Erin Hayes ’18
Arabic major
Refugee status determination legal advisor, St. Andrew’s Refugee Services
Digital and communication specialist, Education for Employment, Cairo, Egypt

“Studying Arabic gave me the confidence I needed to move to Cairo and delve into a world full of opportunities here. I use the language daily, whether greeting legal aid clients in Arabic, reading social media posts, or simply buying fruit from my favorite produce stall. People in Egypt are eager to let visitors practice language, and I am grateful that I arrived with a foundation with which to learn colloquial Egyptian Arabic.

After learning Arabic in the classroom environment, I studied abroad in Oman and Morocco and wrote a senior thesis on peace processes in Northern Ireland and the Palestinian–Israeli crisis. The study abroad experiences in particular taught me the importance of not being shy about practicing language and going out on a limb, which has been very important to my current time in Egypt.

“I now use Arabic every day as I commute, shop, and explore Cairo — I’m so grateful for everything I learned in the program!”

Curriculum requirements
- 6 courses in Arabic language
- 1 course in Arabic literature
- 1 course in Middle Eastern history
- 1 course in Islamic studies
- 1 elective

Source: Center for Career Development First Destination Reports, 2017-2021