About Us

The Center for Advanced Arabic Study in Cairo (CAASIC) hosts the Center for Advanced Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) at AUC. CAASIC also offers a customized advanced Arabic program for advanced students who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents. CAASIC is run by the Department of Arabic Language Instruction (ALI) and offers a unique opportunity for advanced students of Arabic language to study Arabic for a full year at a reduced tuition fee.

The CAASIC language program is dedicated to both Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and the spoken dialect of Cairo.

Our language classes use a theme-based, content-based instruction curriculum that makes use of a number of authentic materials, integrated skills, activities and real-world tasks. All materials are developed by experienced instructors to specifically meet the needs of advanced learners of Arabic.

CAASIC is committed to providing quality education in advanced Arabic language to learners from all nationalities by staying at the forefront of teaching methodology and technology. All CAASIC instructors are native speakers of Arabic with teaching experience at the advanced and superior level.

Mission

CAASIC offers full-year, advanced-level training in Arabic language and culture to graduate and undergraduate students at The American University in Cairo. CAASIC welcomes applicants from all nationalities with a minimum of three years of formal instruction in Arabic. To learn more about reduced fees and opportunities for financial support, contact CAASIC at casic@aucegypt.edu.

Program Description:

The program consists of three semesters — summer, fall and spring — as explained below:

A. Summer Program

The program offers up to 20 contact hours per week and fellows are expected to spend between four to five hours daily doing homework and preparing for class activities for the following day.

The summer academic program includes two courses:

1. AIAS 4301: Umm Addunia: A Course in Egyptian Colloquial Arabic and Culture (4 credits)

This course offers eight to ten contact hours per week and aims to develop the fellows' proficiency in the Egyptian dialect quickly so that they can function in their new environment. In addition to focusing on the colloquial of daily life, the course places emphasis on aammiyyat al-muthaqaffin (educated colloquial), in which the colloquial is mixed with formal Arabic. Multiple sections of this course are offered to accommodate varying levels of proficiency.

2. AIAS 4010: Egypt: Culture and Society (4 credits)

This is a content-based course that offers eight to ten contact hours per week and aims to engage students through a number of historical, political, social and cultural issues of significance to the society in which they are living. The course places emphasis on the development of all language skills with attention to expanding vocabulary and enhancing grammatical accuracy.

B. Fall Academic Program

Description and Courses

The fall semester requires learners to study three core courses at 20 contact hours per week. The following courses are offered in the fall:

1. AIAS 5301: Egyptian Stories: Hikayaat maSriyya (3 credits)

This course further develops students’ communicative skills in Egyptian colloquial Arabic. It concentrates on complex vocabulary and syntax and enables students to communicate with native speakers in a wide range of situations, taking into consideration the development of high levels of accuracy and fluency. Special emphasis is placed upon educated Egyptian Arabic as well as appropriateness of speech and cultural competency.
The community-based learning component of the program, Learners Without Borders, is highly recommended. This is a community-based learning course in which learners design and complete a community project, documentary or presentation based on volunteer work with local organizations or institutions related to their academic and/or general interests. Fellows will engage with the target language community so they can develop superior language proficiency, improve intercultural competence and establish significant lifelong social networks. Each learner will work with a cultural adviser and develop a course agreement specifying the nature of their work. Course projects involving volunteer work will require a signed student organization agreement, outlining roles and responsibilities which should be submitted to the advising professor.

Cultural Program

Summer Cultural Program
This program aims to provide the fellows with opportunities to explore Egypt and immerse themselves in their new environment both linguistically and culturally. The main component of the summer cultural program is Mishwaar wa dardasha (a trip and a chat), a weekly activity with an Egyptian conversation partner. The conversation partners are graduate students and professionals representing the diversity of Egyptian society. Each group chooses a place or event of interest in Cairo, which may include cafés, concerts or historical sites. Mishwaar wa dardasha offers learners an opportunity to use their Egyptian colloquial Arabic with native speakers, while immersing themselves in the culture.

The fall and spring cultural program offers a structured lecture series that is aligned with the objectives and themes of the curriculum. Fellows attend a biweekly lecture.

Cultural Activities
CAASIC fellows are eligible to join all free ALI tours. ALI offers day tours to various sites in and around Cairo. These are considered part of the program and are funded by the institute, with no additional costs incurred by the students. When and if offered, CAASIC fellows are also allowed to join weekend trips to sites of interest in Egypt for a fee. These may include Upper Egypt Nile cruises (Luxor, Aswan and Abu Simbel), voyages to Sinai (St. Catherine and Sharm Al-Sheikh) and trips to the North Coast and Western Desert (Alexandria, Marsa Matrouh and Siwa Oasis). Trips are typically for three to four nights. Students who wish to participate in these trips will pay for food and accommodation only.

The ISSA offers advising for study-abroad students, and advocacy and assistance to all international students throughout their sojourn in Egypt. The ISSA also offers help with housing to new students.

2. AIAS 5151: Scenes from Arab Media: Mashaahid min al-i’laam al ‘arabii (3 credits)
This course further develops students’ skill in listening comprehension of large chunks of authentic spoken MSA in different genres (reports, interviews, debates, etc.). It integrates listening and speaking skills by training students to carry out discussions on various topics of general and personal interest. The course includes a number of live lectures given by specialists in different fields of interests.

3. AIAS 5121: Contemporary Arab Issues: QaDaaya ‘arabiyya mu’aaSira (5 credits)
This course fosters and further develops the student’s ability to read long, authentic texts on a wide range of topics with minimal dependency on the dictionary. Students are trained to extend their reading strategies and knowledge of different genres and styles. Special emphasis is placed upon vocabulary building and the idiomatic use of Arabic. The writing component is integrated whereby students employ and manipulate syntactic and morphological structures studied in the reading component, in addition to various cohesive devices, to produce complex sentences at the paragraph and text level, according to the mores of connected Arabic written discourse.

C. Spring Academic Program
The spring semester represents the culmination of the CAASIC program. In the spring, fellows have the chance to fully utilize the advanced language skills they have developed during the summer and fall by working with Arabic materials in their own fields of specialization. Each fellow is required to study four courses for approximately 12 contact hours per week: two elective core courses with language focus (such as Palestinian literature, the city of Cairo, Arabic media, Arabic literature, Egyptian history through movies, Egyptian colloquial literature and text, etc.), in addition to two elective courses related to the learners’ research interest (such as literature, religion, politics, economics, political Islam, etc.). The selection process happens in consultation with the CAASIC director. Fellows choose from a list of courses that have been previously offered.

Any spring course offered must have a minimum enrollment of six students.

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Class Sizes
To guarantee maximum student participation in class activities during summer and fall, class sizes are kept small (six to seven students per class). In spring elective courses, however, a class must have at least 12 students before splitting the class is considered.

CAASIC Academic Calendar
Summer 2015
Wednesday, June 3, 2015: Orientation
Thursday, June 4, 2015: First day of classes
Monday, July 27, 2015: Last day of classes and final exams

For the 2015 – 2016 academic calendar, visit:
http://www.aucegypt.edu/students/Registrar/Pages/AcademicCalendars.aspx

International Health and Accident Insurance
AUC requires all international students and Egyptians with dual nationality who are not permanent residents in Egypt to have a comprehensive accident and health insurance plan, including emergency medical evacuation and repatriation of remains. AUC holds a group insurance policy with CMI Insurance that is issued with the policy number GLMN 01173662 by American Insurance Company. For details, visit:
www.aucegypt.edu/studentlife/isa/Pages/InternStudents.aspx#

AUC Local Health Insurance
All CAASIC students and fellows need local medical insurance. For details of what this local insurance covers and costs, visit:
www.aucegypt.edu/studentlife/isa/Pages/InternStudents.aspx#

CAASIC Faculty
CAASIC faculty members are all highly qualified ALI teachers who hold master's degrees in teaching Arabic as a foreign language. They all have worldwide reputations in teaching Arabic at the advanced and advanced-plus levels. Spring elective courses are conducted by adjunct faculty who teach subject content areas.

Language Pledge
All CAASIC students will be required to abide by an Arabic-only speaking policy on campus and off campus as much as possible.

Entry Exam
All CAASIC applicants are required to take a written entry exam. Acceptance to the program is contingent upon passing the exam. Priority will be given to those who score highly on this exam. The exam date will be announced to applicants by the CAASIC administration.

Exit Exam
All CAASIC students will be required to participate in an end of full-year proficiency exit exam. This exam is no substitute for the regular quizzes or monthly and end of semester achievement exams.

Attendance Policy
Attendance and participation in class sessions are essential to the process of education at the CAASIC program. This is because students benefit from the lectures and discussions with their teachers and fellow students. If they fail to attend class, they fail to take advantage of an educational opportunity. For more information, visit:
www.aucegypt.edu/academics/ALI/ALNG/Pages/Attendance-Policy.aspx
Application:

Candidates will be required to submit the following:
1. An online application form: www.aucegypt.edu/academics/ALI/ALIN/Pages/Application.aspx
2. Official transcripts for each institution listed on the application
3. Three letters of recommendation along with the Reference Form
4. Medical Form

Applications for the 2015 - 2016 program are due on January 15, 2015. Before submitting an application, carefully read the information at www.aucegypt.edu/academics/ALI/CAASIC. Accepted applicants will be notified by email from the CASA administration after passing the entry exam.