

ASIAN STUDIES MAJOR, B.A. – ARAB CULTURES CONCENTRATION

Contact Information

Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Visit Program Website (<http://asianstudies.unc.edu>)
New West 113, CB# 3267
(919) 962-4294

Ana Vinea, Arabic Program Advisor

anavinea@email.unc.edu

Morgan Pitelka, Chair

mpitelka@unc.edu

Robin Visser, Director of Undergraduate Studies

rvisser@email.unc.edu

Ash Barnes, Student Services Specialist

wow@unc.edu

As the fifth most widely spoken language in the world, as one of the official languages of the United Nations, and as the religious language of Muslims who make up a quarter of the world's population, Arabic is a language with a rich literary and cultural heritage and considerable contemporary significance. Speakers of Arabic learn two forms of the language: a formal form, often called Modern Standard Arabic, which is used for official communication such as speeches and most writing; and an informal form that is used primarily in conversation. Because Arabic is spoken across a culturally and geographically varied region stretching from Western Asia across North Africa, there are many dialects of spoken Arabic. Students in Arabic courses at UNC learn both Modern Standard Arabic and a dialect of spoken Arabic (either Egyptian or Levantine) simultaneously.

The Arab world has a long and rich history that has always intersected with the histories of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Its geopolitical significance in the modern era, as well as the radical transformations that are occurring in the region since the 2011 Arab revolutions, make the study of the Arab world and its cultures key to understanding the world today. Arab Cultures majors study the literature and visual culture of the Arab world, as well as social practices and intellectual debates through rich course offerings in English.

Department Programs

Majors

- Asian Studies Major, B.A. – Interdisciplinary Concentration (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/asian-studies-major-ba-general-concentration/>)
- Asian Studies Major, B.A. – Arab Cultures Concentration (p. 1)
- Asian Studies Major, B.A. – Chinese Concentration (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/asian-studies-major-ba-chinese-concentration/>)
- Asian Studies Major, B.A. – Japanese Concentration (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/asian-studies-major-ba-japanese-concentration/>)

- Asian Studies Major, B.A. – Korean Studies Concentration (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/asian-studies-major-ba-korean-concentration/>)
- Asian Studies Major, B.A. – South Asian Studies Concentration (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/asian-studies-major-ba-south-asian-studies-concentration/>)

Minors

- Arabic Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/arabic-minor/>)
- Asian Studies Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/asian-studies-minor/>)
- Chinese Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/chinese-minor/>)
- Modern Hebrew Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/modern-hebrew-minor/>)
- Hindi-Urdu Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/hindi-urdu-minor/>)
- Japanese Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/japanese-minor/>)
- Korean Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/korean-minor/>)
- Middle Eastern Languages Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/middle-eastern-languages-minor/>)
- Persian Minor (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/persian-minor/>)

Graduate Programs

- M.A. in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (<http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/asian-studies/>)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Asian studies program, students should be able to:

- Identify or analyze significant aspects of the target cultures by interpreting texts and media
- Demonstrate proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in the target language
- Demonstrate experience in the use of the target language outside the language classroom

Requirements

In addition to the program requirements, students must

- earn a minimum final cumulative GPA of 2.000
- complete a minimum of 45 academic credit hours earned from UNC–Chapel Hill courses
- take at least half of their major core requirements (courses and credit hours) at UNC–Chapel Hill
- earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.000 in the major core requirements. Some programs may require higher standards for major or specific courses.

For more information, please consult the degree requirements section of the catalog (<http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/general-education-curriculum-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext>).

Code	Title	Hours
Core Requirements		
ARAB 300	Arabic Grammar and Composition	3
Two additional Arabic language courses beyond ARAB 204 ¹		6
One of the following introductory-level classes: ²		3
ASIA 73	First-Year Seminar: Popular Culture in the Arab World ³	
ASIA 74	First-Year Seminar: Imagining Palestine	
ARAB 150	Introduction to Arab Cultures	
ARAB 151	Arabic Literature through the Ages	
Four Arabic literature and culture courses (list below)		12
Additional Requirements		
Arabic through level 4 ⁴		4
Total Hours		28

¹ Students whose initial language placement is above ARAB 305 should consult the department.

² It is recommended that students take this course either prior to or concurrent with upper-level Arabic literature and culture classes.

³ No more than one first-year seminar may be counted among the eight major courses.

⁴ The first three levels of Arabic (ARAB) can count toward the General Education Foundations requirement and have not been included as additional hours for the major.

Arabic Literature and Culture Courses

Code	Title	Hours
At least three must be chosen from:		
ARAB/ANTH 214	Medicine and Modernity in the Arab World	
ARAB 255	Arab World Photography	
ASIA/WGST 329	Middle East Women Writers	
ARAB 434	Modern Arabic Literature in Translation	
ARAB 337	Borders and Walls in the Arab World	
ARAB 350	Women and Leadership in the Arab World	
ARAB/ANTH 354	Everyday Lives in the Middle East: Anthropological Perspectives	
ASIA/JWST 357/PWAD 362	The Arab-Jews: Culture, Community, and Coexistence	
ASIA/CMPL 359	Literary Diasporas of the Middle East	
ARAB 407	Readings in Arabic I (taught in Arabic)	
ARAB 408	Readings in Arabic II (taught in Arabic)	
ASIA/JWST/PWAD 425	Beyond Hostilities: Israeli-Palestinian Exchanges and Partnerships in Film, Literature, and Music	
ARAB/ANTH 432	Science and Society in the Middle East	
ASIA/CMPL 442	Postcolonial Literature of the Middle East	
ARAB 453	Film, Nation, and Identity in the Arab World	
ASIA/WGST 471	Gender and Sexuality in Middle Eastern Literature	
ASIA 692H	Senior Honors Thesis II	

At most one course may be chosen from:

GEOG 59	First-Year Seminar: Space, Identity, and Power in the Middle East ¹
SOCI 60	First-Year Seminar: Sociology of the Islamic World ¹
ASIA/HIST 138 History of Muslim Societies to 1500	
ASIA/HIST 139 History of Muslim Societies since 1500	
ASIA/RELI 180 Introduction to Islamic Civilization	
ASIA/RELI 181 Modern Muslim Societies	
RELI 185	Women/Gender/Islam ^H
ASIA/HIST 276 The Modern Middle East	
ASIA/HIST 277 The Conflict over Israel/Palestine	
RELI/ASIA 279 Islamic Law, Ethics, and Practice	
SOCI 419	Sociology of the Islamic World
ASIA/PWAD 435	The Cinemas of the Middle East and North Africa
ASIA/GEOG 447	Gender, Space, and Place in the Middle East
GEOG 448	Transnational Geographies of Muslim Societies
RELI 480	Modern Muslim Literatures
RELI/ASIA 485	Gender and Sexuality in Islam
RELI/ASIA 486	Islam and Feminism/Islamic Feminism
ASIA/HIST 536 Revolution in the Modern Middle East	
ASIA/HIST 537 Women in the Middle East	
ASIA/HIST 538 The Middle East and the West	
ASIA/RELI 581 Sufism	
ASIA/RELI 582 Islam and Islamic Art in South Asia	
ASIA/RELI 584 The Qur'an as Literature	
RELI/ASIA 587 Islam and Sexual Diversity	
FREN 617	Framing Identities: Franco-Arab Transvisual Transcultural Contexts
ARAB/ASIA/RELI 681	Readings in Islamicate Literatures
or approved courses taken in UNC–Chapel Hill-sponsored study abroad programs	

^H Honors version available. An honors course fulfills the same requirements as the nonhonors version of that course. Enrollment and GPA restrictions may apply.

¹ No more than one first-year seminar may be counted among the eight major courses.

Students majoring in Arab cultures are strongly encouraged to take additional Arabic literature or culture courses as electives or to fulfill General Education requirements.

Note that ARAB 308 does not count toward this major.

Placement credit (PL) may not be used to meet core requirements for the concentration.

With the approval of the associate chair of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, a student may count a course in directed readings (ASIA 496 or ARAB 496) in the concentration in Arab cultures. To register for ASIA 496 or ARAB 496, a student must obtain the approval of the associate chair and the faculty member who will supervise the project.

Of the eight courses in the concentration in Arab cultures, at least six must be passed with a grade of C (not C-) or better.

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans can be used as a guide to identify the courses required to complete the major and other requirements needed for degree completion within the expected eight semesters. The actual degree plan may differ depending on the course of study selected (second major, minor, etc.). Students should meet with their academic advisor to create a degree plan that is specific and unique to their interests. The sample plans represented in this catalog are intended for first-year students entering UNC–Chapel Hill in the fall term. Some courses may not be offered every term.

The Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies requires that *all* students with prior knowledge of Arabic take a placement test. Their beginning language course at UNC is decided by the placement result (not by test credit or transfer credit).

A student's initial placement is the most important determinant of how long it will take to complete the major. It's also important to be aware that almost all Arabic language courses are only offered in fall or spring, but not both.

Sample Plan One

This plan is for a student who either is a beginner in Arabic, or has some background but has placed into ARAB 101.

First Year	Hours
ARAB 101 Elementary Arabic I (fall only)	4
ARAB 102 Elementary Arabic II (spring only)	4
Major culture course, from the introductory courses list	3
Hours	11
Sophomore Year	
ARAB 203 Intermediate Arabic I (fall only)	4
ARAB 204 Intermediate Arabic II (spring only)	4
Major culture course	3
Hours	11
Junior Year	
ARAB 305 Advanced Arabic I (fall only)	3
ARAB 306 Advanced Arabic II (spring only)	3
ARAB 300 Arabic Grammar and Composition (spring only)	3
Major culture course	3
Hours	12
Senior Year	
Major culture course	3
Either of:	3
ARAB 4-- ARAB 400-Level Elective (4th-year language course, if available)	
Major culture course	
Hours	6
Total Hours	40

Sample Plan Two

This plan is for a student who has placed into ARAB 203.

First Year	Hours
ARAB 203 Intermediate Arabic I (fall only)	4
ARAB 204 Intermediate Arabic II (spring only)	4
Major culture course, from the introductory courses list	3
Hours	11
Sophomore Year	
ARAB 305 Advanced Arabic I (fall only)	3
ARAB 306 Advanced Arabic II (spring only)	3
ARAB 300 Arabic Grammar and Composition (spring only)	3
Major culture course	3
Hours	12
Junior Year	
Major culture course	3
Either of:	3
ARAB 4-- ARAB 400-Level Elective (4th-year language course, if available)	
Major culture course	
Hours	6
Senior Year	
Either of:	3
ARAB 4-- ARAB 400-Level Elective (4th-year language course, if available)	
Major culture course	
Hours	3
Total Hours	24

Special Opportunities in Asian Studies

Honors in Asian Studies

A candidate for honors in Asian studies will write a substantial paper under the guidance of a faculty member. While researching and writing the honors paper, the student will enroll in ASIA 691H and ASIA 692H. ASIA 692H may count as one of the interdisciplinary courses for the major; ASIA 691H will count for elective credit only. In the case of the concentrations in Arab cultures, Chinese, Japanese, Korean studies, and South Asian studies, ASIA 692H may count toward the major in the concentration.

A committee composed of at least two faculty members will examine the candidate. To be accepted as an honors candidate, a student must meet the University's requirement of a minimum overall grade point average of 3.3, secure the consent of a faculty member in the Asian studies field to act as advisor for the project, and submit a proposal to the associate chair of Asian studies for approval.

Departmental Involvement

The department sponsors a variety of cultural events — lectures, film series, performances, and more — as well as social and informational events where students can get to know each other and faculty members in an informal setting. Faculty members in the department serve as advisors to some of the many Asia-related student organizations on campus, such as the Japan Club, Chinese Conversation Club, Hebrew Table, and more.

Languages across the Curriculum

The department participates in the Languages across the Curriculum (LAC) program, offering a one-credit-hour discussion section that is conducted in Arabic, Chinese, or Hindi-Urdu but associated with a variety of courses offered in English, both in Asian studies and in such other departments as history or religious studies. This LAC recitation section offers students the opportunity to use their Arabic, Chinese, or Hindi-Urdu language skills in a broader intellectual context.

Libraries

The University has rich collections of books and periodicals on Asia in the relevant Asian languages, as well as in English and other Western languages. Experts in the collection development department for Davis Library are available to help students locate the materials they need. The University also has an outstanding collection of Asian films and other audiovisual materials, housed in the Media Resource Center at House Library.

Speaker Series

The department sponsors an annual speaker series. These events include lectures by prominent artists, scholars, and writers and are often cosponsored by other units on campus.

Study Abroad

UNC–Chapel Hill sponsors several study programs (summer, semester, and yearlong) in China, Egypt, India, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Korea, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Oman, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, and Vietnam. Asian studies majors are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities to live and study in an Asian setting; UNC-approved study abroad programs also satisfy the experiential education requirement. For further information on these programs and other study abroad opportunities in Asia, contact the UNC Study Abroad Office.

Undergraduate Research

The department actively encourages undergraduate student research. Through classes, advising, and office hours, faculty members guide students toward defining areas of interest, conceptualizing research questions, identifying sources, and writing academic papers. Students may pursue research through independent studies, the senior honors thesis, and study abroad research opportunities such as the Burch Fellowship. Asian studies students have received a variety of competitive research support and travel awards, won regional contests for undergraduate papers, published papers in academic journals, and presented their work at such events as the Senior Colloquium in Asian Studies and the campuswide Annual Celebration of Undergraduate Research in the spring.