

## Background

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Welcome to the section of Arabic studies, the institutional home of two distinguished programs in the Department of Linguistics and Languages: Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Arabic. Arabic remains at the center of what modern linguistics is. Indeed, the need for area-studies specialists with advanced proficiency in Arabic has never been greater or more compelling. As Kenyans struggle to build a better understanding of the Arab world, its society, its religion, and its culture, we are positioned to develop a determined and vigorous academic strategy to create and maintain linguistic and cultural expertise among our students. Arabic is the native language of over 200 million people in 20 different countries as well as the liturgical language for over a billion Muslims. It is a member of the Semitic language family and has a long and distinguished literary and intellectual tradition. It is now a key factor in understanding and negotiating crucial contemporary global issues. In accordance with the University of Nairobi's ethos, we stress knowledge of Arabic as a path to living altruistically and creatively in a globally-integrated world.

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