

Elementary Tamil

ASIALANG 310, SASLI 2020, UW-Madison

Synchronous: M-F, 10:30 AM -12:30 PM Central Standard Time

(An additional 2 hours of asynchronous class time will take place daily)

Credit Hours: 4.0

Instructor: Jay Ramesh

Office Hours: M-F, 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Course Description

This course provides a rigorous introduction to the study of Tamil, one of the oldest South Asian languages. Students will be trained in four distinct skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening. An emphasis will be placed on being able to navigate everyday situations one might encounter while in South India and on interpreting authentic literary, audio, and visual sources. To that end, this course covers most of the grammatical concepts that one would have to master in order to participate in such conversations and engage with such sources. Furthermore, students will be exposed to modern Tamil in both its written/formal register and its spoken register as practiced in Tamil Nadu. By the end of the second semester, students will be prepared for further study of the language, perhaps in the form of deeper engagement with Tamil literature or an immersion course in India.

Course Learning Outcomes: By the end of the second semester of the course, students will be able to:

- Engage in basic conversations with native speakers on a variety of topics, spontaneously articulating their own thoughts in Tamil
- Navigate everyday situations in Tamil-speaking regions, communicating their own needs and desires as well as responding to those of others

- Understand and interpret the main themes of more complex communicative modes such as periodicals, literature or audio-visual media and form follow-up thoughts or questions to the presented material
- Translate prose written in modern Tamil with the assistance of a dictionary
- Articulate their own thoughts in written form, using descriptive and connected sentences
- Deliver oral presentations in Tamil on researched topics

Suggested Materials: While there are no texts that are required for students to purchase, we will be frequently using selections from K. Paramasivam and J. Lindolm, *A Basic Tamil Grammar and Reader*, Vols. 1 and 2. As this text has long since been out of print, I will provide scans for the necessary readings.

While you are welcome to consult a published dictionary, there are several good online dictionaries. There are two that I particularly recommend:

- 1) Crea's Tamil-English and English-Tamil dictionary is well suited for use in the introductory class.
- 2) The University of Madras Tamil Lexicon is the better suited for more advanced work in the language, such as translation of premodern texts. While you likely won't need to consult it this summer, it is an invaluable tool and may still be worth using if querying Crea's dictionary should ever prove fruitless.

Additionally, handouts and Powerpoint slides will be made available on Canvas throughout the summer.

Course Policies:

Class Etiquette:

Learning a new language is a collaborative endeavor. For that reason, it is essential that you treat your fellow students with respect at all times. Please refrain from using inappropriate language with one another when engaged in group activities or in group chat window during synchronous sessions. Additionally, as this course will require your full attention, please refrain from checking your phone/using social media during our times together.

Attendance:

All students are expected to attend every synchronous session of the course on time. If at any point you experience some difficulty in participating in a meeting of the class, please contact me as soon as you are able.

Per SASLI's policy, students are expected to **attend class every day** during the semester given the intensive structure of the program.

- One absence per semester is permissible.
- Two absences in a semester will result in a grade deduction for that semester.
- Three or more absences in a semester will result in automatic failure of the course.

Additional Notes:

- Absences on days of exams, projects, presentations etc will lead to failure of that coursework except in case of documented emergencies. There will be no make-ups of quizzes, projects, presentations, etc. due to absence.
- Failure of the first/third/fifth semester course prohibits students moving to the second/fourth/sixth semester course and will result in dismissal from the program without refund.
- Contact hours for federal grants require that the SASLI program must end on the last day of class. Requests to leave or take final exams early will not be granted.

- Pre-program requests for absences will not be granted.
- If you have a chronic illness that might require you to miss classes during the semester, please inform the instructor as well as schedule an appointment with the SASLI Academic Director, Sarah Beckham at the beginning of the semester.
- If you are absent due to an illness, you are required to meet with the SASLI Academic Director, Sarah Beckham. You will also be required to submit necessary documentation.

Any emergency circumstances for absences can be addressed to the SASLI Academic Director, Sarah Beckham.

Absences due to Religious Observances:

SASLI follows the UW-Madison policy for religious observances. If you need to be absent from class due to religious observances, you must notify the instructor as soon as possible and no later than the first week of class of the specific days or dates on which you request relief. The instructor will make reasonable accommodations to schedule make-ups before or after the regularly scheduled requirements.

Technology:

As noted above, please limit cellphone use during class times.

- Per FERPA regulations, **you are not permitted to make audio or video recordings during synchronous class times.**

Academic Integrity:

By virtue of enrollment, you agree to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action.

Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Common examples of academic misconduct include:

- cheating on an examination collaborating with others in work to be presented contrary to the stated rules of the course
- submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another
- submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas
- stealing examinations or course materials submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course
- using online language translation tools contrary to the rules of the course knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed

For detailed information, please see conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/

Assignments: There will be several forms of graded assignments this summer:

- **Homework:** There will be a homework assignment almost every single day this summer. These assignments will usually consist of a written component, but will occasionally require you to make short audio recordings as well. These must be uploaded to Canvas or sent to me as email attachments by the start of our synchronous class time the following day.

- **Take-Home Exams:** At the end of the second week of each semester, there will be a short take-home exam that will test your writing and translation abilities. They will be made available to you on a Friday and will be due the following Monday. These are open-book, open-note exams, but do not use an online translation tool (such as Google Translate). It will be very obvious you if you have and most of your translations will probably be wrong.
- **Conversation Assessments:** At the end of the third week of each semester, I will schedule an appointment with each of you to conduct a brief assessment of your speaking and comprehension abilities. It will consist of a short conversation on a familiar topic, but you will not be permitted to consult any outside materials.
- **Final Projects:** On the last day of class in each semester, you will have to submit a final project. In the first semester, this will consist of a short presentation on a topic of your choice. In the second semester you will engage in a group project that will consist of a brief skit. You will be graded both on the textual transcripts of these assignments – to be composed in written Tamil – and an audio or video recording to be delivered in spoken Tamil.

Grading Rubric:

- Attendance and Participation (both synchronous and asynchronous sessions): 30%
- Homework: 15%
- Take Home Exams: 15%
- Conversation Assessments: 15%
- Final Projects: 25%

Grade Range: A

- (93+)
- A- (90-92)
- B+ (87-89)
- B (83-86)
- B- (80-82)

And so on. Grades of a D- and below will be considered failing grades.

Course Credit Fulfillment:

45 Hours Per Credit – One credit is the learning that takes place in at least 45 hours of learning activities, which include time in lectures or class meetings, in person or online, labs, exams, presentations, tutorials, reading, writing, studying, preparation for any of these activities, and any other learning activities.

Student Code of Conduct (Rights and Responsibilities of Students):

Please familiarize yourself with the following:

<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#rulesrightsandresponsibilitiestext>

Classroom Atmosphere/ Diversity & Inclusion:

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world. <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>

UW-Madison 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, learning capability or preferred style, or any other identity or community are deemed **unacceptable** in class/on the online forum.

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

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the first week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center (<https://mcburney.wisc.edu>) to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Student Health/Resource Centers:

University Health Services offers a wide range of services from medical to individual and group counseling. **UHS can answer specific questions about what services are available to remote learners.** Please visit their website for more information (<https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/>).

One service UHS offers is ongoing individual counseling. The model for this service is brief and time-limited, which means students usually see their counselor every 2-4 weeks. There is typically a wait to get started in ongoing individual counseling at UHS. If a student is interested in more frequent individual counseling appointments or having appointments outside of standard business hours, you might consider meeting with a UHS care manager to explore options for providers in the community. The best way to get started with UHS mental health services is to schedule an access consultation. You can schedule an access

consultation at any time, including before you get to campus. Find more info here:

<https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/getting-started/>

Students have access to a 24-hour mental health crisis line. The number is 608-2655600 option 9.

LGBTQ Support : The Gender & Sexuality Campus Center (<https://lgbt.wisc.edu/>) is a fantastic resource for LGBTQ students on campus. If you need to locate a genderinclusive restroom on UW campus, visit: <https://lgbt.wisc.edu/support/navigate-campus/>

Dean of Students: The Dean of Students' office can provide you with support and resources for a variety of problems; their main reason for existing is to promote student well-being. They are located in Bascom Hall and can be contacted at 608-263-5700. Their website is <https://students.wisc.edu/doso/>.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Important Dates):

Monday, June 15th: Course Begins

Friday, June 26th: Take Home Exam Distributed

Monday, June 29th: Take Home Exam Due

Friday, July 3rd: Spoken Assessment Meetings

Friday, July 10th: Final Projects Due

END OF FIRST SEMESTER

Monday, July 13th: Second Semester Begins

Friday, July 24th: Take Home Exam Distributed

Monday, July 27th: Take Home Exam Due

Friday, July 31st: Spoken Assessment Meetings Friday,

August 7th: Presentation of Group Final Projects

DETAILED WEEKLY SCHEDULE – WEEKS 1&2:

You'll be given a new detailed schedule at the beginning of each week after the second.

Week 1:

Day	Synchronous Topics	Asynchronous Topics (Lectures)	Assignments	Additional Notes
Monday, 6/15	Introductions, Basics of Studying Tamil	Learning the script	Write each character along with lecture	
Tuesday, 6/16	Reviewing correct pronunciation of characters, learning to write names	Specifics of Tamil pronunciation and spelling (combining nasals and hard consonants; "double" letters; vocabulary for introductions	Write the entire alphabet three times. Also write your first and last name.	Photograph/scan and upload HW to Canvas or email to me by beginning of class Wednesday
Wednesday, 6/17	Learning to introduce ourselves; practicing pronunciation of given vocabulary	Sentences without verbs (a.k.a. "A=B" sentences); Vocabulary: school/classroom	Dictation: Listen to recording and write down recognized words in Tamil script	
Thursday, 6/18	Group Exercise: Practice describing virtual classroom with A=B sentences; live dictation practice	Asking yes/no questions; Introduction to sandhi rules; Vocabulary: town/family	Writing Exercise: A=B sentences and yes/no questions	

Friday, 6/19	Group Exercise: Using Yes/No questions to ask about families; Practice reading aloud together	Introducing Nouns and Cases; Vocabulary: Numbers and Questions	Write 5 simple sentences using dictionary; listen to recorded conversation and compare to written form and	
			take note of any differences.	

Week 2:

Day	Synch. Topics	Asynch. Topics	Assignments	Notes
Monday, 6/22	Practice constructing more complex phrases using cases	Introduction to verbs; present tense. Vocab: Getting around the city (places and directions)	Writing more complex phrases using nouns and cases (worksheet)	
Tuesday, 6/23	Practice using Verbs; Rehearsing Dialogue: Asking how to go from place to place	Expressing states of being using the dative Vocabulary: Adjectives and states of being	Translate: Paramasivam and Lindholm, Chapter 1 "இந்தியா," Listen to recording of spoken form	We'll review the translation together; no need to upload. Each of you will be asked to read a few sentences in class.
Wednesday, 6/24	Review HW translation together; practice expressing wants and desires.	Expressing possibilities and commands; Vocabulary: Food and Restaurants	Recording: Listen to recorded dialogue "Going to a restaurant" alongside script. Translate: Paramasivam and Lindholm, Chapter 2, first two paragraphs.	

<p>Thursday, 6/25</p>	<p>Dialogue Practice: Communicating Wants and Desires. Review of Lindholm and Paramasivam Reading</p>	<p>Making evaluations and expressing Comparisons; Vocabulary: shopping</p>	<p>Exercise: Interpreting a restaurant menu. (Answer questions based on a menu)</p>	
<p>Friday, 6/26</p>	<p>Dialogue Practice: Rehearse a conversation about going shopping; Review for Take Home Exam</p>	<p>The infinitive and infinitive-Based expressions</p>	<p>Take Home Exam</p>	<p>Exam will be posted online immediately following synchronous class session.</p>