

PERS-0390: Persian for Heritage Speakers
Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations
University of Pennsylvania
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Office Hours: Wed. 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM,
and by appointment

Course Description:

PERS-0390, or Persian for Heritage Speakers, is conducted in Persian and designed to help you strengthen your skills by learning not only to read and write, but also to engage in more complex forms of discourse in Persian. In this course, we will begin to address a variety of topics in order to increase your proficiency in linguistic as well as cultural terms. Emphasis is placed on *actively* using the language for interpersonal, interpretive and presentational modes of communication. Therefore, English is restricted. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are integrated into the course, as are culture, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Prerequisite: Students must be proficient in spoken Persian (whether Farsi or Dari), and lack reading and writing skills.

By the end of this course you will:

1. Learn the Persian alphabet and modern writing conventions;
2. Improve your command and understanding of Persian grammar;
3. Substantially increase your command of high-frequency vocabulary;
4. Demonstrate an ability to use and understand the *neveshtâri* (formal) register;
5. Be able to sustain lengthier social interactions with greater ease and confidence;
6. Be able to compose paragraphs about a variety of topics, both informal and formal;
7. Comprehend authentic materials (texts, audio, videos, etc.) on familiar topics, as well as some unfamiliar topics through the use of effective reading and listening strategies.

Course Materials:

1. *Persian of Iran Today, Volume One & Volume Two*: The books and audiovisual materials are available for free online at laits.utexas.edu/persian_teaching_resources. It is not required (only recommended) that you purchase physical copies from Amazon.
2. Authentic, real-life listening and reading materials (videos and texts) with accompanying vocabulary and grammar materials provided by the instructor via Canvas.
3. Canvas: In this class we will use Canvas—a web-based course management system at canvas.upenn.edu—to access schedules, certain assignments and materials, and grades.
4. Email: Additionally, you will receive emails with important course information sent to the course listserv, so be sure to check your email (and spam folder) frequently.

Grade Distribution:

Participation	30%
Homework	30%
Corrections	5%
Quizzes	20%
Composition	10%
Presentation	5%

Course Requirements:

Participation (30%)

Class time is your opportunity to develop and activate your Persian oral skills and to fully exploit this opportunity, we will all speak only Persian from the time we enter the classroom. Adhering to the Persian-only policy is very important to your proficiency development. If you need to ask a question or make a comment in English, you must explicitly get permission to do so first. Use of English without permission will lower your participation grade. This means any use of English at all, even single words thrown out “spontaneously.” Controlling the urge to use English can be frustrating, but it will in the long run help you find your “voice” in Persian and help to create a language immersion environment in the classroom that will benefit everyone.

Class time will be devoted to **activating** the vocabulary and structures that you have prepared at home through your homework. You will spend the majority of class time doing activities in pairs and small groups. Thus, attendance and *active* participation in class are essential to your making good language-proficiency gains and doing well in the class. This part of your grade will be based on daily points assigned by your instructor (on Canvas) according to the following criteria:

- 5 points:** You are actively engaged in developing your Persian proficiency by communicating in Persian from the moment you walk into the class until you leave it. Full credit is earned when you,
- i. arrive to class on time;
 - ii. are well prepared for the class, which means that you have listened to recorded materials on the accompanying website, learned the new vocabulary, read the grammar explanations carefully and done the homework drills based on those explanations before coming to class;
 - iii. you submit fully completed homework before the beginning of class;
 - iv. are alert (i.e., are listening whenever someone has the floor);
 - v. participate actively when we are working together as a class;
 - vi. make maximum use of pair/group work time by,
 - a) understanding the learning objectives of tasks assigned,
 - b) staying focused on those objectives,
 - c) continuing to work with your partner on the task objectives even if you “finish” an assigned task before the allotted time is up. (Ask your instructor for additional instructions if you aren’t sure what to do next.)

Note: If you come to class but do not submit homework, the most you can earn that day for attendance and participation is 3 out of 5 points. This does penalize you twice for not doing the homework, but that is because the homework is *essential* to doing classwork.

Attendance Policies:

- Your lowest two grades for attendance and participation will be dropped.
- Please inform your instructor by email of an absence as soon as possible *before—not after*—the class you will miss. This helps considerably in planning for class activities.

Tardiness Policy:

Arriving late to class is disruptive, so please make every effort to be in class and ready to start working when class begins. Points will be deducted for tardiness as follows: arrival during the first 5 minutes of class = 1 point; arrival during the first 10 minutes = 2 points; arrival during the first 15 minutes = 3 points; arrival during the first 20 minutes = 4 points. If you arrive more than 20 minutes late you will receive a “zero” for that day’s attendance and participation, and it will count as an absence in applying the absence policy.

Classroom Conduct Policies:

- Use of laptops, tablets, and phones is not permitted.
- Please set phones to silent mode (not just vibrate).
- Food is not allowed.

Homework (30%)

This is a flipped class, which in short means that during our meetings you will practice what you learn at home. Therefore, expect to spend about one to two hours on homework for every class session. To prepare for the learning that takes place through practice in class, you will listen to, read and study new material at home. *This material will not be presented in class.* To help you process this material, you will have daily written assignments **due before the start of class** on the day designated in the assignment schedule on Canvas. The amount of effort you put into your at-home preparation and on your homework is an important part of your homework grade. Follow up promptly in office hours or via email if you have questions or need clarification.

Homework assignments will be rated on a **scale of 1 to 5 (5=excellent; 4=good but not your best effort; 3=average; 2=poor; 1=very poor work)**. You will be rated on the overall quality of your work, not merely on the number of correct or incorrect answers. Note that you do not have to have everything 100% correct on your homework in order to get a “5” as long as you have made your best effort. Your lowest two grades for homework will be dropped.

On each homework assignment:

1. write your name in Persian as soon as you are able to do so;
2. label the homework with the assignment number;
3. staple all pages together;
4. write in pencil;
5. and skip lines!

Note: Failure to do any of the above will lower your homework grade by a ½ point.

Fill-in-the-blanks: You will not receive full credit for submitting only the words from a fill-in-the blank vocabulary or grammar exercises. The goal of such exercises is not just to develop your vocabulary, but also to recycle and reinforce the vocabulary and grammatical structures that you already know. By writing out the exercises in full, you notice details (such as spelling and

grammar) that you might have missed before, you incorporate your new vocabulary into a system rather than producing simple lists, and you also increase your writing speed.

Late homework will **not** be accepted for a grade, but you ask for permission in advance if you there are circumstances that will prevent you from turning in an assignment on time.

Corrections (5%)

You will be asked to correct certain homework assignments. Homework assignments that need correcting will be returned with “اصلاح کنید” at the top of the page. Mistakes are a natural part of the learning process; however, in order to learn from mistakes, you must take time to recognize and correct them. Your instructor will use a simple code (available on Canvas) to identify the category of the error (spelling, grammar, word choice, etc.). **Using a different color, write the correction above or below the error on the original homework and then resubmit that very same page (with the corrections on it) at the next meeting.** To get full credit for corrections, you must attempt to correct every marked mistake. If you do not understand why something is wrong, make sure you get help before the corrections are due. Corrections receive a separate grade using a **scale of 1 to 5 (5=excellent; 4=good but not your best effort; 3=average; 2=poor; 1=very poor)**. Failure to use a different color of ink/pencil on corrections will result in a ½ point deduction. *Late submissions of homework corrections will not be accepted for a grade.*

Note: If you do not submit the original homework assignment, then you will automatically receive a zero for the correction grade. However, your lowest score will be dropped.

Quizzes (20%)

There will be three quizzes over the course of the semester. All quizzes focus on vocabulary and grammar, but reading and listening will be occasionally assessed as well. If you will miss/have missed a quiz, contact your instructor as soon as you know that you will be missing/have missed it. If you have not contacted your instructor within 24 hours after the quiz has been given to discuss the possibility of a make-up, you will receive a zero. Requests for make-ups will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The *tentative* dates for these quizzes are:

Quiz 1: Thursday, Sept. 28

Quiz 2: Thursday, Nov. 2

Quiz 3: Thursday, Nov. 30

Composition (10%)

In preparation for your presentation (see below), you will write a 500-word composition on a topic pertaining to Persianate culture. The topic may be a historical or contemporary person, place, event, custom, object, etc. Academic standards of research, organization, and formatting apply. You must select a topic by Oct. 1, submit an annotated bibliography (of English sources) by Oct. 15, the first draft by Nov. 1, and the final draft by Nov. 15. More instructions will follow.

Presentation (5%)

Based on your research for the composition, you will give a presentation (4–6 minutes long) using either PowerPoint or Google Slides. Instructions and a grading rubric will be provided in advance. **The presentations will take place in class on Thursday, December 7.**

Final Grade Calculation and Grade Policies:

Number/letter grade equivalents are as follows:

Number	Letter	Number	Letter	Number	Letter	Number	Letter
93 - 100	A	86 - 88	B+	76 - 78	C+	66 - 68	D+
		83 - 85	B	73 - 75	C	63 - 65	D
89 - 92	A-	79 - 82	B-	69 - 72	C-	60* - 62	D-

*(below 60 = F)

- Grades on the border between two letter grades (88.9 for instance) may or may not be rounded up to the next higher letter grade, at the instructor's discretion.
- In order to continue to the next level of Persian, you must have a grade of "C+" or better.

Important University Policies:

CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The Penn Code of Academic Integrity is in effect in this class. Submitting any assignment or exam that is not your own, or that you did not participate fully in doing, is a violation of that code. While collaborative study *is* permitted, you may *not* copy one another's work. **Use of artificial intelligence or machine translation services is not permitted.**

DISABILITIES: All students with disabilities who seek an accommodation at Penn have the responsibility to identify themselves to Student Disability Services. Identification may take place at admissions or at any time during the student's course of study. All students with disabilities have the responsibility to provide documentation at their own expense in order to be considered for accommodations. After documentation of disability has been approved and accommodations have been proposed, students must give permission for letters to be sent to all instructors in whose classes accommodations are being requested. Instructors review the proposed accommodations. After there is agreement on the appropriate accommodation, students are encouraged to introduce themselves to professors directly and to initiate a dialogue about their particular needs.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS: Students who wish to observe religious holidays must inform their instructors within the first two weeks of each semester of their intent to observe the holiday even when the exact date of the holiday will not be known until later so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity.

به کلاس زبان فارسی خوش آمدید!
Be kelâs-e zabân-e Fârsi khowsh âmadid!