



THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP

Creating Global Professionals

OU ARABIC FLAGSHIP PARTNER PROGRAM

ABSTRACT

The University of Oklahoma has partnered with the National Security Education Program (NSEP) to enhance the Arabic language learning program at the University of Oklahoma (OU) and to expand its curricular and extracurricular offerings. The overarching goal is to graduate more students with advanced-proficiency in Arabic and to establish, through partnership with the University of Texas at Austin Flagship Center, a model for best teaching and learning practices of Arabic.

OU plans to develop a program along the lines of the UT program by offering specialized, content-based fourth and fifth year language courses. It will also help build extracurricular programming and scholarship incentives. NSEP funding goes toward capacity building in Arabic language at OU, including the hiring of a full-time tenure track faculty member and an Arabic Language Activities Coordinator, the creation of a scholarship program, and subsidies for student study abroad experiences. In addition to the new curricular options, the plan is to build extracurricular activities such as living in an "Arabic House" section of the dorms and other language cultural activities such as films, music, and language arts.

The University commits to continue the process of ramping up and redesigning Arabic language learning at OU by funding 50% of the tenure-track line as well as half of the language activities coordinator's salary in year 3 of the grant. These two positions will become permanent positions, fully funded by the University, upon completion of the Diffusion of Innovation grant. The University's commitment to fund these two positions is a major step towards the creation of a program that will graduate an increased number of students with language and cultural skills meeting the advanced levels of the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) scale.

The benchmark goals of OU's Arabic language program include graduating 25-35 Arabic majors by the 2011-2012 academic year with 80-90% scoring at the minimum advanced low level or above on the ACTFL exam by 2012. It is expected that numbers will increase in subsequent years.

OU's President David Boren is personally committed to advancing the study of the critical languages that Americans will need to compete in the twenty-first century. As a three-term U.S. Senator, President Boren authored the National Security Education Program while in Congress and promoted the study of non-traditional languages as a key to America's security future. Studying the language and cultures of the Arab world is

also significant for the understanding of the historical, scientific, economic and cultural relevance of the region to the modern world.

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