

## Elementary Urdu

SASLI – 2016 Syllabus, UW-Madison

**Instructor:** Dr. Peter Knapczyk

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**Class meeting:** Van Hise 587, 8:30am-1pm

**Office hours:** B436 Medical Arts Center, Monday-Thursday, 1:30-2:30, and by appointment

### *Introduction*

Welcome to Elementary Urdu! This is an introductory language course that assumes no previous knowledge of the Urdu language or South Asian culture. This intensive course will cover the material of a typical one-year university-level course sequence, and it is designed to help students achieve a comparable level of proficiency in the four skills of language: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Counted with Hindi, Urdu is spoken by well over 500 million people, making it among the most popular languages in the world. Urdu is spoken primarily across North India and Pakistan where it is the language of government, media, education, business, as well as arts and entertainment. Urdu is also widely spoken as a link language throughout the Indian subcontinent and the transnational South Asian diaspora. Urdu shares a special affinity with Hindi, an official language of India. Urdu and Hindi share a common grammar and are nearly identical in their colloquial registers.

In recent years South Asia has assumed a growing influence internationally in such fields as politics, business, research, and the arts. (Many in the US are introduced to Urdu through the vibrant world of Bollywood film and music.) The study of Urdu is an ideal choice for students who hope to take advantage of new opportunities emerging in South Asia, and for those who aspire to engage in the international exchange of ideas where Urdu plays a prominent role.

### *Goals and Format*

The goal of this course is to provide students with a solid foundation in Urdu grammar and vocabulary, as well as the cultural awareness and practical experience necessary for basic, yet accurate and appropriate, communication in spoken and written Urdu. This course is designed to develop your ability in the four skills of language learning. You will learn to confidently navigate a range of common social and “survival” situations in Urdu. Upon completing this course, you will have mastered the core constructions of Urdu grammar and a large body of vocabulary and cultural knowledge necessary for many real-world interactions with Urdu speakers.

During the first week of the course our primary focus will be learning to read and write Urdu’s Nastaliq script, as well as learning to pronounce the basic sounds of Urdu. From the second week, students will be required to use the Nastaliq script exclusively for all written assignments and exams.

From the second week, the course will follow the general outline of our main textbook, *Beginning Urdu: A Complete Course*. We will aim to cover approximately one unit from *Beginning Urdu* each week, which puts us on pace to complete the majority of the textbook by the end of the eight-week course. Our class time will be divided into practice sessions devoted to reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Lessons from the textbook will be supplemented with materials drawn from popular film and songs, articles and advertisements from Urdu magazines and newspapers, video clips from film and television, and works of fiction and poetry.

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Use the Urdu script for basic reading and writing tasks.
- Carry out simple, every day conversations in Urdu.
- Express likes, dislikes, and emotions. Describe people, places, and objects.
- Exchange information and express opinions about everyday topics.
- Compose polished written paragraphs.
- Recognize and use all of the major grammar structures covered in *Beginning Urdu*.
- Use the basic formations for past, present, and future verbs.
- Use an Urdu-English dictionary as an aid to reading unfamiliar texts.
- Deliver an oral presentation and creative performance in Urdu.

### ***Required Texts and Materials***

- 1) Asani, Ali & Akbar Hyder. *Let's Study Urdu: An Introduction to the Script*. (Includes CD)
- 2) Pien, Josh & Fauzia Farooqui. *Beginning Urdu: A Complete Course*. (Includes CD)
- 3) Masud, Timsal. *Essential Urdu Dictionary*.

### ***Requirements and Grading***

The most efficient and effective way to learn Urdu is to follow a regular, daily routine of practice and study both in and outside the classroom. To benefit fully from this intensive course, you should continue to immerse yourself in language study outside of our class meetings. **Plan to spend a minimum of four hours each day on Urdu outside of class**, and additional time on the weekends. To make the most of our time together, classes will be divided into activities that focus on different skills and texts. For this to be feasible, all students must prepare prior to class. In preparation for each class you should:

- Refer to our weekly schedule to see what to prepare for each class. The weekly schedules and most assignments will be posted on our Learn@UW site.
- Before each class, read the assigned explanations of grammar and vocabulary from the textbook, verify your understanding of each concept by studying the examples, and make note of questions.
- When using the textbook use Roman script transliteration only as a last resort. If a vocabulary list is given, I suggest you read through the list before attempting the text. First try to identify the main features of the text (main ideas, characters, plot points, etc.), then concentrate on finer details.

- Prepare a translation of written texts. Try to be as literal as possible and capture the nuances of Urdu grammar and vocabulary.
- Listen to the audio recordings that accompany readings. Practice pronunciation by reading along with these recordings.
- Watch or listen to assigned audio-visual clips. Write out a brief summary of what you understand from each clip.

You will receive two grades for this course. Your grades will be calculated as follows:

Part one (grading ends July 11)

15 Homework @ 2%	30%
3 quizzes @ 10%	30%
Midterm Exam	30%
2 Oral presentations @ 5%	10%

Part two (grading ends August 5)

15 Homework @ 2%	30%
3 quizzes @ 10%	30%
Final Exam	30%
Oral presentation	5%
Creative performance	5%

Grading scale:

A (Excellent)	90-100
AB (Intermediate Grade)	83-89
B (Good)	74-82
BC (Intermediate Grade)	67-73
C (Fair)	61-66
D (Poor)	55-60
F (Failure)	54 or less

**Attendance and participation:** This is an intensive language course. Consider it your full time job for the summer. This course will move rapidly, and it is imperative that you attend class every day and stay up with the course material. Missing one day is like missing a whole week of a typical semester course.

Absences due to illness will be excused only if you present a medical note. If you plan to miss class due to a religious obligation, please notify me at the beginning of the course. If you must miss class due to an emergency and you believe that this absence should be excused, you must notify me for approval.

Otherwise you are allowed to miss only one class (or 4 hours) without penalty. After the first class (or 4 hours), each subsequent class that you miss without approval will result in a loss of 2% from your final grade for the course. For example, if you miss a total of 3 classes, your final grade for the course will be

reduced by 4% (first 4 hours = no penalty; subsequent 2 classes x 2% = 4%). Arriving more than 5 minutes late will be counted as an unexcused absence for that class-hour.

**Late work:** If you miss a class (excused or unexcused), you are responsible for asking your classmates what was covered that day. I will accept late assignments, but only for half credit. There will be no make-up quizzes or exams for unexcused absences.

**Homework:** I will post the homework assignments on our Learn@UW course site. All assignments should be handwritten in Urdu unless otherwise indicated. I encourage you to form study groups with your classmates. However, your work on assignments must be your own. The use of translation websites is not acceptable.

**Oral presentations:** Each student will give three oral presentations on topics of their own interest. For each presentation, prepare a short vocabulary list (approximately 5 words) and 2 questions for a follow-up discussion with the class.

**Quizzes and exams:** Most Mondays there will be a quiz or exam. In total there will be 6 quizzes covering a limited number of topics and 2 cumulative exams covering material from the entire term.

**Creative performance:** Towards the end of the course you will work with your classmates to develop a creative performance that highlights your Urdu language skills.

### *Course Policies*

**Ask for help:** It is normal not to understand every word of a lesson in Urdu, but you should never feel lost. If something is unclear, ask questions right away. If you need extra help, come work with me during office hours.

**Be respectful:** Show respect and consideration for the instructor and your classmates. Do not behave in a way that spoils the learning environment for others.

**Be fearless:** One cannot learn a language without making countless mistakes over a period of many years. Embrace this part of the learning process. Don't allow the fear of mistakes to inhibit your willingness to experiment with the language, especially while speaking.

**Be supportive:** Learning a new language entails making mistakes, training your voice to make unfamiliar sounds, and navigating uncomfortable situations. Please support your classmates and create an environment where everyone feels comfortable.

**Use of English:** Although complete linguistic accuracy is an admirable goal, in real-world interactions with native speakers successful communication always trumps perfection. One of the most important skills you can develop is to express yourself with a limited knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. In that spirit, you should consider our class an Urdu-only zone, meaning that you should strive to speak in Urdu from the time you enter the classroom, until the time you leave. If you have a question that you cannot express in Urdu, feel free to use English. But while classroom activities are being conducted in Urdu, English should be avoided at all costs.

**Use of electronic devices:** Learning Urdu demands your full attention. During class all electronic devices must be switched off and placed out of sight. According to SASLI policy, audio-video recording and photography is forbidden during class.

**Email and Learn@UW announcements:** Check your campus email account regularly for course news. I will use Learn@UW for posting announcements and assignments.

**Classroom atmosphere:** SASLI is committed to creating a diverse and welcoming learning environment for all students, and has a non-discrimination policy that reflects this philosophy. Disrespectful behaviors or comments addressed towards any group or individual, regardless of race/ethnicity, sexuality, gender, religion, ability, or any other identity or community are deemed unacceptable in class, and will be addressed by the instructor or referred to the Academic Director.

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. We will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun.

### *UW-Madison Policies*

**McBurney Disability Resource Center:** The McBurney Center is available for all students at the University of Wisconsin. The Center offers a wide array of services for students with disabilities. If you need any disability accommodations you need to register with the McBurney Center. The McBurney Center is available for all students at the University of Wisconsin. The Center offers a wide array of services for students with disabilities. For a list of the services provided, please visit the website: <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/services/>

#### **Rights and Responsibilities:**

Students with disabilities have the right to:

- Full and equal participation in the services and activities of the University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services
- Privacy and to not have confidential information freely disseminated throughout the campus
- Limit access to confidential records. In doing so, however, students recognize that implementing accommodations may become more difficult
- Information readily available in accessible formats

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, jobs and activities
- Identify as an individual with a disability when an accommodation is needed and to seek information, counsel and assistance as necessary
- Demonstrate and/or document (from an appropriate professional) how the disability limits their participation in courses, programs, services, jobs and activities
- Follow published procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services, or requesting barrier removal

The University, through faculty and staff, has the right to:

- Establish essential functions, abilities, skills, knowledge and standards for courses, programs, services, jobs and activities or facilities and to evaluate students on this basis;

- Determine the appropriate standards in developing, constructing, remodeling and maintaining facilities;
- Confirm disability status and request and receive current, relevant documentation that supports requests for accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Have appropriate staff discuss students and their disabilities in order to implement requested accommodations (particularly instructional accommodations);
- Deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and services, and/or barrier removal in facilities if the documentation does not demonstrate that the request is warranted, or if the individual fails to provide appropriate documentation;
- Select among equally effective accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Refuse unreasonable accommodations, academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and services, and/or facility-related barrier removal requests that impose a fundamental alteration on a program or activity of the university.

The University has the responsibility to:

- Provide information to faculty, staff, students and guests with disabilities in accessible formats upon request
- Ensure that courses, programs, services, jobs, activities and facilities, when viewed in their entirety, are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings
- Evaluate students on the basis of their abilities and not their disabilities
- Respond to requests on a timely basis
- Provide or arrange reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities in courses, programs, services, jobs, activities and facilities
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication except where permitted or required by law

Contact information for the McBurney Disability Resource Center:

702 W Johnson Street, Suite 2104  
 Madison, WI, 53715  
 phone: 608-263-2741  
 text: 608-225-7956  
 fax: 608-265-2998  
 mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu

**Student Code of Conduct:** The student Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures for the University of Wisconsin is available on the website listed below:

<http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/misconduct.html>

This document outlines the rules and regulations regarding your student rights and responsibilities while a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It states that “Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:

- seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
- assists other students in any of these acts.”

Please see the website listed above for further information.