

## Guide to Self-Assessment in Arabic Language Skills

Students entering UNC-Chapel Hill with some background in the Arabic language who wish to continue studying the language here need to find the class best suited to their skill level. The official way to do this is via the Arabic Placement Exam. Information on when the exam is given and how to sign up for it can be found on the Department of Asian Studies website: <http://asianstudies.unc.edu/placement>

Often, however, you may not have a chance to take the placement test before registering for classes (for instance, if it is not offered during your CTOPS session). In the meantime, you can sign up for an Arabic language class by using this guide to assess your Arabic skills on your own. Often students do a good job of self-assessment. This guide does not take the place of the placement test, which is required, but it will help you to probably register for the right class.

We have provided below samples of work completed by the end of each semester in years 1-3 of Arabic language classes at UNC-Chapel Hill. Read through these to figure out which level fits you best and sign up for the appropriate class. The official placement test will help us make sure that you are in precisely the right class, so don't worry that your self-assessment may not be accurate.

### First-Year Arabic

ARAB 101 [First semester of first-year Arabic. Offered only in Fall semester.]

ARAB 102 [Second semester of first-year Arabic. Offered only in Spring semester.]

This is a list of tasks which are covered in ARAB 101. If you can perform all tasks below, you are probably ready for ARAB 102. If not, you probably should start in ARAB 101.

1. Mastering the Arabic alphabet and sound system, being able to distinguish and pronounce all Arabic sounds, and writing accurately from dictation
2. Speaking: Being able to talk about yourself, your education, and your family with native speakers of Arabic
3. Reading: Comprehending simple written texts on familiar topics
4. Listening: Comprehending simple audio/video texts on familiar topics
5. Writing: Being able to compose simple paragraphs about yourself
6. Grammar: Being familiar with the following grammatical points:
  - Gender and number agreement
  - Asking questions
  - Subject pronouns
  - Possessive pronouns
  - Nominal/Verbal sentences
  - Genitive or "iDaafa"
  - Noun-adjective phrases
  - Present tense

## Negation

### Second-Year Arabic

ARAB 203 [First semester of second-year Arabic. Offered only in Fall semester.]

ARAB 204 [Second semester of second-year Arabic. Offered only in Spring semester.]

This is a list of tasks which are covered in ARAB 102. If you can perform all tasks below, you are probably ready for ARAB 203.

1. Speaking: Speaking about yourself and your environment, initiating and sustaining conversations on a number of topics (e.g., family, friends, study, etc.) and narrating in present, past and future time frames
2. Reading: Reading texts on familiar topics and understanding the main ideas without using the dictionary
3. Listening: Comprehending simple Arabic discourse dealing with familiar topics
4. Writing: Carrying out written transactions connected to daily life and writing short letters and essays
5. Grammar: Being familiar with the following grammatical points (in addition to the previous points):
  - Recognize and use verbs in all major tenses,
  - Recognize and form complex sentence structures such as dependent clauses, and
  - Recognize and use negation patterns
  - Numbers
  - Root and pattern
  - Telling time
  - Object pronouns

This is a list of tasks which are covered in ARAB 203. If you can perform all tasks below, you are probably ready for ARAB 204.

1. Speaking and Writing: Speaking and writing in paragraphs (more than just sentences) about the following functions: narration in the present and the past, descriptions of daily life and personal relations, asking and reporting information: who, what, when, where and why
2. Reading: Reading longer texts using efficient reading strategies.
3. Listening: Sustaining understanding while listening to longer authentic discourse
4. Grammar: Being familiar with the following grammatical points (in addition to all previous points):
  - Case endings
  - Verb patterns in Arabic

Relative pronouns  
Conditional  
Comparative  
Colors

### Third-Year Arabic

ARAB 305 [First semester of third-year Arabic. Offered only in Fall semester.]

ARAB 306 [Second semester of third-year Arabic. Offered only in Spring semester.]

This is a list of tasks which are covered in ARAB 204. If you can perform all tasks below, you are probably ready for ARAB 305.

1. Tasks of Speaking, Writing, Reading, and Listening are similar to the ones in the section ARAB 204, but more developed and advanced.
2. Grammar: Being familiar with the following grammatical points (in addition to all previous points):
  - Feminine Plural
  - Deeper understanding of case endings
  - Deeper understanding of verb patterns
  - Doubled or Geminate verbs
  - Rules of numbers
  - Active and passive participles
  - 'kaana' and its sisters
  - Passive verbs

This is a list of tasks which are covered in ARAB 305. If you can perform all tasks below, you are probably ready for ARAB 306.

1. More advanced language accuracy and fluency.
2. An understanding of the social, historical, political, and cultural dimensions of the Arabic language.
3. Reading and writing:
  - Ability to read faster and better understand authentic texts by further developing appropriate reading strategies and techniques
  - Developed ability to guess word meaning from the context and through application of grammatical and morphological knowledge (root and pattern)
  - Skill of analyzing complex sentences
  - Ability to better express yourself through writing in correct constructions, longer sentences using Arabic connectors in culturally correct contexts
4. Listening and Speaking:

- Ability to understand the main ideas of authentic materials and recognize frequently used vocabulary
  - Ability to make presentations and converse about non-technical topics appropriate to Modern Standard Arabic, especially concerning Arabic Media and Arabic culture topics
5. Grammar: Being familiar with the following grammatical points (in addition to all previous points):
- “inna” and its sisters
  - Name of place
  - Broken plurals
  - Nouns that take special case endings
  - “tamyeez” or Specification
  - “Haal” or State
  - “Al-Ism Al-manqoos”
  - The imperative
  - The meaning of verbal patterns

### **Fourth-Year Arabic**

You would place into Fourth Year Arabic if you can perform the following tasks covered in 306:

- More advanced language production accuracy and fluency.
- Further understanding of the social, historical, political, and cultural dimensions of the Arabic language.
- Same Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking tasks as 305 but more developed.
- Knowledge of most of the grammatical structures of the language.