Arabic

The Department of Jewish, Islamic, and Middle Eastern Studies offers a major and a minor in Arabic. As majors in Arabic, students can expect to gain proficiency in the language, study the area's literary and cultural landmarks, and gain familiarity with Middle Eastern history and civilizations.

Language Placement: Placement tests are required for all students entering our language programs. Students may be eligible for up to 6 units of back credit based on advanced placement and successful completion of the recommended course. Native speakers are not eligible for back credit; evidence of secondary or postsecondary study of the language is required. Any units received from back credit cannot be counted toward the major or minor.

Phone: 314-935-8567
Email: scordias@wustl.edu
Website: http://jimes.wustl.edu

Faculty

Chair

Flora Cassen
Associate Professor of Jewish, Islamic, and Middle Eastern Studies and of History
PhD, New York University

Endowed Professor

Hillel J. Kieval (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/hillel-j-kieval/)
Gloria M. Goldstein Professor of Jewish History and Thought
PhD, Harvard University

Professors

Nancy E. Berg (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/nancy-e-berg/)
Professor of Hebrew Language and Literature
PhD, University of Pennsylvania

Martin Jacobs (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/martin-jacobs/)
Professor of Rabbinic Studies
PhD and Habilitation, Free University of Berlin

Erin McGlothlin (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/erin-mcglothlin/)
Professor of German and Jewish Studies
PhD, University of Virginia

Associate Professors

Pamela Barmash (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/pamela-barmash/)
Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible and Biblical Hebrew
PhD, Harvard University

Nancy Reynolds (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/nancy-reynolds/)
Associate Professor of History and of Jewish, Islamic, and Middle Eastern Studies
PhD, Stanford University

Hayrettin Yücesoy (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/hayrettin-y%C3%BCcesoy/)
Associate Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies
PhD, University of Chicago

Assistant Professors

Aria Nakissa (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/aria-nakissa/)
Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies
PhD, Harvard University

Senior Lecturers

Housni Bennis (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/housni-bennis/)
Senior Lecturer in Arabic
PhD Candidate, Washington University in St. Louis

Younasse Tarbouni (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/younasse-tarbouni/)
Senior Lecturer in Arabic
PhD, L’École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS)

Lecturers

Martin Luther Chan
Lecturer of Hebrew
PhD, University of California at Los Angeles

Meera Jain (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/meera-jain/)
Lecturer of Hindi
MArch, University of Texas at Austin

Sara Jay (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/sara-jay/)
Lecturer in Jewish, Islamic, and Middle Eastern Studies
PhD, Washington University in St. Louis

Toqeer Shah (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/toqeer-shah/)
Lecturer of Urdu
MSc, University of Peshawar

Madhavi Verma (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/madhavi-verma/)
Lecturer in Hindi Languages and Cultures
MA, Patna University

Teaching Fellow

Elai Rettig (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/elai-rettig/)
Israel Institute Teaching Fellow
PhD, University of Haifa

Postdoctoral Fellow

Rosanne Liebermann
Friedman Postdoctoral Fellow in Jewish Studies
PhD, Johns Hopkins University
Postdoctoral Research Associate

David H. Warren (https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/david-h-warren/)
PhD, University of Manchester

Endowed Professor - Affiliated

John R. Bowen (https://anthropology.wustl.edu/people/john-bowen/)
Dunbar-Van Cleve Professor in Arts & Sciences
PhD, University of Chicago

Professors - Affiliated

Lois Beck (https://anthropology.wustl.edu/people/lois-beck/)
Professor of Sociocultural Anthropology
PhD, University of Chicago

Robert Canfield (https://anthropology.wustl.edu/people/robert-canfield/)
Professor Emeritus of Sociocultural Anthropology
PhD, University of Michigan

Tabea Alexa Linhard (https://rll.wustl.edu/people/tabea-alexa-linhard/)
Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature
PhD, Duke University

Joseph Schraibman (https://rll.wustl.edu/people/joseph-schraibman/)
Professor of Romance Languages
PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Associate Professors - Affiliated

Michael Frachetti (https://anthropology.wustl.edu/people/michael-frachetti/)
Associate Professor of Anthropology
PhD, University of Pennsylvania

Seth Graebner (https://rll.wustl.edu/people/seth-graebner/)
Associate Professor of French and International and Area Studies
PhD, Harvard University

Anike Walke (https://history.wustl.edu/people/anika-walke/)
Associate Professor of History
PhD, University of California

Majors

The Major in Arabic

Units required: 24 advanced, in addition to prerequisites

Prerequisites:

- 100- and 200-level Arabic, by course work or by placement. (A student who skips the first four semesters of Arabic courses by placement must successfully complete JIMES 307D Advanced Arabic I. Students who complete the third-level language course with a grade of B- or better will receive 6 units of back credit.)

- JIMES 210C Introduction to Islamic Civilization and JIMES 208F Introduction to Jewish Civilization: History and Identity. (Students with substantial prior course work may substitute an additional upper-level course with permission of their adviser and the director of undergraduate studies.)

Requirements:

- 12 credits in 300- and 400-level language courses
- 6 credits in other 300- and 400-level JIMES courses, distributed as the student wishes
- At least 3 credits in 300- and 400-level courses in a JIMES culture other than that of the selected language tradition
- 3 credits in a departmental capstone course to be taken during the senior year. (Students may take this course during their junior year with permission of their adviser and the director of undergraduate studies.)

Additional Information

Students enrolled in preapproved Washington University study abroad programs during the regular academic semester can earn a maximum of 9 credits subject to review by their adviser and the director of undergraduate studies. Summer programs and transfer courses can be granted as many as 6 credits subject to review by the student’s adviser and the director of undergraduate studies. A limit of 9 credits in total can be applied to the major, whether the credits are earned in study abroad or summer programs or via transfer credit. For more information about preapproved study abroad programs, please visit the Jewish, Islamic, and Middle Eastern Studies Study Abroad Program website (https://jimes.wustl.edu/studyabroad/).

Students must maintain an average of B in all courses for the major. A grade of B- or higher must be earned in each language course in order to advance to the next level.

No course taken pass/fail can count toward the prerequisites or the major.

A student may request credit for courses taken outside of the department (other than those that are cross-listed) by seeking the permission of the director of undergraduate studies and the department chair.

To be eligible to write a senior thesis, a student must maintain a grade-point average of 3.65 through the sixth semester. Senior thesis writers should sign up for an appropriate 3-credit course during both the fall and spring semesters. (The 6 credits from these courses can be applied to the primary area of study.)
Minors

The Minor in Arabic

Units required: 18, in addition to prerequisites

Prerequisites:

- Both semesters of 100-level Arabic, by course work or by placement. (Students who place into and complete higher levels of language courses may be eligible to receive back credit. Please see the department’s policy on back credit (https://jimes.wustl.edu/back-credit-policy/).

Requirements:

- 9 credits in 300- or 400-level JIMES courses in Arabic language
- 6 credits in other 300- or 400-level JIMES courses, distributed as the student wishes

Additional Information

Students enrolled in preapproved Washington University study abroad programs during the regular academic semester, in summer programs, and in transfer courses can earn a maximum of 3 units subject to review by their adviser and the director of undergraduate study.

Students must maintain an average of B in all courses for the minor. A grade of B- or higher must be earned in each language course in order to advance to the next level.

No course taken pass/fail can count toward the prerequisites or the minor.

A student may request credit for courses taken outside of the department (other than those that are cross-listed) by seeking the permission of the director of undergraduate studies and the department chair.

Courses


L49 Arab 107D Beginning Arabic I

Introduction to modern Arabic; concentrates on rapidly developing basic skills in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding. Five class hours, including one culture hour, and additional drill or laboratory hours. Students with previous Arabic language background must take a placement examination. Student may not take this class pass/fail or audit.

Credit 5 units. A&S IQ: LCD, LS BU: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 108D Beginning Arabic II

Continuation of Arab 107D. Emphasis on enhancing skills in reading, writing, speaking, and aural comprehension of modern Arabic. Prerequisite: grade of B- or better in Arab 107DQ or placement by examination. Five class hours a week with additional drill or laboratory hours arranged by instructor. Student may not take this class pass/fail or audit.

Credit 5 units. A&S IQ: LCD, LS BU: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 207D Intermediate Arabic I

Study of grammar of literary Arabic and reading of annotated classical and modern prose texts; elementary composition; practice in speaking and comprehending modern Arabic. Prerequisite: grade of B- or better in Arab 108DQ or placement by examination. Five class hours a week with additional drill or laboratory hours set by instructor. Student may not take this class pass/fail or audit.

Credit 5 units. A&S IQ: LCD, LS BU: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 208D Intermediate Arabic II

Continuation of Arab 207D. Study of grammar of literary Arabic and reading of annotated classical and modern prose texts; elementary composition; practice in speaking and comprehending modern Arabic. Prerequisite: grade of B- or better in Arab 207D or placement by examination. Five class hours a week with additional drill or laboratory hours arranged by instructor. Student may not take this class pass/fail or audit.

Credit 5 units. A&S IQ: LCD, LS BU: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 208F Introduction to Jewish Civilization: History and Identity

The anthropologist Clifford Geertz once famously invoked Max Weber in writing that “man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun. I take culture to be those webs.” The main goal of this course—designed as an introduction to Jewish history, culture, and society—will be to investigate the “webs of significance” produced by Jewish societies and individuals, in a select number of historical periods, both as responses to historical circumstances and as expressions of Jewish identity. Over the course of the semester we will focus on the following historical settings: 7th century BCE Judah and the Babylonian exile; pre-Islamic Palestine and Babylonia (the period of the Mishnah and the Talmud); Europe in the period of the Crusades; Islamic and Christian Spain; Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries; North America in the 20th century; and the modern State of Israel. For each period we will investigate the social and political conditions of Jewish life; identify the major texts that Jews possessed, studied, and produced; determine the non-Jewish influences on their attitudes and aspirations; and the explore the efforts that Jews made to define what it meant to be part of a Jewish collective.

Same as L75 JIMES 208F

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: Arch; HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH, IS EN: H

L49 Arab 210F Introduction to Islamic Civilization

A historical survey of Islamic civilization in global perspective. Chronological coverage of social, political, economic and cultural history are balanced with focused attention to special topics, which include: aspects of Islam as religion; science, medicine and technology in Islamic societies; art and architecture;
philosophy and theology; interaction between Islamdom and Christendom; Islamic history in the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia as well as Africa; European colonialism; globalization of Islam and contemporary Islam. 
Same as L75 JIMES 210C
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH, IS EN: H

L49 Arab 3062 Islam, Culture and Society in West Africa
This course will explore the introduction of Islam into West Africa beginning in the 10th Century and explore its expansion and development in the region, placing emphasis on the 19th century to present day. It will focus on the development of West African Muslim cultural, social, religious, and political life, to understand not only how the religion affected societies, but also how West African local societies shaped Islam. The course also aims to introduce students to a critical understanding of Islamic writing in West Africa. It will also examine the organization of Muslim Sufi orders in West Africa through time and space. The course is organized around a series of lectures, readings, as well as print and visual media. For AFAS majors, this course counts as Area Requirement 4.
Same as L90 AFAS 3062
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: LCD, SSC Arch: SSC Art: SSC BU: IS EN: S UColl: CD

L49 Arab 307D Advanced Arabic I
Continuation of Arabic 208D. Competence in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and culture is developed through intensive exposure to classical and modern standard Arabic in its written and audio-visual forms. Prerequisite: grade of B- or better in Arabic 208D or placement by examination. Three class hours a week with one additional laboratory hour as assigned by instructor. Student may not take this class pass/fail or audit.
Credit 4 units. A&S IQ: LCD, LS BU: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 308D Advanced Arabic II
A continuation of Arabic 307D. Continued integration of language development through reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities centered around advanced authentic material. This semester will prove critical for making the transition from Modern Arabic to Classical Arabic, including Qur'anic Arabic. Continued development of colloquial Arabic. Prerequisite: Arabic 307D or equivalent. Student may not take this class pass/fail or audit.
Credit 4 units. A&S IQ: LCD, LS BU: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 313C Islamic History: 600-1200
The cultural, intellectual, and political history of the Islamic Middle East, beginning with the prophetic mission of Muhammad and concluding with the Mongol conquests. Topics covered include: the life of Muhammad; the early Muslim conquests; the institution of the caliphate; the translation movement from Greek into Arabic and the emergence of Arabic as a language of learning and artistic expression; the development of new educational, legal and pietistic institutions; changes in agriculture, crafts, commerce and the growth of urban culture; multiculturalism and inter-confessional interaction; and large-scale movements of nomadic peoples.
Same as L22 History 313C
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM, IS EN: H

L49 Arab 3149 The Late Ottoman Middle East
This course surveys the Middle East in the late Ottoman period (essentially the 18th and 19th centuries, up to the First World War). It examines the central Ottoman state and the Ottoman provinces as they were incorporated into the world economy, and how they responded to their peripheralization in that process. Students focus on how everyday people's lived experiences were affected by the increased monetarization of social and economic relations; changes in patterns of land tenure and agriculture; the rise of colonialism; state efforts at modernization and reform; shifts in gender relations; and debates over the relationship of religion to community and political identity.
Same as L22 History 3149
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD, SD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM, IS EN: H

L49 Arab 325 Introduction to Arabic Literature
A survey of the major genres and themes in Arabic literature from the pre-Islamic era to the modern period. Texts include pre-Islamic, classical and Sufi poetry, as well as popular tales and critical prose from the Umayyad and Abbasid empires and Andalusia. The modern sections of the course interrogate political commitment in Arabic literature and introduce students to feminist and magical realist novels from North Africa and the Levant. All readings are in English translation.
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM, IS EN: H

L49 Arab 329C Middle Eastern Islamic Literatures in Translation
This course studies, in English translation, several great works of Islamic literature that still influence or reflect the ways in which we perceive Islamic culture today. We critically consider great and disparate literary works, originally written in a variety of languages including Arabic, Turkish and Persian and stretched from Spain to India, that share the common backdrop of an urban and educated milieu in which they were produced, widely read and circulated. The course aims at exploring the literary cultures in their historical and social context. Possible themes include court literature, politics, Sufi literature, history, theology and literature of romance. All readings are in English.
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 352 Iraqi Literature
This course introduces students to major works in Iraqi literature in the 20th and 21st centuries, with a focus on the post-World War Two period up to the present day.
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM BU: IS EN: H

L49 Arab 355C The Flowering of Islamic Literature, 500-1200
Exploration of the multilingual (Arabic, Persian, Turkish) literary cultures of a civilization that stretched from Spain to India. Themes and genres include early court patronage, bedouin odes, wine poetry, social satire, mystical poetry, national epic, and the literature of love and romance. Comparisons to contemporaneous Hebrew and ancient and medieval Western literatures. Readings in English.
Same as L16 Comp Lit 355C
Credit 3 units. Art: HUM BU: HUM
L49 Arab 361 City of Peace: Baghdad in Medieval Times (ca. 762-1250)
The subject of this course is an exploration of the city of Baghdad in medieval times from its foundation in the eighth century to its sack by the Mongols in the 13th. Starting from the background history of its location in Mesopotamia, we study the reasons of its foundation in that location and examine its topography, city planning and layout, institutions, citizens, neighborhoods, markets, libraries and workshops to discuss life in the city. Because Baghdad was the seat of the Abbasid caliphate at the time, we examine its role as the hub of the empire (in politics, administration, economy and literature), and its links to and rivalries with other provincial cities.
Same as L75 JIMES 361
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 396 Islamic Philosophy, Mysticism, and Theology
How does an individual achieve access to knowledge and access to God? To what extent is such access dependent upon scripture? To what extent is such access dependent upon reason? Are there forms of truth and experience that only reveal themselves through mysticism? Questions of this sort are central to the interrelated disciplines of Islamic philosophy, Islamic theology, and Islamic mysticism (i.e., Sufism). This course examines how these three disciplines have shaped various aspects of social life within premodern Muslim communities.
Same as L23 Re St 396
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

L49 Arab 4001 Capstone Seminar
The capstone course for Jewish, Islamic, and Middle Eastern Studies majors, Arabic majors, and Hebrew majors. The course content is subject to change.
Same as L75 JIMES 4001
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 4041 Islam and Politics
Blending history and ethnography, this course covers politics in the Islamic world in historical and contemporary times. Topics include history of Islam, uniformity and diversity in belief and practice (global patterns, local realties), revolution and social change, women and veiling, and the international dimensions of resurgent Islam. Geographical focus extends from Morocco to Indonesia; discussion of other Muslim communities is included (Bosnia, Chechnya, sub-Saharan Africa, U.S.).
Same as L48 Anthro 4041
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: LCD, SSC Art: SSC BU: IS

L49 Arab 405 Colloquial Arabic
The aim of this course is to introduce the students to colloquial Arabic through their knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). We focus on the main differences between colloquial and MSA so that the students can use the colloquial form for practical purposes in everyday life. Prerequisite: Arab 208D or instructor's permission.
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: LCD BU: IS EN: H

L49 Arab 4050 Diaspora in Jewish and Islamic Experience
Tensions between center and periphery; migration and rest; power and powerlessness; exile, home, and return are easily found in the historical record of both Jews and Muslims. For Muslims, it can be said that it was the very success of Islam as a world culture, and the establishment of Muslim societies in all corners of the globe, that lay at the root of this unease. But the disruptions of the post-colonial era, the emergence of minority Muslim communities in Europe and North America, and the recent, tragic flow of refugees following the Arab Spring have created a heightened sense of displacement and yearning for many. Of course, the very term “diaspora”-from ancient Greek, meaning dispersion or scattering-has most often been used to describe the Jewish condition in the world. The themes of exile and return, catastrophe and redemption, are already woven into the Hebrew Bible and continued to be central motifs in Rabbinic Judaism in late antiquity and the middle ages. This, despite the fact that more Jews lived outside the borders of Judea than within the country many years before the destruction of Jewish sovereignty at the hands of the Romans. In the twentieth century, European imperialism, nationalisms of various types, revolution, and war-including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict-have done much to underscore the continuing dilemmas of Diaspora and home in both Jewish and Islamic identity. The goal of this course is to offer a comparative, historical perspective on the themes of migration and displacement, center and periphery, home and residence, exile and return, and to give students the opportunity to examine in depth some aspect of the experience of “Diaspora”. Note: This course fulfills the capstone requirement for Jewish, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies. The course also counts as an Advanced Seminar for History. (Students wishing to receive History Advanced Seminar credit should also enroll in L22 491R section 19 for 1 unit.) The course is open to advanced undergraduate and graduate students.
Same as L75 JIMES 405
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 407 Fourth-Level Arabic: Modern Literature
Focused reading and discussion of texts written by modern Arab intellectuals. These texts will center on the interrelated topics of modernity, politics, and religion. The course will emphasize: (1) increasing reading speed; (2) increasing depth of reading comprehension; (3) strengthening grammar; (4) building Arabic to English translation skills. Note: Students may not take this class pass/fail or audit.
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: LCD, LS Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 408 Fourth-Level Arabic: Classical Literature
This class provides an overview of pre-modern Arabic-Islamic thought (i.e., Islamicate intellectual traditions expressed in the Arabic language). Topics to be covered include Pre-Islamic Poetry, Quran, Hadith, Islamic Law, Sufism, Philosophy, Natural Science, and Social Thought. Students will be introduced to these topics through focused reading and discussion of Classical Arabic texts by key thinkers like al-’abari, Ibn ajar, Ibn Qudama, al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, and Ibn Khaldun. In addition to reading Classical Arabic texts, students will be given select exercises designed to strengthen their grammar, expand their vocabulary, and build their translation.
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: LCD, LS Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 450 Topics in Classical Arabic Literature and Culture
Exploration of medieval Arabic Belles-Lettres (Adab). All texts read in Arabic. Prerequisite: senior standing.
Credit 3 units. Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: IS
L49 Arab 464 Arabic Textual Analysis
This course introduces the advanced student of Arabic to a variety of prose narratives in the modern language. Readings, which include literary texts and topical essays on aspects of Arabic society and culture, reflect the needs and interests of the enrolled students.
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD, LS Art: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 465 Topics in Arabic
This course is an in-depth study of a particular segment of Arabic literature and/or culture.
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 4675 Beyond the Harem: Women, Gender, and Revolution
This course examines the history and current situations of women in Middle Eastern societies. The first half of the course is devoted to studying historical changes in factors structuring women's status and their sociopolitical roles. The second half of the course will focus on several case studies of women's participation in broad anticolonial social revolutions and how these revolutions affected the position of women in those societies.
Same as L22 History 4675
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD BU: BA, HUM EN: H

L49 Arab 470 Topics in Classical Arabic Literature in Translation
Various themes in Arabic religious literature and Belles-Lettres (Adab), e.g., the intertwining of religion and politics, court culture and fashions, social critiques, gender roles, etc., are read in English.
Credit 3 units. Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH

L49 Arab 471 Topics in Modern Arabic Literature in Translation
Modern Arabic narratives read in English translation foregrounding themes such as the conflict between tradition and modernity, civil war, poverty, alienation, religion and politics, and changing gender roles.
Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM, LCD Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: ETH EN: H

L49 Arab 488 Independent Work for Senior Honors
This course to be taken in the fall semester. Prerequisites: senior standing, eligibility for honors, and permission of the department.
Credit 3 units.

L49 Arab 489 Independent Work for Senior Honors
This course to be taken in the spring semester. Prerequisite: senior standing, eligibility for honors, and permission of the department.
Credit 3 units.

L49 Arab 497 Guided Readings in Arabic
Prerequisites: senior standing and permission of instructor and department chair.
Credit 3 units.

L49 Arab 498 Guided Readings in Arabic
Prerequisites: senior standing and permission of the instructor and the department chair.
Credit 3 units.