an Arabic Minor

Development of the Arabic minor directly supports a number of area studies and interdisciplinary programs, and its implementation was a key component of a grant proposal (Iran and Beyond: Strengthening the International Studies and Foreign Language Curriculum in Middle Eastern and Central Eurasian Studies) presented by Jo-Ann Gross of the History Department in Fall 2007.

Arabic language acquisition in higher learning institutions is central to scholarship and to practical application in many fields of study. The Arab world is a crucial political, economic, religious and cultural presence in the globalization process. Arabic is a Semitic language widely spoken by nearly 300 million people in 22 countries in North Africa and the Middle East. Arabic is the sacral language of Muslims and it is the language of religious instruction and prayer for one and a quarter billion people from Nigeria to Indonesia. New studies show that Arabic script and prayer traveled even further a field with the African Diaspora and was used in the daily lives and rebellions of the enslaved Africans in the Americas. The UN recognizes Arabic as the sixth most commonly used language in the world.

Prior to the 9/11 tragedy, interest in Arabic was already on the rise all over the United States primarily due to the increase in the number of heritage students coming from Arab and Muslim immigrant families and due to the needs of professionals with economic ties to the area. Post 9/11 we see a dramatic increase in the number students who want to study Arabic to learn about Islam, the Middle East and to work in American government institutions and the armed forces. The newest edition of *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21 Century*, published by ACTFL, reflects this increase in professional interest and includes the Standards for learning Arabic in the US. Such recognition by ACTFL means that interest in Arabic will outlast the current political storms and will be part of the curriculum of modern languages for the foreseeable future.

At TCNJ, where I have had the pleasure of teaching Arabic for two and a half years now, I find student interest in and appreciation of Arabic is constantly growing. The elementary classes attract students from all fields, several of whom are simply curious about the language and the people. The students who tend to continue through the intermediate classes are majors in International Relations, History and Political Science. The Modern Arabic Society and the Media class we are currently offering is also attracting students from Communications and Anthropology. TCNJ students, especially those majoring in the above-mentioned fields are interested in working for the government in several capacities up to and including that of Ambassador. "I want to be a good ambassador for my country" says one of the upper level students. Others want to continue to become scholars fully engaged in producing specialized knowledge using their Arabic language skills and enhanced cultural perspectives. For this reason, I cannot stress enough that the intermediate and advanced level courses support the future scholars of TCNJ and should be offered in a sequential format and on a continuous basis, especially when at least five students are registered. To increase our offerings, I will be working on adding an upper level class that focuses on dealing with Media Arabic.

The elementary level has had a constant level of interest in the past few years, averaging about twenty students each fall. On average we have between 35-40 students enrolled in Arabic classes each semester. I hope this number will rise as more students, especially in the sciences learn about our offerings and do not wait until their last year to

“enjoy” themselves and take a language that is personally relevant to their families and religion. Students in fields of business and economics could also benefit from the Arabic program. An Arabic minor will help to stabilize class sequences and increase the number of students interested in taking Arabic. More students from a variety of fields will have the incentive to commit to the number of classes required and will strengthen the program as a whole.

The Arabic classes at TCNJ are a miniature model of multi-culturalism at its best. Students from a variety of backgrounds come together to learn about the Arab-Muslim World an area that evokes anxiety and distress due to the often troubling news and sad images in the media. I am, and I feel the students are, more hopeful and inspired after each class. With your support, a stronger Arabic program at TCNJ can contribute academic depth to many fields at the university and will actively enhance cultural diversity.

Specifically an Arabic minor at TCNJ strengthens the fulfillment of two Core Beliefs that underlie our mission. Core Belief 8 states that: The College prepares its students to be successful, ethical, and visionary leaders in a multicultural, highly technological, and increasingly global world. Core Belief 9 states that: The College believes that an educated individual possesses an understanding of his or her own culture, an appreciation of other cultures, and the capacity to facilitate genuine cross-cultural interaction.

The performance goals and outcomes of the Arabic minor, outlined above, are clearly in accordance with these Core Beliefs. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Statement of Philosophy also underlines the necessity of educating citizens capable of functioning in a world whose cultures are becoming more and more interconnected: “The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic society and abroad.” Such a direct link to the essential definition of humanity is undeniable, and access to the varied means of communication through knowledge of a second language opens doors of enhanced global competency essential to committed citizens of a world community.

#### V. Faculty

Currently, there is sufficient faculty at The Modern Language Department to teach all Arabic courses included in the proposed minor at current enrollment levels. The Conversation Hour is being taught by the faculty. If the minor attracts more students the Department will need to consider hiring additional faculty.

#### VI. Library Collections

The Roscoe L. West Library needs to add more Arabic books, periodicals and films to its current collections to support a minor in Arabic. Faculty in the program will try to enrich the collection by submitting specific requests. The Arabic program will solicit funds in the future to expand the collections by working closely with faculty from other departments teaching about the Middle East. A number of DVD’s have already been requested and acquired by the History, Political Science and Religion Departments, and we will continue to request materials from the existing budget.

#### VII. Equipment, Laboratory Support, Computer Support

There is no current need for additional equipment, laboratory support, or computer support for the Arabic minor.

#### VIII. Facilities

No special facilities are needed for the Arabic Minor.

### **Appendix**

#### Course Offerings

In all 100-level language courses, students may not enroll in a course at a lower level once they have completed a more advanced-level course.

#### Arabic

ARA 101, 102, 103/Arabic for Beginners I, II, III 1 course unit each  
(Every semester)

An intensive introduction to spoken and written Arabic, emphasizing aural comprehension and speaking, accompanied by practice in reading and writing. Cultural audio-visual materials complement the textbook and emphasize the link between language and culture. Recitation/conversation hour is required in ARA 101,102 and 103. Students with four or more years of high school study in Arabic will not receive credit for 101.

ARA 201/Intermediate Arabic I 1 course unit  
(Annually)

Prerequisite: ARA 103 or permission of instructor

This course offers selected readings from classical Arabic, literary texts and media sources as a vehicle to build the student's understanding of grammar and working vocabulary, and to provide insight into the Arab and Muslim world. In addition, audio-visual materials will be used to improve the student's fluency in speech. Additional practice in spoken and written Arabic emphasizing increased skill acquisition. Recitation/conversation hour is required for both ARA 101 and 102.

ARA 202/Intermediate Arabic II 1 course unit  
(Occasionally)

Prerequisite: ARA 201 or permission of instructor

This course will focus on expanding listening, speaking, reading and writing skills at the Intermediate level. The course will emphasize rapid expansion of vocabulary, comprehension and communication of more complex and intellectual topics, idiomatic expressions, and mastery of less common grammatical constructs. Recitation/conversation hour is required.

ARA 245/Modern Arabic Society and the Media

1 course unit

(Same as COM 245)

(Occasionally)

This course will be taught in English with option to do assignments in Arabic. It will explore social issues that have been central to the transformation of modern Arab societies in the modern period. Readings and recordings will address major topics such as democracy and development, nationalism, Islam, feminism and the status of women, and socialism.

ARA 301, 302 / Advanced Arabic I, II

1 course unit each class

Prerequisites: ARA 101,102, 103, 201 and 202 or Permission of Instructor

These classes are designed for students who have already taken ARA 101 through 202, or have equivalent knowledge and skills of that level. The objectives of these courses are to increase aural proficiency in understanding everyday conversation, acquiring more advanced and effective communication skills, and using appropriate sentence structures and vocabulary; to acquire reading skills, including skimming, scanning, and intensive reading; to acquire writing skills, including descriptions and some functional writing tasks, such as letter writing; to acquire socio-cultural information on the Arabic language and people. Recitation/conversation hour is required for both ARA 301 and 302.

ARA 370/Topics in Arabic

1 course unit

(Occasionally)

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

This course focuses on a different topic each time that it is offered and is taught in Arabic.

ARA 391/Independent Study in Arabic

variable course units

(Every semester)

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

Study of a topic related to Arabic language, culture, or literature selected following consultation with instructor.