

Study Arabic at UMSL

Why study Arabic?

Arabic has the reputation of being a difficult language. Is it really worth studying? In fact, the benefits of learning Arabic can hardly be overstated. Although Arabic is certainly a challenging and unconventional language to learn, the cultural and professional benefits it offers are unsurpassed.

From the *Los Angeles Times*, April 1, 2006:

"A survey by the Modern Language Association showed the number of students studying Arabic at U.S. colleges climbed 92.3 percent -- to 10,584 -- between 1998 and 2002. The number of undergraduate campuses teaching it jumped 48 percent, to 233.... Since then, those Arabic numbers probably have doubled yet again, according to Gerald Lampe, president of the American Association of Teachers of Arabic. 'I think people see clearly that there could be a job for them waiting down the road if they master the language and culture,' said Lampe, who also is deputy director of the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland."

Ahlan wa Sahlan wa Marhaba!

Arabic is the newest foreign language to be offered at the University of Missouri – St. Louis. It was first offered in the Fall of 2006. There are plans to offer a series of three 5.0 credit hour classes including Elementary Arabic 1001, Elementary Arabic 1002 and Intermediate Arabic 2101; allowing students to complete the university language requirement in Arabic. For information concerning Arabic, please contact the instructor Laura El-Hage Chehade at elhagechehadel@umsl.edu or the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature (314) 516-6240 located in Clark Hall 554.

Classes are taught in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the formal Arabic which is written and spoken in the contemporary Arab world. MSA is the direct descendent of Qur'anic Arabic, the poetry of Pre-Islamic Arabia and the classical literature of the Golden Age of the Arab/Islamic empire. It is the universal form of Arabic learned in schools across the Arab world and is used exclusively in any printed Arabic publication throughout the world today. It is also an oral medium of expression used in formal situations ranging from a TV newscast to a lecture on a university campus or a formal address at an international conference.