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College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences

Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures

Bachelor of Arts in Foreign Languages (BAFL)

ARABIC MAJOR

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1. Justification

The Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures is ideally situated for the addition of an Arabic major. Currently, the department offers a minor in Arabic, one of the languages classified as "critical" by the US government. Arabic is an official language of the United Nations. It is the official language in 22 Arab countries. It is also the religious language of Islam, the faith of over 1.5 billion people worldwide. A Major in Arabic will provide Virginia Tech graduates the linguistic and cultural knowledge necessary for working in various capacities within the U.S. government, such as Foreign Service officers, FBI agents, CIA linguists and analysts, etc. In addition to government jobs, a Major in Arabic would make students more marketable in other fields including Journalism, Translation, Petroleum Engineering, Teaching and Research, Consultancy, and International Development.

Virginia Tech's proximity to Washington D.C. provides our students a relative ease of access to internships in the Federal Government and Non-governmental Organizations, including Arab-American organizations. The knowledge of Arabic language, culture, history, and politics will give Virginia Tech's undergraduate students a strong advantage in obtaining government internships compared to graduates of other neighboring institutions that do not offer such a degree.

Virginia Tech's ROTC program is already well recognized by other US schools. Among other things, it belongs to the elite group of US Senior Military Colleges, of which there are only 6 in the country. Students enrolled in the Core of Cadets can enhance their education and career opportunities by studying Arabic language and culture while earning a credential that will give them a significant advantage in future military careers. Having an Arabic Major available at Virginia Tech will attract more in-state and out-of-state high school graduates interested in the ROTC program because the students will have an opportunity to combine military training with a chance to develop an understanding of the diverse cultures of the Arab world.

Importantly, having a Major in Arabic will increase the department's potential in obtaining external funding, including Project GO (which provided funding for Arabic in the past) and the Arabic Flagship Grant (for which the Arabic program is planning to apply). Our students in Arabic have earned prestigious scholarships including the Boren Scholarship and Critical Language Scholarship, and we anticipate that the number of students applying for and earning national scholarships will increase with the establishment of a Major in Arabic.

We have seen very healthy and sustained enrollments in Arabic classes. During the 2012-2013 academic year, a total of 129 students took Arabic. During the 2013-14 year, that number increased to 192. In 2014-15, student enrollment increased to 227, in 2015-16 to 255, in 2016-17

to 290, and in 2017-18, we maintained that growth at **288**. Currently, we have **82** students enrolled in the Arabic minor, which is remarkable, given that the Minor has been in place for only four years. In sum, there is a demonstrated interest in Arabic classes, and a major in Arabic can only sustain and expand such interest.

Our course offerings have also tripled since 2012. In addition to offering Arabic language at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels, we have developed additional courses in literature, culture, cinema, media Arabic, oral proficiency, accelerated Arabic, advanced composition and stylistics, and research in Arab culture. In addition, the Arabic program has been offering a faculty-led Arabic study-abroad program in Oman for the past two years and is on track to offer a study-abroad program in summer 2019. Our English-language classes in Arabic culture, literature, and cinema have all been approved for Pathways and are open to all students from all majors and minors. Our Arabic classes have been added to the Minor in Middle East Studies check sheet. Most recently, our Arab Culture and Civilization class has been added to the Minor in International Business checksheet.

Given our current enrollments, expansion of course offerings, student request for more advanced courses, geographic location, and the addition of a new tenure-track faculty member (to begin in Fall 2019), we firmly believe that we are well-equipped to provide our students with a major in Arabic.

2. Whom the Major Will Serve

Our Arabic program continues to attract students of different backgrounds and career paths. The major will serve heritage and non-heritage students interested in Arab culture/Arabic language, students seeking government and military careers, and students interested in non-governmental jobs and conflict resolution/peace studies. Considerable student interest has been expressed in an Arabic major, particularly by students in International Studies, Religion and Culture, History, International Business, and Political Science. We anticipate graduating approximately 20 Arabic majors per year once the program has been established.

3. Resource Needs

The Arabic faculty has grown from two part-time instructors to one tenure-track faculty, one full-time instructor, and two part-time instructors. In Fall 2019, a second tenure-track faculty member will join the program.

Based on current staffing and on enrollments in existing Arabic courses, no additional resources are required for the Arabic major.

4. Administration of the Arabic Major

The Arabic major will be administered by the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, which already offers majors in Classical Studies, French, German, Russian, and Spanish and minors in Arabic, Chinese Studies, Classical Studies, French, German, Italian, Japanese Studies, Russian, and Spanish.

The first Arabic Majors will graduate in the academic year 2022. Many of the students who have expressed interest in earning an Arabic minor are already taking 3rd year courses in Arabic, which will be required for the Arabic Major. Others will move more rapidly through the required coursework through our study abroad program. Those who choose to take "Accelerated Elementary Arabic" will also be able to expedite their graduation.

**Modern and Classical
Languages and Literatures**
220 Stanger Street
331 Major Williams Hall (0225)
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March 22, 2019

Dear members of the various levels of curriculum committees,

I hereby express my support for the following new undergraduate program proposal being
submitted by the department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures:

Major in Arabic

This new major will require no additional resources.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Janell Watson
Professor and Department Chair

Matthew Gabriele
Professor of Medieval Studies
Chair, Dept. of Religion and Culture
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Wir LIBERAL ARTS ANO HUMAN SCIENCES
RELIGION AND CULTURE
VIRGINIA TECK

March 2019

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the Department of Religion & Culture, we consent to including RLCL 1004 on the checksheet for the new major in Arabic. This inclusion will require no new resources.

Thank you for your time and attention

Sincerely Yours,

Matthew Gabriele
Professor & Chair, Dept. of Religion & Culture
Virginia Tech

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences
Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures
Bachelor of Arts in Foreign Languages (BAFL)
ARABIC MAJOR
For students graduating in calendar year 2022 and date of entry under UG Catalog 2020-2021

Common Degree Core (21 credit hours)

All language majors under the BA in Foreign Languages share the following Common Degree Core requirements (21 credit hour total):

> First year experience (3 credit hours)
> Language (6-15 credit hours)
> Other language-program-specific courses (3-12 credit hours)

First year experience (3 cr)

____ RLCL 1004 Introduction in Religion and Culture (3) (or an FYE course completed in another major)

Language (e.g., oral, written, interpretive) (6 cr)

____ ARBC 2105 Intermediate Arabic (3 cr.; prereq.: 1106)

____ ARBC 2106 Intermediate Arabic (3 cr.; prereq.: 2105)

Other language-program-specific courses (e.g., literature, culture, linguistics) (12 cr)

____ ARBC 3105 Advanced Arabic (3 cr.; prereq.: 2106)

____ ARBC 3106 Advanced Arabic (3 cr.; prereq.: 3105)

____ ARBC 3124 Arabic for Oral Proficiency (3 cr.; prereq.: 2105)

____ ARBC 4154 Advanced Composition and Stylistics (3 cr.; prereq.: 3105)

Major Requirements (15 credit hours)

____ ARBC 3514 Media Arabic (3 cr.; prereq.: 2105)

____ ARBC 2774 Arab Culture and Civilization[1] (3 cr.)

____ ARBC 3474 Topics in Arab Cinema[1] (3 cr,; may be taken twice for 6 cr.)

____ ARBC 3304 Modern Arabic Literature in Translation[1] (3cr.)

____ ARBC 4334 Research in Arab Culture (3 cr.; prereq.: 2105 and 2774)

[1]May also count toward Pathways. Taught in English.

 Note:

- Some courses required for this major have pre-/co-requisite and/or enrollment requirements. Please refer to Undergraduate Course Catalog or consult your advisor for information about pre-/co-requisite and enrollment requirements.

Pathways to General Education Requirements (45 credit hours)

Area 1: Discourse (9 credit hours)

      _____ (foundational) (3)

      _____ (foundational) (3)

      _____ (advanced/applied) (3)

Area 2: Critical Thinking in the Humanities (6 credit hours)

      _____ (3)

      _____ (3)

Area 3: Reasoning in the Social Sciences (6 credit hours)

      _____ (3)

      _____ (3)

Area 4: Reasoning in the Natural Sciences (6 credit hours)

      _____ (3)

      _____ (3)

Area 5: Quantitative and Computational Thinking (9 credit hours)

      _____ (foundational) (3)

      _____ (foundational) (3)

      _____ (advanced/applied) (3)

Area 6: Critique and Practice in Design and the Arts (6 credit hours)

      _____ (design) (3)

      _____ (arts) (3)

Area 7: Critical Analysis of Identity and Equity in the United States (3 credit hours)

(may be double-counted with another core concept)

      _____ (3)

Free Electives:

Complete remaining credit hours needed to satisfy degree 120 credit hour requirement.

Total Hours Required: 120 credit hours required for graduation

GPA requirements:

Students must have a 2.0 in-major GPA in Arabic and earn a C or better in each course for it to count towards the major.

Additional Graduation Requirements:

- As a major in Arabic, you will have completed the Foreign Language (FL) requirement at Virginia Tech:

    o Students who completed 3 years of a single FL in high school have completed the requirement.

    o Students who did not complete 3 years of a single FL in high school may complete the requirement as follows:

        ▪ Complete 2 years of a single language in high school, plus 1106 or equivalent in college (these 3 hours count toward the 120 required for graduation) OR

        ▪ Complete 1105-1106 or equivalent in college (these 6 hours do not count toward the 120 required for graduation)

Transfer Credit:

- Students may transfer no more than 18 of the last 45 cr. of course work. Study Abroad falls under this rule if it is not VT credit.

- A form for "Authorization to Take Courses Elsewhere" must be filled out and signed by the student, the department representative, and the Director of the Global Education Office before the student departs on the study abroad program.

- A maximum of 50% of the required credits for a degree may be earned at a two-year college.

Satisfactory Progress toward Degree:

By the time a student majoring in Arabic has completed 72 semester credits (including transfer, advanced placement, advanced standing, and course withdrawal), the student must have completed satisfactorily the following courses in Arabic: 3105, 3106, and 3124. Satisfactory completion means a C or better (in each required course in the major).