

**ASIALANG 307/308
First and Second Semester Burmese
Course Syllabus 2026**

Institution Name: University of Wisconsin–Madison

Credits: By the end of the program, you will complete two, four-credit language courses.

Course Designations and Attributes

This course is:

- **Communication-Focused:** Emphasizes real-world language use through interactive and meaningful communication.
- **Proficiency-Oriented:** Designed to help students develop functional language skills based on ACTFL proficiency standards.
- **Learner-Centered:** Encourages active participation, collaboration, and self-reflection.
- **Culture-Integrated:** Explores the cultural diversity, traditions, and contemporary life of Myanmar alongside language learning.
- **Inclusive and Supportive:** Provides a welcoming environment where students can learn through practice, experimentation, and constructive feedback.
- **Technology-Enhanced:** Incorporates digital tools and authentic resources to support language development and cultural learning.

Course Description: Introduction to the Burmese language and cultures of Myanmar. Development of basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing through communicative, proficiency-based instruction.

Requisites: No prior knowledge of Burmese is required. This course is designed for students with little or no previous experience studying the Burmese language.

Meeting Time and Location: 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (CDT), [REDACTED]

Instructional Modality: Online

Instructor Contact Info: Ye Min Tun; email: [REDACTED]

Office Hours: Mondays and Tuesdays (2:30 – 3:30) [REDACTED]

Course Learning Outcomes

(adopted from <https://www.actfl.org/uploads/files/general/Resources-Publications/Intermediate-Can-Do-Statements.pdf>)

The first and second semester courses aim to help students develop all four language skills, namely speaking, listening, reading and writing, for learners who have not had any or little exposure to Burmese before. The overall language pedagogy is based on a communicative and

proficiency-based approach: the focus on students' demonstration of desired learning outcomes. Students gain the skills, abilities, and knowledge required in an area of study, along with those necessary to be successful in real-world situations. Learners are thus required to participate in various activities that are designed to help them master the linguistic skills at the basic level, up to Intermediate Low as defined by American Council on the Teachings of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), which is defined as follows for this course:

- Ability to handle a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks by **creating with the language** in straightforward social situations.
- Ability to engage in brief concrete exchanges and predictable topics necessary for **survival in the Burmese-speaking culture** around personal information and immediate needs.
- Ability to **read and write (and type) Burmese script** and comprehend texts in everyday topics for both colloquial and literary settings.

Class hours will include:

- **Reading:** Students learn to read and pronounce written Burmese words and syllables. They also learn to read discrete sentences and short texts about routine behavior and highly predictable descriptions of people, places, and things.
- **Speaking/Listening practice:** Students will engage in virtual conversations and will prepare and deliver short presentations and conduct interviews based on the weekly speaking/listening objectives. Specific topics may be selected by the students or teacher, beginning with everyday/autobiographical information and gradually working up to professional topics. The objective is for students to organize their ideas into connected discourse.
- **Conversation Practice:** Students will be guided to apply and expand the grammatical structures and vocabulary introduced in the reading and dialogs, without directly referring to those materials. Focus is on developing strategies for interpersonal communication in Burmese.

How Credit Hours are Met by the Course

The credit standard for each of the 4-credit courses is met by requiring at least **180 total hours of student engagement** with course learning activities, consistent with the UW–Madison standard of **at least 45 hours of learning activities per credit**. These learning activities include scheduled instructor-student meeting times as well as asynchronous reading, writing, listening, speaking, preparation, homework, projects, studying, and other course-related activities. **Required co-curricular programming** will take place on Fridays, which includes lectures, language practice, cultural sessions, and other structured activities designed to support and extend course learning.

Regular and Substantive Student-Instructor Interaction

This course meets the regular and substantive student-instructor interaction requirement. By engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment through direct instruction, providing feedback on student work, providing information about course content, and facilitating discussion of course content on a weekly basis. Regular and substantive student-instructor interaction, as defined by the US Department of Education (Within 34 C.F.R. §600.2), is always a requirement of UW-Madison for-credit learning activities

Course Overview

Elementary Burmese is designed for students with little or no prior knowledge of the language. Through a communicative and proficiency-oriented approach, you will learn to use Burmese in everyday

situations while developing skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. By the end of the course, you will be able to introduce yourself, exchange basic personal information, describe familiar people and places, navigate common social interactions, and engage in simple conversations on everyday topics. Throughout the semester, we will explore not only the Burmese language but also the cultural practices, values, and perspectives that shape communication in Myanmar. Class activities will include interactive conversations, role plays, collaborative tasks, cultural discussions, and authentic materials that help connect language learning to real-world contexts.

Course Website and Digital Instructional Tools

[Link to institute website](#)



Perusall:

Required textbook:

§ Hnin Tun, San San (2014), *Colloquial Burmese: the complete course for beginners*, London, Routledge

Other Resources

§ Okell, John (1994), *Burmese: An introduction to the script*, Northern Illinois University

§ Okell, John (1994), *Burmese: An introduction to the spoken language, Book I*, Northern Illinois University

§ NIU seasite (Myanmar): <https://seasite.niu.edu/Burmese/language.htm>

§ Quizlet: 

Requirements

Given that language acquisition is a complex process that can be best achieved through a consistent and active participation in learning activities, learners are required to attend all classes and engage in all in-class activities everyday throughout the whole course period of SEASSI. Furthermore, all assignments to do outside must be submitted as specified by the instructors. Failure to fulfill these requirements will not only result in your personal failure to learn Burmese, but also in negatively affecting your grades (see grading criteria below for details).

Cultural-sessions, organized 3 times a week, are designed to create a forum for discussions on all matters related to learning Burmese, with a special emphasis on pragmatics of language use, that take into account a crucial role of socio-cultural aspects of Burmese. Active participation in the forum is required as a part of course work. Guest speakers or guest lecturers will utilize these sessions to broaden the perspectives of Burmese learners.

Final exam dates cannot be rescheduled, except for medical emergencies, for which an official medical certificate must be provided.

Be sure to follow all other specific instructions as they are given throughout the course period.

Be sure to seek advice from the instructors if you have any doubts or concerns about your language learning process as soon as possible without waiting until the approaching exam periods.

Grading

Your work in the course will be assessed through a daily evaluation of your participation in class, assignments turned in as required, quizzes (dates TBA) and a final exam assessing 4 skills (oral, reading, listening, and writing).

Grading criteria (for ASIALANG 307 001 & ASIALANG 308 001)

Component	Percentage
§ Attendance & Participation:	30%
§ Projects:	20%
§ Homework and assignments:	20%
§ Quizzes:	10%
§ Final:	20%

Grading Schema and Class Policy

A	: 92 – 100
AB	: 87 – 91
B	: 82 – 86
BC	: 77 – 81
C	: 72 – 76
D	: 62 – 71
F	: < 62

Participation

Participation is evaluated daily and is an essential component of language learning in this intensive course. Students are expected to come to class prepared, engage actively in classroom activities, and contribute positively to the learning environment.

Participation will be graded based on the following criteria:

- 5 well-prepared, responsible/engaged and participating fully in *all* tasks and activities
- 4 well-prepared, responsible/engaged and participating fully in tasks and activities, but coming late to class (up to 5 minutes)
- 3 present, but relatively passive or late (6-15 minutes)
- 2 present, but relatively passive or late (16-29 minutes)
- 1 significantly late (30 minutes after the class begins) or significantly disturbing the class dynamic

0 elective absence

Time table:

15th June – 12th July (the second half: See below)

	M	T	W	Th	F
Session I	8:30-9:20	8:30-9:20	8:30-9:20	8:30-9:20	8:30-9:20
Break I	9:20-9:30	9:20-9:30	9:20-9:30	9:20-9:30	9:20-9:30
Session II	9:30-10:20	9:30-10:20	9:30-10:20	9:30-10:20	9:30-10:20
Break II	10:20-10:30	10:20-10:30	10:20-10:30	10:20-10:30	
Session III	10:30-11:20	10:30-11:20	10:30-11:20	10:30-11:20	
Break III	11:20-11:50	11:20-11:50	11:20-11:50	11:20-11:50	
Session IV	11:50-12:40	11:50-12:40	11:50-12:40	11:50-12:40	
Break IV	12:40-12:50	12:40-12:50	12:40-12:50	12:40-12:50	
Cultural Session	12:50-1:30	12:50-1:30	12:50-1:30	12:50-1:30	

Required co-curricular Friday programming is as follows:

Friday, June 19	11:00 am	Global Professionals Panel Sessions
Friday, June 26	11:00 am	Language Practice Tables
Friday, July 3	TBD	WISLI Research Symposium
Friday, July 10	8:30 am	Final Exams
Friday, July 17	—	Asynchronous Review/Study Day
Friday, July 24	11:00 am	Language Practice Tables
Friday, July 31	11:00 am	Intercultural Learning Session
Friday, August 7	8:30 am	Final Exams

WISLI Program Policies

Attendance Policy

Students may miss one class per semester without penalty; a second absence can result in a full grade deduction; three or more absences may lead to an additional grade reduction or automatic failure.

Tardiness Policy

Tardiness is defined as arriving more than 5 minutes late to the start of class as well as the time

immediately following scheduled breaks. **Excessive tardiness** is arriving more than 10 minutes late to class. Tardiness in excess of 30 minutes will be considered a half- or full-day absence. In instances of repeated tardiness:

- **Three instances of tardiness** will result in a warning. A fourth instance of tardiness will require a meeting with an Academic Director.
- **Three instances of excessive tardiness** (arriving more than 10 minutes late but less than 30) will be counted as a half-day absence.
- **Repeated tardiness in excess of 30 minutes** will be subject to the WISLI absence policy.
- **Continued tardiness or excessive tardiness** may result in further penalty or dismissal.

WISLI understands that unforeseen circumstances can occur. Please notify the course instructor of any tardiness or absences as soon as possible.

WISLI Technology Policy

AI Policy

There are many helpful online tools available to language learners, and these tools should be used responsibly and in alignment with UW-Madison expectations of [academic integrity](#) and guidelines on [generative artificial intelligence](#). Do not use translation software or AI tools unless instructed to use these tools for assignments or projects. In these instances, these tools are to be used only in the manner permitted by the instructor. Ask for clarification if you have any questions about what is allowed.

AI Policy – Burmese Language Class

AI tools such as ChatGPT may be used to support your learning, especially in the context of studying a less commonly taught language like Burmese, where resources can be limited. However, these tools are meant to assist your learning process, not replace your own thinking or effort.

You may use AI to practice Burmese skills, including speaking, writing, vocabulary, and grammar, as well as to receive feedback on drafts, summarize texts, or generate examples such as differences between formal and colloquial usage. At the same time, you are expected to use these tools responsibly. Submitting AI-generated work as your own, using AI during tests or quizzes without permission, or copying responses without understanding and revising them is not allowed.

When using AI, you should aim to write clear and specific prompts, carefully check the accuracy of the output, and revise any generated content. You are responsible for understanding what you submit and should be able to explain your work if asked. Keep in mind that Burmese includes both formal and colloquial forms. The quality of feedback you receive will also depend on how well you frame your prompts. Until now AI cannot handle Burmese sounds correctly. Generated Burmese sounds may not be correct.

AI is intended for practice and learning support only. All final assessed work must reflect your own ability. While AI can be a helpful tool, your progress ultimately depends on your own effort, critical thinking, and engagement.

UW-Madison Academic Policies and Statements

- [Academic Calendar and Religious Observances](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Course Evaluations](#)
- [Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Student Health, Well-Being & Basic Needs](#)
- [Privacy of Student Records and the Use of Audio Recorded Lectures](#)
- [Remote Proctoring with Honorlock \(if applicable\)](#)
- [Students' Rules, Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Teaching & Learning Data Transparency](#)

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