

NEAR EASTERN STUDIES

<http://neareast.jhu.edu/>

The Department of Near Eastern Studies offers programs in four main areas: Egyptology, Assyriology, Northwest Semitic languages and literatures (including the Hebrew Bible), and Near Eastern Archaeology and art. The department approaches Near Eastern civilizations primarily through their own records, and language study is therefore an important part of the curriculum. However, many undergraduate courses require no knowledge of foreign languages and any interested student may take them.

Facilities

The university's Milton S. Eisenhower Library contains an outstanding collection of books and journals in the branches of Near Eastern studies pursued by the department. The Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum has a collection of Near Eastern antiquities, including excellent study collections of Egyptian artifacts and Palestinian pottery. The Baltimore-Washington area is especially rich in library and museum facilities. Of special interest to students of the Near East are the Walters Art Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Library of Congress.

Programs

- Near Eastern Studies, Bachelor of Arts (<https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/degree-programs/near-eastern-studies/near-eastern-studies-bachelor-arts/>)
- Near Eastern Studies, Minor (<https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/degree-programs/near-eastern-studies/near-eastern-studies-minor/>)
- Near Eastern Studies, PhD (<https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/degree-programs/near-eastern-studies/near-eastern-studies-phd/>)

For current course information and registration go to <https://sis.jhu.edu/classes/>

Courses

AS.130.101. Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations. 3 Credits.

Review of important issues in ancient Near Eastern history and culture from the Neolithic era to the Persian period. Included will be an examination of the Neolithic agricultural revolution, the emergence of cities, states and writing, and formation of empires. Cultures such as Sumer and Akkad, Egypt, the Hittites, Israelites, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians will be discussed.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.119. Medicine in Ancient Egypt. 3 Credits.

A survey of medicine and medical practice in Egypt and, to a lesser extent, the ancient Near East in general. The abundant sources range from magical spells to surprisingly "scientific" treatises and handbooks. Readings are selected from translations of primary sources in the writings of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Israel. Topics will include the sources of our knowledge; the nature of medical practitioners, medical treatment, and surgery; beliefs about disease and the etiology of illness; concepts of contagion and ritual purity.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.124. Texts, Tablets, and Tweets: The Sociolinguistics of Writing. 3 Credits.

This course examines the evolution of writing and the relationship between speech and writing in ancient and modern societies. We will examine the ways in which orthography, scripts, and the visual components inherent to written language (e.g., scripts, fonts, emoticons, diacritics etc.) are used to create and/or project certain social identities in these new written spaces. A primary aim of this course is to generate discussion regarding the ways in which writing in all of its forms—at the institutional, group, and individual level, in official documents, in emails, texts, tweets, and graffiti, using standardized and non-standard orthographies, in both regulated and unregulated spaces—can be a social and often political act of identity. The writing assignments for the course will encourage you to consider the ways in which writing can be harnessed to express social identities. You will work as a group to develop your own writing system and present it to the class. This will hone your creative and critical thinking skills and give you practice collaborating on a project. You will also research and conduct an original analysis on a corpus of writing.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.126. Gods and Monsters in Ancient Egypt. 3 Credits.

A basic introduction to Egyptian Religion, with a special focus on the nature of the gods and how humans interact with them. We will devote particular time to the Book of the Dead and to the "magical" aspects of religion designed for protective purposes.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.136. History of Hasidism. 3 Credits.

Although it appears to be a relic of pre-modern Judaism, Hasidism is a phenomenon of the modern era of Jewish history. This course surveys the political and social history of the Hasidic movement over the course of the last three centuries. Students will also explore basic features of Hasidic culture and thought in their historical development. Cross-listed with Jewish Studies.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.140. Hebrew Bible / Old Testament. 3 Credits.

The Bible is arguably the most read and yet most misinterpreted book of all time, one of the most influential and yet most misapplied work of literature. The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is Scripture to Jews and Christians yet also a rich collection of literature w/ numerous literary genres that has been highly influential on secular Western culture. At its core, it is our most important literary source that (when wed with archaeology) helps us to understand the people and culture of Iron Age Israel and Judah. This is an introductory course surveying of the books of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) giving primary attention to the religious ideas they contain and the ancient contexts in which they were composed. Topics include: The Academic Study of Religion, Ancient Creation Accounts, Ancestral Religion, The Exodus and Moses, Covenant, Tribalism and Monarchy, The Ideology of Kingship, Prophecy, Priestly Sources, Psalms, Wisdom Literature, and Apocalyptic Thought.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.152. After Babylon: Mesopotamia from Athens to Anime. 3 Credits.

This course is an exploration of how ancient Mesopotamian art, literature, history, and culture have been transmitted from the fall of Babylon in 539 BCE to the present day and the ways in which they have been adapted and transformed along the way. While all aspects of ancient Mesopotamia will be under discussion, the course will principally focus on the narratives of Gilgamesh, Semiramis/Shammuramat, and Sardanapalus/Assurbanipal. After briefly introducing ancient Mesopotamia, we will see how the region and its history are portrayed in biblical, Classical, Quranic, and medieval sources. From there we will discuss the “rediscovery” of Mesopotamia and the decipherment of cuneiform. The latter half of the course will then be devoted to Mesopotamia in 20th and 21st century popular culture.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.153. A (Virtual) Visit to the Louvre Museum: Introduction to the Material Culture of Ancient Egypt. 3 Credits.

This course will present the Egyptological collections of the musée du Louvre in Paris, room by room, as in a real visit. The experience will be enhanced by the study of objects that are not shown to the public but are kept in the reserves of the museum. From the 4th millennium BC to Roman time, the iconic “masterpieces” of this world-renowned art museum, as well as its little-known artifacts, will allow us to explore the history and material culture of ancient Egypt. We will also learn to observe, describe and analyze archaeological objects, in a global manner and without establishing a hierarchy between them, while questioning their place in the museum and its particular language. The objective will be to go beyond the objects themselves and answer, in fine, the following questions: What do these objects tell us about the men and women who produced them, exchanged them, used them, and lived among them in antiquity? What do they also reveal about those who discovered them in Egypt, several millennia later, about those who collected them and sometimes traded them, and what does this say about the relations between Egypt and the Western countries over time? The courses will be complemented by visits to the rich Egyptian collections in Baltimore.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.170. Diplomacy and Conflict in the Ancient Middle East. 3 Credits.

The Middle East is home to the invention of agriculture, cities, and writing. It is also in the Middle East that we find evidence of humanity's earliest diplomatic activity in, for instance, the actual letters sent by ancient kings to one another, the treaties drawn up after their conflicts, and the inscriptions that commemorate their conquests. In this course, we examine texts such as these to explore questions such as: How do we characterize the international system of the ancient Middle East? Does this system change over the approximately two millennia for which we have documentation? Is it better to approach ancient diplomacy through present-day eyes or in the context of ancient world-views? Is an understanding of diplomacy in the ancient Middle East relevant to our understanding of modern international relations? All texts read in translation.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.177. World Prehistory: An Anthropological Perspective. 3 Credits.

How and why did our nomadic hunting and gathering ancestors become farmers? What led agricultural societies to build cities, develop writing, religious institutions, wage war, and trade for exotic goods? This course surveys prehistory and ancient history from the origins of human culture to the emergence civilization. Although prehistory and ancient history yield evidence of tremendous cultural diversity this course emphasizes common elements of past human experience, culture, and culture change. These include the origins of modern humans and their adjustment to a variety of post-ice age environments, shifts from hunting and gathering to agricultural lifeways, and the initial development of the world's earliest cities and civilizations.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.130.202. Ancient Mythology. 3 Credits.

This course explores the mythology of the ancient Near East from the invention of writing in Sumer in 3000 B.C. until the conquest of Alexander the Great near the end of the first millennium B.C. Mythological texts from Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia, the Levant, and the Bible will be read from a comparative perspective. Special attention is paid to the origin and development of the epic, culminating in the great Epic of Gilgamesh, but considerable time is also given to the vast mythological and historical literature, and such diverse genres as love poetry, proverbs, humorous dialogues, Omens, and legal and medical texts. All readings are in English translation.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.203. Archaeology of Africa: From Human Origins to the Emergence of Civilizations. 3 Credits.

This course examines Africa's ancient past from the emergence of biologically modern humans, ancient hunter-gatherers, the earliest animal herding and farming populations, to cities and civilizations. While Egypt plays an undeniably central role in world history, this course concentrates in particular on ancient geographies other than Egypt.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.214. The Origins of Civilization: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. 3 Credits.

One of the most significant transformations in human history was the “urban revolution” in which cities, writing, and social classes formed for the first time. In this course, we compare five areas where this development occurred: China, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, Egypt, and Mesoamerica (Mexico/Guatemala/Honduras/Belize). In each region, we review the physical setting, the archaeological and textual evidence, and the theories advanced to explain the rise (and eventual collapse) of these complex societies.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.130.216. History of the Jews in Pre-Modern Times, from the Middle Ages to 1789. 3 Credits.

A broad survey of the significant political and cultural dynamics of Jewish history in the Medieval, Early-Modern, and Modern Eras.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.223. Ancient Revolutions: The Archaeology of Culture Change. 3 Credits.

The last 250,000 years have seen many moments that could be referred to as “revolutions” in art, technology, or other aspects of human society. The “Human Revolution” of the Upper Paleolithic saw the birth of artistic ability and symbolic thinking in hominids. We call the transition from hunting and gathering to settled agriculture the “Neolithic Revolution,” while the “Urban Revolution” gave us complex societies and urban life. Times of dynamic change gave rise to important aspects of our shared behavioral and societal identity. They have become the subject not only of much archaeological investigation, but also of popular discourse about the human past. This class will explore famous cultural “revolutions” by looking at the causes and consequences of these important changes. We will evaluate the archaeological evidence, and through it interrogate the term “revolution” itself. What do we mean when we speak of “revolutions?” Are there other ways to think of past social and technological change, and when, if ever, do we truly see “revolutions” in the human condition in the ancient past?

Area: Humanities

AS.130.245. The Archaeology of Gender in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean. 3 Credits.

How do art historians and archaeologists recover and study genders and sexualities of ancient people? This writing-intensive seminar looks at texts and objects from ancient Egypt, Assyria, and Greece through the lens of gender and sexuality studies. Beyond exploring concepts of gender in the ancient Eastern Mediterranean, students will also consider how modern scholars have approached, recovered, and written about ancient gender identities. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.130.246. Writing History in the Ancient Mediterranean World. 3 Credits.

Just what does it mean to “write history”? In this course, we will read a selection of historical texts from ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome, in order to examine how these cultures conceived of, and narrated, their own pasts. A major focus will be how these texts were created in order to understand or control the present. We will also examine how these texts have come down to us, and in what ways this might affect how we use them in constructing our own historical narratives. No prior knowledge of the ancient world necessary; all texts read in English translation.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.130.247. Digging for Legitimacy Archaeology, Museums, and Ideology. 3 Credits.

Archaeology was born out of Western Colonial endeavors into Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas. Large scale excavations conducted by the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, and the United States resulted in the removal and transfer of valuable (culturally and monetarily) material culture from local stewards and stakeholders to the West. To this day the discipline of archaeology is still saddled by its colonial past and the Hollywood interpretation of archaeologists as saviors of ancient treasures. Today, most interaction between people and ancient objects is facilitated via the museum. In this course we will explore 19th- 21st century archaeological and museum practices and the role they play in modern narratives of identity and representation in the America and the Middle East. Students will engage with the historical, legal, economic, and ethical implications of archaeology and analyze how political, religious, cultural, and academic institutions have leveraged archaeology and cultural artifacts to reify and legitimize their pursuits and ideologies.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.248. Up the Nile: New Approaches to the History of Egyptology and Nubiology. 3 Credits.

King Tut, Napoleon, Champollion, Ozymandias, Nefertiti: the history of Egyptology is filled with big characters, huge monuments, and glimmering objects. But it is also made up of colonialist practices, looted sites, and forgotten scholarly contributions. “Up the Nile” examines the antiquarian, colonialist, racist, Western-centric, and patriarchal roots of modern Egyptology and Nubiology, and addresses how scholars and enthusiasts alike are continuing to grapple with these lasting legacies and biases. This class investigates how the Egyptians and Nubians thought of their own histories, as well as how other ancient cultures viewed the cultures of the Nile. It moves roughly chronologically, tracing understudied and marginalized voices from the Islamic, Medieval, and Ottoman periods into the 20th and 21st centuries. It examines the origins of scholarship, modern collecting, Egyptomania, and museums, delving into the problems and repercussions that still haunt us today. “Up the Nile” will engage with important and difficult aspects regarding Egyptology’s and Nubiology’s colonialist, racist, and sexist past and present. It asks: who decides who writes history, then and now?

Area: Humanities

AS.130.249. Everything She Says is Done for Her: Exploring the Spheres of Influence of Women in Ancient Egypt. 3 Credits.

How did women move within their gendered spheres of influence in ancient Egyptian society? How do scholars discuss women in the ancient world and what are the spheres influence often allotted to women? How can we investigate the lives of women through the material record? What methodologies are applied by scholars to study women in antiquity? This course seeks to explore these questions and much more. The course will utilize textual and material evidence to examine and deconstruct the economic, social, religious, and political roles of women in ancient Egypt.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.300. History of Ancient Mesopotamia. 3 Credits.

A survey of the history of Sumer, Babylonia, and Assyria.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.301. History of Ancient Syria-Palestine. 3 Credits.

A survey of the history of Ancient Syria and Canaan, including Ancient Israel.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.302. History: Ancient Syria-Palestine II. 3 Credits.

A survey of the history of Ancient Syria and Cannan, including ancient Israel. Taught with AS.134.661. Cross-listed with Jewish Studies.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.334. Egyptian Funerary Arts in the Archaeological Museum. 3 Credits.

This class will aim to cover the production and choice of funerary objects for Egyptian elite tombs in several eras of antiquity: the Middle and New Kingdoms, the Third Intermediate Period, and the Late Periods. Students will work with specific objects after learning generally about them, and they will carry out analyses of materials, pigments, construction methods, and erosion and degradation effects. They will create a virtual exhibition for the Museum's website and present their results for inclusion in the museum cataloguing project.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.338. The Talmud as Read in the Middle Ages: The Sugya of Kavod HaBriot (Human Dignity). 3 Credits.

In the early Middle Ages the Talmud emerged as the defining document of official Jewish religion and culture, and remained so until the dawn of the Modern Era. Jewish scholars in many different countries, and in a wide variety of cultural contexts, developed certain ways of reading, interpreting, and applying the Talmud. In the process, they produced an immense corpus of commentary and law. This course will examine how and why the Talmud was studied in these centuries by Jews who mined it, subject by subject, for emotional, philosophical, and legal meaning.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.346. Introduction to the History of Rabbinic Literature. 3 Credits.

Broadly surveying classic rabbinic literature, including the Talmud and its commentaries, the legal codes and the response, this seminar explores the immanent as well as the external factors that shaped the development of this literature, the seminal role of this literature in Jewish self-definition and self-perception, and the role of this literature in pre-modern and modern Jewish culture.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.348. Survey Jewish History as Relected in Responsa Literature: How Immutable Judaism Wrestles with Change. 3 Credits.

How does a religious system which defines its ancient laws as God-given and unchangeable apply them to radically different and changing social, political and intellectual situations? This course explores the literature of "Questions and Answers"(She'elot u-Teshuvot), the Jewish legal responsa which have struggled to match Jewish religious law to modern life for fifteen centuries. A sweeping survey of Jewish history as revealed by one of its most impenetrable yet fascinating sources.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.353. Space Archaeology: An Introduction to Satellite Remote Sensing, GIS and GPS. 3 Credits.

This course introduces technologies archaeologists use to map ancient landscapes. These include Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping software, advanced Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers, and various types of satellite imagery. Taught together with AS.131.653.

Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.130.354. Archaeological Method and Theory. 3 Credits.

Climate change, population growth, war - what questions do archaeologists ask about the ancient past, how do they collect relevant evidence, and how do they arrive at satisfying answers to their questions? This course will review major theoretical currents in archaeology including evolutionary, cultural-historical, processual and post-processual approaches and discuss the future of archaeology as a scientific and humanistic discipline. Basic techniques for analyzing major categories of artifacts such as lithics, ceramics, archaeobotanical, and zooarchaeological materials will also be introduced.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.130.357. Geographic Information Systems in Archaeology. 3 Credits.

Applications of GIS in archaeology have recently expanded dramatically and GIS has now become an indispensable tool for archaeological research worldwide. This course will introduce the major applications of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in archaeology. These include the history of GIS in archaeology, air photography and satellite imagery, predictive modeling, hydrological modeling, viewsheds, and least-cost routes. It will grapple with theoretical issues manifest in archaeological GIS including conflicts between environment and social understandings of the ancient past, and will foster discussion of issues that affect outcomes of analyses including spatial scale and boundary delineation choices that can dramatically influence results. Students will learn the basics of ESRI's ArcGIS software. Taught with AS.131.657.

Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

AS.130.364. Archaeology of Arabia. 3 Credits.

This course examines the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula from the earliest Paleolithic in the region (c. 1.5 million years ago) through the first few centuries of the Islamic era (c. 1000 AD). We will review basic geology and environmental conditions, examine the development of animal herding and crop cultivating lifeways, and scrutinize the rise of ancient South Arabian complex societies and civilizations. Co-listed with AS.131.664.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.373. Prophets and Prophecy in the Bible. 3 Credits.

From thundering voices of social justice to apocalyptic visionaries, biblical prophets have been revered by Jews, Christians and Muslims for thousands of years. They have inspired civic leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. yet also provided fodder for modern charlatans promising a utopian future. Yet who were these individuals (orators? politicians? diviners? poets?) and what was the full range of their message as set against the Realpolitik world of ancient Israel, Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Jordan?

Area: Humanities

AS.130.376. Ancient Magic and Ritual. 3 Credits.

This course will introduce students to the vast body of rituals that were practiced and performed in antiquity, with a particular emphasis on rituals from ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Hebrew Bible. In addition to examining rituals from a comparative perspective, anthropological and sociological studies of ritual will be read and discussed to shed light on the social, cultural, and political significance of ritual in the ancient world and beyond.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.130.378. Geoarchaeology: Applications of Earth Science to Archaeology. 3 Credits.

Geoarchaeology is a multidisciplinary subfield that applies the tools and techniques of earth science to understand ancient humans and their interactions with environments. This course examines basic topics and concepts, including archaeological site formation, paleo-environmental reconstruction, raw materials and resources, soil science, deposition and erosion of wind and water-borne sediments in different environments such as along rivers, lakes and coastlines, radiocarbon and other chronometric dating methods, and ground-based remote sensing, including ground penetrating radar.

Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.130.381. Elementary Akkadian. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the paleography, grammar and lexicon of the Akkadian language, and the reading of simpler texts in that language. Co-listed with AS.132.600

Area: Humanities

AS.130.382. History of Mesopotamia II. 3 Credits.

A survey of the history of Sumer, Babylonia, and Assyria.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.383. Elementary Akkadian II. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the paleography, grammar, and lexicon of the Akkadian language, and the reading of simpler texts in that language. Continues AS.130.381

Area: Humanities

AS.130.388. Elementary Sumerian. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the paleography, grammar and lexicon of the Sumerian language, and the reading of simpler texts in that language.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.389. Elementary Sumerian II. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the paleography, grammar and lexicon of the Sumerian language and the reading of simpler texts in that language.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.400. Introduction To Middle Egyptian. 3 Credits.

Introduction to the grammar and writing system of the classical language of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (ca. 2055-1650 B.C.). In the second semester, literary texts and royal inscriptions will be read. Course meets with AS.133.600.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.401. Introduction To Middle Egyptian. 3 Credits.

Introduction to the grammar and writing system of the classical language of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (ca. 2011- 1700 B.C.). Co-listed with AS.133.601.

Prerequisite(s): AS.130.400 or equivalent.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.420. Seminar in Research Methods in Near Eastern Studies. 3 Credits.

This writing intensive seminar examines the relationship between religion and science in ancient Mesopotamia and the rest of the Near East from the 4th millennium to the Hellenistic period. Using a variety of case studies, and through engagement with scholarly literature pertaining to the topic of the course, students will develop skills in specific research skills such as critical reading, analysis, and interpretation.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.130.440. Elementary Biblical Hebrew. 3 Credits.

Introduction to the grammar, vocabulary, and writing system of biblical Hebrew.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.441. Elementary Biblical Hebrew II. 3 Credits.

Survey of grammar and reading of simple texts. May not be taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. A continuation of Elementary Biblical Hebrew I.

Prerequisite(s): AS.130.440

Area: Humanities

AS.130.442. Readings - Hebrew Prose. 3 Credits.

Reading of biblical Hebrew prose, especially from the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. Cross-listed with Jewish Studies.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.443. Readings - Hebrew Prose and Poetry. 3 Credits.

Reading of Biblical Hebrew Prose, from texts such as the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings.

Area: Humanities

AS.130.501. Readings & Research. 3 Credits.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.130.504. Independent Study. 1 - 3 Credits.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.130.505. Archaeology Fieldwork. 1 Credit.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.130.506. Independent Study-Archaeology Fieldwork. 1 - 3 Credits.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.130.510. Archaeology Major Honors Thesis I. 3 Credits.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

Writing Intensive

AS.130.511. Archaeology Major Honors Thesis II. 3 Credits.

Prerequisite(s): AS.130.510; You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

Writing Intensive

AS.130.590. Independent Study. 0 - 3 Credits.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.131.600. Seminar Near Eastern History.

Seminar in Near Eastern History.

AS.131.601. Seminar Near Eastern History: Mesopotamia.

A three-year history cycle required of all graduate students and forming the core of our graduate program. One year each will be devoted to Egyptian history, Mesopotamian history, and Syro-Palestinian history.

AS.131.613. Archaeology of Africa: From Human Origins to the Emergence of Civilizations.

This course examines Africa's ancient past from the emergence of biologically modern humans, ancient hunter-gatherers, the earliest animal herding and farming populations, to cities and civilizations. While Egypt plays an undeniably central role in world history, this course concentrates in particular on ancient geographies other than Egypt.

Area: Humanities

AS.131.634. Seminar: Near Eastern Archaeology.

Topic varies but can include the archaeology of Mesopotamia, Syria, or Palestine, or thematic discussions (e.g., on ideology, state collapse, etc.).

AS.131.635. Seminar: Near East Archaeology.

Topic varies but can include the archaeology of Mesopotamia, Syria, or Palestine, or thematic discussions (e.g., on ideology, state collapse, etc.).

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.131.653. Space Archaeology: An Introduction to Satellite Remote Sensing, GIS and GPS.

This course introduces technologies archaeologists use to map ancient landscapes. These include Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping software, advanced Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers, and various types of satellite imagery. Taught together with AS.130.353.

Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.131.654. Advanced Archaeological Method and Theory.

Climate change, population growth, war - what questions do archaeologists ask about the ancient past, how do they collect relevant evidence, and how do they arrive at satisfying answers to their questions? This course will review major theoretical currents in archaeology including evolutionary, cultural-historical, processual and post-processual approaches and discuss the future of archaeology as a scientific and humanistic discipline. Basic techniques for analyzing major categories of artifacts such as lithics, ceramics, archaeobotanical, and zooarchaeological materials will also be introduced.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.131.657. Geographic Information Systems in Archaeology.

Applications of GIS in archaeology have recently expanded dramatically and GIS has now become an indispensable tool for archaeological research worldwide. This course will introduce the major applications of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in archaeology. These include the history of GIS in archaeology, air photography and satellite imagery, predictive modeling, hydrological modeling, viewsheds, and least-cost routes. It will grapple with theoretical issues manifest in archaeological GIS including conflicts between environment and social understandings of the ancient past, and will foster discussion of issues that affect outcomes of analyses including spatial scale and boundary delineation choices that can dramatically influence results. Students will learn the basics of ESRI's ArcGIS software. Taught with AS.130.357.

Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

AS.131.664. Archaeology of Arabia.

This course examines the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula from the earliest Paleolithic in the region (c. 1.5 million years ago) through the first few centuries of the Islamic era (c. 1000 AD). We will review basic geology and environmental conditions, examine the development of animal herding and crop cultivating lifeways, and scrutinize the rise of ancient South Arabian complex societies and civilizations. Co-listed with AS.130.364.

AS.131.678. Geoarchaeology: Applications of Earth Science to Archaeology.

Geoarchaeology is a multidisciplinary subfield that applies the tools and techniques of earth science to understand ancient humans and their interactions with environments. This course examines basic topics and concepts, including archaeological site formation, paleo-environmental reconstruction, raw materials and resources, soil science, deposition and erosion of wind and water-borne sediments in different environments such as along rivers, lakes and coastlines, radiocarbon and other chronometric dating methods, and ground-based remote sensing, including ground penetrating radar.

Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.131.800. Readings & Research.**AS.131.801. Readings And Research.**

Area: Humanities

AS.131.848. Dissertation Research.**AS.131.849. Dissertation Research.****AS.131.850. Summer Independent Research.**

Independent summer research

AS.132.600. Elementary Akkadian.

An introduction to the paleography, grammar and lexicon of the Akkadian language, and the reading of simpler texts in that language.

AS.132.601. Elementary Akkadian II.

An introduction to the paleography, grammar and lexicon of the Akkadian language, and the reading of simpler texts in that language.

Area: Humanities

AS.132.606. Intermediate Akkadian Texts.

In this course a selection of intermediate level Akkadian texts from different genres and period will be read, analyzed and discussed. To build on skills learned in Introduction to Akkadian, specific emphasis will be placed on understanding more advanced grammatical forms and learning how to critically use research tools like the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary and von Soden's Akkadisches Handwoerterbuch.

AS.132.607. Intermediate Akkadian Texts.

In this course a selection of intermediate level Akkadian texts from different genres and period will be read, analyzed and discussed. To build on skills learned in Introduction to Akkadian, specific emphasis will be placed on understanding more advanced grammatical forms and learning how to critically use research tools like the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary and von Soden's Akkadisches Handwoerterbuch.

Area: Humanities

AS.132.608. Akkadian Letters.

This course introduces students to letters written in the Akkadian language from a variety of historical periods. Recommended course background: AS.132.600 and AS.132.601.

Area: Humanities

AS.132.609. Seminar in Research Methods in Near Eastern Studies.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.132.612. Advanced Akkadian.

Students read texts in the original Akkadian cuneiform with attention to their philological, archaeological, historical, and literary features. The seminar topic varies from semester to semester but usually consists either of texts of various genres from a single period (e.g., Neo-Assyrian) or texts of various period from a single genre (e.g., letters).

Area: Humanities

AS.132.631. Literature and Religious Texts.

AS.132.643. Ancient Magic and Ritual.

This course will introduce students to the vast body of rituals that were practiced and performed in antiquity, with a particular emphasis on rituals from Ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Hebrew Bible. In addition to examining rituals from a comparative perspective, anthropological and sociological studies of ritual will be read and discussed to shed light on the social, cultural, and political significance of ritual in the ancient world and beyond.

Area: Humanities

AS.132.644. Treaties And Diplomacy.

Reading treaties and related materials in Akkadian.

AS.132.701. Elementary Sumerian II.

Area: Humanities

AS.132.710. Advanced Sumerian.

We will read Letter Collection B and related materials in the original cuneiform.

AS.132.711. Advanced Sumerian.

In this course a selection of Sumerian texts from different periods and genres will be read and discussed from a linguistic, philological, historical, and literary perspective.

AS.132.800. Mesopotamian Seminar.

Research and discussion on topics of current interest.

AS.132.801. Mesopotamian Seminar.

Research and discussion on topics of current interest.

Area: Humanities

AS.133.304. Let's Play! Games from Ancient Egypt and Beyond. 3 Credits.

The ancient Egyptians played many games, as we do today. Board games, ball games, games of skill, etc., were not only part of daily life, but also had a role to play in religious practices and beliefs. Although the rules of the games are largely unknown to us, archaeological objects, funerary images, and texts help us to better understand their roles and meanings in ancient Egyptian culture. These various sources also show how games reflect some facets of the organization of the society, and reveal how the ancient Egyptians perceived some aspects of their world - social hierarchy, gender division, representation of death, relationship to chance/fate/divine will, etc. This course will present the evolution of games and play in Ancient Egypt from the 4th millennium B.C., with the first board game discovered in the tomb of a woman, through those deposited in the tomb of Tutankhamun, and up to the Roman period, with the games engraved on the ground by soldiers in the fortresses of the Eastern Desert. Particular attention will be paid to the travels of the games - Egyptian games played outside of Egypt and games of foreign origin played inside Egypt - because they allow for a better understanding of the intercultural connections that were established in between Egypt, Nubia, the Near East in general and the Mediterranean world. By replacing the games in their archaeological, historical and cultural contexts, the course is also intended as an original introduction to the civilization of ancient Egypt.

Area: Humanities

AS.133.600. Introduction To Middle Egyptian.

Introduction to the grammar and writing system of the classical language of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (ca. 2135-2000 B.C.). In the second semester, literary texts and royal inscriptions will be read.

AS.133.601. Introduction To Middle Egyptian (Hieroglyphs).

Introduction to the grammar and writing system of the classical language of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (ca. 2011-1700 B.C.). Co-listed with AS.130.401

Prerequisite(s): AS.133.600 or equivalent.

Area: Humanities

AS.133.610. Middle Egyptian Texts.

In this course we read a variety of Middle Egyptian hieroglyphic compositions and documents. Knowledge of Middle Egyptian Required.

AS.133.611. Middle Egyptian Texts.

In this course we read a variety of Middle Egyptian hieroglyphic compositions and documents. Knowledge of Middle Egyptian Required.

Area: Humanities

AS.133.616. Let's Play! Games from Ancient Egypt and Beyond.

The ancient Egyptians played many games, as we do today. Board games, ball games, games of skill, etc., were not only part of daily life, but also had a role to play in religious practices and beliefs. Although the rules of the games are largely unknown to us, archaeological objects, funerary images, and texts help us to better understand their roles and meanings in ancient Egyptian culture. These various sources also show how games reflect some facets of the organization of the society, and reveal how the ancient Egyptians perceived some aspects of their world - social hierarchy, gender division, representation of death, relationship to chance/fate/divine will, etc. This course will present the evolution of games and play in Ancient Egypt from the 4th millennium B.C., with the first board game discovered in the tomb of a woman, through those deposited in the tomb of Tutankhamun, and up to the Roman period, with the games engraved on the ground by soldiers in the fortresses of the Eastern Desert. Particular attention will be paid to the travels of the games - Egyptian games played outside of Egypt and games of foreign origin played inside Egypt - because they allow for a better understanding of the intercultural connections that were established in between Egypt, Nubia, the Near East in general and the Mediterranean world. By replacing the games in their archaeological, historical and cultural contexts, the course is also intended as an original introduction to the civilization of ancient Egypt.

Area: Humanities

AS.133.620. Hieratic.**AS.133.630. Old Egyptian.****AS.133.631. Old Egyptian.****AS.133.640. Late Egyptian.****AS.133.641. Late Egyptian Texts.**

An introduction to the grammar and texts of Late Egyptian.

Area: Humanities

AS.133.646. Demotic Texts.**AS.133.647. Demotic Texts.**

Area: Humanities

AS.133.648. Intro To Coptic.**AS.133.649. Advanced Coptic.**

In this class we will read Coptic texts of various genres.

AS.133.706. Egyptian Funerary Arts in the Archaeological Museum.

This class will aim to cover the production and choice of funerary objects for Egyptian elite tombs in several eras of antiquity: the Middle and New Kingdoms, the Third Intermediate Period, and the Late Periods. Students will work with specific objects after learning generally about them, and they will carry out analyses of materials, pigments, construction methods, and erosion and degradation effects. They will create a virtual exhibition for the Museum's website and present their results for inclusion in the museum cataloguing project.

AS.133.751. Seminar in Egyptian Art and Archaeology: Egyptian Art in Museums.

This course will utilize Egyptian collections in museums as a basis for studying Egyptian art. An aim is to evaluate how the experience of the objects impacts approaches to the discipline.

AS.134.101. GOD 101: The Early History of God - Origin, Character, Practice. 3 Credits.

In a world of big ideas, there is none larger than that of God. Divinity is an ever-present topic for both religious devotees and hard core secularists—for anyone who embraces the humanities or ponders what makes us human. Humans are, for better and worse, homo-religiosus (humans who practice religion) as much as homo-sapiens. But what do we know of God historically? How do we go about reconstructing divinity from ancient texts and archaeology? How do we best walk back in time to understand ancient Middle Eastern cultures that gave birth to notions of the divine that have come down to today's Judaism, Christianity and Islam? This course looks synthetically at the vast topic of God—exploring questions of historical origin, how God was characterized in literature (mythic warrior, king, parent, judge, holy, compassionate) and how God was represented in iconography, both materially and abstractly. Secondly, how did belief intersect with practice? Using the indow of divinity, this course will peer into the varieties of religion experience, exploring the royal use of religion for power, prestige and control balanced against the intimacy of family and household religion. It will probe priestly prerogatives and cultic status, prophetic challenges to injustice, and the pondering of theodicy by poetic sages.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.301. Introduction to the Pentateuch. 3 Credits.

This course surveys the linguistic and literary structure of the Pentateuch, with a focus on P and non-P in Genesis and Exodus. A second and equally important focus will be the history of scholarship and its broader impact on the study of the history and religion of ancient Israel and Judah. We will examine critical issues in the study of the Pentateuch, focusing on scholarly reconstructions of composition and redaction and key literary themes. Throughout our examination of the biblical text, we will also address parallels to other ancient Near Eastern corpora.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.400. Northwest Semitic Epigraphy. 3 Credits.

This course will provide an introduction to West Semitic dialects as reflected in inscriptions from the first millennium BCE. We will survey the grammar (phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon) of epigraphic Hebrew, Phoenician, and known Transjordanian languages (Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite). We will also discuss the methodological challenges inherent to the study of script evolution, scribalism, and the reconstruction of NWS languages through the study of inscriptions. This course will also introduce students to scholarship outside of the field of NWS and Hebrew Bible on literacy, the study of visual grammar, and the socio-semiotic approach to the study of writing.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.404. The Book of Job. 3 Credits.

Reading portions of the Book of Job in Hebrew. In addition to increasing proficiency in biblical Hebrew, the course also involves critical exegesis including grammatical analysis and textual criticism. Students will interact with various aspects of interpretation for the Book of Job (e.g., philology, text history, structure, literary history, message, poetics, rhetoric, philosophy, theology and reception history).

Area: Humanities

AS.134.406. Kings, Prophets, and Scribes: The Creation of "Israel" in the Deuteronomistic History. 3 Credits.

This class will introduce students to "The Deuteronomistic History," which comprises the biblical books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings. The narrative arc of this "history" spans the giving of the law to Moses to the rise and fall of the monarchies of Israel and Judah, respectively in the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods. During this course we will examine the reasons why biblical scholars have argued in varying ways that this body of text represents the work of a group of ideologically driven scribes, the Deuteronomists; we will also investigate the primary texts themselves for evidence for divergent views about the need for a king in Israel and the role and fate of the royal house of David. We will also explore the relationship between the books of the former prophets (Joshua>2 Kings) and Deuteronomy, which is a book that concludes the Pentateuch. This course requires students to engage with the biblical text in the original Hebrew language at an advanced level. We will also engage with biblical scholarship regarding the scope, purpose, and nature of a cohesive Deuteronomistic History, as well as with dissenting voices that probe the unity of these biblical books.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.408. The Book of Ezekiel. 3 Credits.

A rapid reading course aimed at increasing proficiency in reading the Hebrew text of the book of Ezekiel. Various aspects of translation and interpretation will be studied (e.g., grammar, textual criticism, Philology) including literary, historical, and theological questions.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.409. Prophets and Prophecy in the Hebrew Bible. 3 Credits.

From thundering voices of social justice to apocalyptic visionaries, biblical prophets have been revered by Jews, Christians and Muslims for thousands of years. They have inspired civic leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. yet also provided fodder for modern charlatans promising a utopian future. Yet who were these individuals (orators? politicians? diviners? poets?) and what was the full range of their message as set against the Realpolitik world of ancient Israel, Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Jordan?"

Area: Humanities

AS.134.410. Kings and Chronicles. 3 Credits.

This course surveys scholarship on the histories of Israel and Judah as presented in Kings and Chronicles. The course also addresses changes in the Hebrew language in the first millennium BCE.

Prerequisite(s): AS.130.440 OR AS.130.441

Area: Humanities

AS.134.450. Seminar in Hebrew: Archaic Biblical Poetry. 3 Credits.

Translation and analysis of selected texts in Biblical Hebrew giving attention to advanced features of grammar and syntax. Topic: "Archaic Biblical Poetry".

Area: Humanities

AS.134.604. The Book Of Job.

Reading portions of the Book of Job in Hebrew. In addition to increasing proficiency in biblical Hebrew, the course also involves critical exegesis including grammatical analysis and textual criticism. Students will interact with various aspects of interpretation for the Book of Job (e.g., philology, text history, structure, literary history, message, poetics, rhetoric, philosophy, theology and reception history)

Area: Humanities

AS.134.606. Kings, Prophets, and Scribes: The Creation of "Israel" in the Deuteronomistic History.

This class will introduce students to "The Deuteronomistic History," which comprises the biblical books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings. The narrative arc of this "history" spans the giving of the law to Moses to the rise and fall of the monarchies of Israel and Judah, respectively in the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods. During this course we will examine the reasons why biblical scholars have argued in varying ways that this body of text represents the work of a group of ideologically driven scribes, the Deuteronomists; we will also investigate the primary texts themselves for evidence for divergent views about the need for a king in Israel and the role and fate of the royal house of David. We will also explore the relationship between the books of the former prophets (Joshua>2 Kings) and Deuteronomy, which is a book that concludes the Pentateuch. This course requires students to engage with the biblical text in the original Hebrew language at an advanced level. We will also engage with biblical scholarship regarding the scope, purpose, and nature of a cohesive Deuteronomistic History, as well as with dissenting voices that probe the unity of these biblical books.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.607. Texts, Tablets, and Tweets: The Sociolinguistics of Writing.

This course examines the evolution of writing and the relationship between speech and writing in ancient and modern societies. We will examine the ways in which orthography, scripts, and the visual components inherent to written language (e.g., scripts, fonts, emoticons, diacritics etc.) are used to create and/or project certain social identities in these new written spaces. A primary aim of this course is to generate discussion regarding the ways in which writing in all of its forms—at the institutional, group, and individual level, in official documents, in emails, texts, tweets, and graffiti, using standardized and non-standard orthographies, in both regulated and unregulated spaces—can be a social and often political act of identity. The writing assignments for the course will encourage you to consider the ways in which writing can be harnessed to express social identities. You will work as a group to develop your own writing system and present it to the class. This will hone your creative and critical thinking skills and give you practice collaborating on a project. You will also research and conduct an original analysis on a corpus of writing.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.608. Book Of Ezekiel.

A rapid reading course aimed at increasing proficiency in reading the Hebrew text of the book of Ezekiel. Various aspects of translation and interpretation will be studied (e.g., grammar, textual criticism, Philology) including literary, historical, and theological questions. Cross-listed with Jewish Studies.

AS.134.609. Prophets and Prophecy in the Hebrew Bible.

From thundering voices of social justice to apocalyptic visionaries, biblical prophets have been revered by Jews, Christians and Muslims for thousands of years. They have inspired civic leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. yet also provided fodder for modern charlatans promising a utopian future. Yet who were these individuals (orators? politicians? diviners? poets?) and what was the full range of their message as set against the Realpolitik world of ancient Israel, Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Jordan?"

Area: Humanities

AS.134.623. Pentateuch.

This course surveys the linguistic and literary structure of the Pentateuch. A second and equally important focus will be the history of scholarship and its broader impact on the study of the history and religion of ancient Israel and Judah.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.650. Seminar in Hebrew.**AS.134.651. Seminar: Hebrew.****AS.134.652. Seminar in Ancient Israelite Religion.**

Topics include history of scholarship, methodology, representations of deity, the aniconic tradition, solar Yahwism, sacred space, blood rituals, passover, royal cult, family religion, divination, prophecy, incantations, etc.

AS.134.660. History of Ancient Syria/Palestine.

A survey of the history of Ancient Syria and Canaan, including Ancient Israel.

AS.134.661. History: Ancient Syria-Palestine II.

A survey of the history of Ancient Syria and Cannan, including Ancient Israel.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.700. Northwest Semitic Epigraphy.**AS.134.720. Ugaritic I.**

A year-long course studying Ugaritic language and literature. The first semester will focus on grammar and translating a representative selection of mythological texts. The second semester will concentrate on ritual texts. The course will also be epigraphic in nature using both conventional and digital techniques.

AS.134.721. Ugaritic II.

A continuation of AS.134.720 with emphasis on the mythological and ritual texts from Ugarit. A digital epigraphy lab will also form part of the course.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.744. Survey Of Aramaic Texts.

Area: Humanities

AS.134.747. Archaic Aramaic.

An advanced course in Aramaic devoted to the study of Old Aramaic inscriptions. We will be translating and analyzing a selection of texts from Northern Syria (e.g. Bar-Rakib; Hadad; Kuttamuwa, Nerab, Panamuwa, Sefire, Zakkur), Southern Syria (e.g. Bar-Hadad/Melqart Stela, Hazael, Tel Dan) and Northern Mesopotamia (e.g. Tell Fakhariyah). Students will be expected to vocalize such texts as a study in historical and comparative linguistics and to clarify their understanding of the morphology and syntax.

Area: Humanities

Cross Listed Courses

Archaeology

AS.136.101. Introduction To Archaeology. 3 Credits.

An introduction to archaeology and to archaeological method and theory, exploring how archaeologists excavate, analyze, and interpret ancient remains in order to reconstruct how ancient societies functioned. Specific examples from a variety of archaeological projects in different parts of the world will be used to illustrate techniques and principles discussed. Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Classics

AS.040.216. Exploring the Ancient Astronomical Imagination. 3 Credits.

This course takes us on an exploratory journey through the ancient astronomical imaginary. We will focus on ancient Greek and Roman ideas about the structure of the cosmos, the substance and nature of the stars, the Earth's place and role in the universe, ancient attempts to map the stars, and ancient beliefs about the significance of cosmic phenomena for events in the human world. The course will culminate in the extraordinary ancient tradition of lunar fictions, which are our earliest imaginative accounts of life on other worlds. Come join us for a voyage to the stars!

Area: Humanities

Earth & Planetary Sciences

AS.270.205. Introduction to Geographic Information Systems and Geospatial Analysis. 3 Credits.

The course provides a broad introduction to the principles and practice of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and related tools of Geospatial Analysis. Topics will include history of GIS, GIS data structures, data acquisition and merging, database management, spatial analysis, and GIS applications. In addition, students will get hands-on experience working with GIS software.

Area: Engineering, Natural Sciences

First Year Seminars

AS.001.147. FYS: Reading Ancient Middle Eastern Literature. 3 Credits.

The Middle East is home to some of the world's earliest and most important literature. In this First-Year Seminar, students will read in translation a selection of texts from different traditions that flourished in the pre-Islamic Middle East. Sample readings include the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Descent of Ishtar to the Netherworld, and the battle between David and Goliath from the Hebrew Bible. As we read, we will consider why ancient Middle Eastern literature may be more relevant to our own present moment than ever before.

Area: Humanities

History

AS.100.374. Conquest, Conversion, and Language Change in the Middle Ages. 3 Credits.

Examines case-studies of imperial conquests (Islamic, Mongol, reconquista, early colonialism) and attendant changes in religion (Christianization; Islamization) and in language (Arabization; transition from Latin to European vernaculars) across medieval Eurasia.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.100.383. Conversion and Apostasy in the Middle Ages. 3 Credits.

Compares religious transformation in medieval Europe and the Middle East (ca. 600-1500), including conquest and conversion; conversion narratives; apostasy, martyrdom and other encounters between medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Pre-requisite for enrollment: Students must have taken one history course.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.100.615. States, Scribes, and Archives: Medieval Arabic Documentary Cultures.

Historical survey of scribal and archiving practices of medieval Islamic states (in comparative perspective); includes close readings of primary documents, including legal deeds, petitions, edicts, fiscal receipts, and administrative reports.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.100.682. Introductory Topics in Computation for Scholarship in the Humanities.

The first half of this seminar course consists of non-mathematical introductions to, and discussions of, the fundamental motivations, vocabulary, and methods behind computational techniques of particular use for humanistic research. The second half combines selected readings chosen to address specific questions raised by these discussions with hands-on application to students' research goals. Each participant will lead discussion for one of the selected readings relevant to their interests.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

History of Art

AS.010.205. Art of Mesoamerica. 3 Credits.

This course provides a basis for the study of Mesoamerican visual cultures and urban settings. We will explore the artistic production of the Olmec, Maya, and Aztec as well as works created by the artists of Teotihuacan, Monte Albán, and West Mexico. With a focus on aesthetics and cultural function, case studies range from stone sculpture, painted ceramics, and screenfold codices, to architectural complexes from Mexico and Central America. Themes to be discussed include: representations of humans and deities, monumentality and rulership, mutilation and destruction of monuments, and ritual and political significance of materials.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.240. Art and the Environment in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean. 3 Credits.

What is the relationship between art and the environment? What are "geoaesthetics?" This course explores the interrelationships between ecosystem and creative responses and practices in the ancient Eastern Mediterranean. Specifically, the class will examine the intersections between artistic and architectural practices and the natural environment during the New Kingdom in ancient Egypt, the Neo-Assyrian period in ancient Mesopotamia, and the Minoan Bronze Age in the ancient Aegean.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.301. Michelangelo: Religion, Sexuality, and the Crisis of Renaissance Art. 3 Credits.

The course will focus on the controversies surrounding the representation of the body in the writings and figurative art of Michelangelo and his contemporaries, the historical circumstances under which the most admired artist in Europe was attacked as a blasphemer and an idolator, and the effect of widespread calls for censorship on his later production. The writings of Michelangelo, Pietro Aretino, Benvenuto Cellini and own writings will be considered with a focus on their staging of an ambivalent and transgressive eroticism.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.307. Diplomats, Dealers, and Diggers: The Birth of Archaeology and the Rise of Collecting from the 19th c. to Today. 3 Credits.

The development of archaeology in the Middle East – its history of explorers, diplomats, missionaries and gentlemen-scholars – profoundly shaped the modern world, from the creation of new museums and the antiquities market to international relations and terrorism.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.315. Art of the Assyrian Empire, 1000-600 BCE. 3 Credits.

From 900 to 609 BCE, the Assyrian Empire dominated the ancient Near Eastern world, stretching from western Iran to the Mediterranean and Egypt. In concert with imperial expansion came an explosion of artistic production ranging from palace wall reliefs to small-scale luxury objects. This course provides an integrated picture of the imperial arts of this first world empire, situating it within the broader social and political contexts of the first millennium BCE. In its conquest of foreign lands, this powerful state came in contact with and appropriated a diversity of cultures, such as Phoenicia, Egypt, and Greece, which we will also study.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.319. Medieval Art and Architecture of the Holy Land. 3 Credits.

The course focuses on art and architecture in the political and religious contexts of the Middle East, from the 4th to the 14th c. The three monotheistic religions all claimed specific territories – in particular the city of Jerusalem – for cult practices. This situation resulted in military conflicts that had an impact of Jewish, Medieval, Byzantine, and Islamic art in the Holy Land. The political conflicts, which still plague the region today, are rooted in the complex situation of the medieval period. The Roman, Arab, Byzantine, and crusader invasions resulted however in exciting eclectic styles that characterize the art and architecture of the region. We will discuss concepts behind political and religious leadership, as they intersect with the power of the arts.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.010.349. Art and Interactions in the Eastern Mediterranean from 2000 to 500 BCE. 3 Credits.

The arts of Egypt, Greece and the Near East are typically taught separately from one another. However, the Mediterranean Sea has always served as a connector, and the diverse cultures of these areas were in close contact with one another for much of their histories. From 2000 to 500 BCE (the Middle/Late Bronze and Iron Ages), these interactions were particularly dynamic, resulting in a diversity of arts including wall frescoes, precious jewelry, and elaborate furnishings and weaponry. This course examines the arts of the interactions among Egyptians, Near Easterners, Greeks and others. It focuses special attention on the role of artistic products in intercultural relations, including trade, diplomacy, war, imperialism, and colonization.

Prerequisite(s): AS.010.301 - Titled "Art and Interactions in the Eastern Mediterranean from 2000 to 500 BCE" - Students who have taken that course in 2014 or prior are not permitted to take this course.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.364. Babylon: Myth and Reality. 3 Credits.

Babylon – the name resonates even today, from the biblical whore of Revelation to sci-fi. It evokes exotic places and time long past. But what do we really know about the ancient city and the civilization that flourished there thousands of years ago? The first part of this course examines the archaeological city of Babylon, located in the modern state of Iraq, and considers its artistic and architectural achievements in the context of Mesopotamian history. The second part of the class explores the ongoing impact of Babylon in the cultural imagination of later periods, from the Classical and biblical authors, to European artists, Hollywood movies, science fiction, and contemporary political movements.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.389. The Stone and the Thread. 3 Credits.

Advanced inquiry into imperial Inka architecture and fiber arts.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.010.398. Tombs for the Living. 3 Credits.

Centering on the tomb as the unit of analysis, this course examines the cultural and material aspects of death and funerary ritual. Case studies are drawn from North America, Mesoamerica, and the Andes. Collections study in museums.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.444. Classics Research Lab: Antioch Recovery Project (ARP). 3 Credits.

Antioch Recovery Project investigates mosaics from the ancient city of Antioch (modern Antakya, Turkey, near the border with Syria) now in the collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art. Excavated by an international team of archaeologists in the 1930s, hundreds of ancient mosaics from the cosmopolitan city were subsequently dispersed to museums across the globe, with twenty-four mosaics entering the collection of the BMA. Phase I will focus on the digital documentation and analysis of the mosaic of Narcissus as a prototype for ongoing research bringing together the fragments of ancient Antioch for contemporary beholders. The Greek myth of Narcissus tells the story of a beautiful Theban hunter doomed to love his own reflection and is the origin of the modern psychiatric term "narcissism". Researching the mythology, materials, conservation history, archival material, historiography, and contemporary reception of the Narcissus mosaic and myth offers extensive opportunities to collaborate with scholars across a range of disciplines at JHU, in the Baltimore museum community, and beyond. Investigators will move between the Baltimore Museum of Art, the CRL processing lab in Gilman Hall, and Special Collections. The course will involve some travel to visit other mosaics from Antioch now in collections at Harvard's Dumbarton Oaks in Washington D.C., and the Princeton Art Museum in Princeton, New Jersey.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.611. Seminar in Near Eastern Art.**AS.010.625. Art and Interaction in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean.**

The arts of the Near East, Aegean and Egypt are typically taught separately from one another. However, the Mediterranean Sea has always served as a connector, and the diverse cultures of these areas were in close contact with one another for much of their histories. During the Bronze Age (3000 to 1200 BCE), these interactions were particularly dynamic, resulting in a diversity of arts including wall frescoes, precious jewelry, and elaborate furnishings and weaponry. This course examines the arts of the interactions among Near Easterners, Greeks, Egyptians and others. It focuses special attention on the role of artistic products in intercultural relations, including trade, diplomacy, war and imperialism. Students are not expected to have extensive knowledge of all the areas, although some experience in at least one of them will be helpful. The course will interweave establishing a knowledge base necessary to tackle this topic with broader conceptual concerns and interdisciplinary approaches (art historical, archaeological, anthropological, and historical). There will be a final paper.

Area: Humanities

AS.010.646. Art and Architecture at the Eastern Frontier: Medieval Georgia.

This seminar investigates the fascinating landscape of medieval art and architecture of Georgia. Its specific geographic position in the South Caucasus, at the cross roads between the East and West, the Christian and Islamic Worlds, had a profound impact on the art and architecture in the region. Ancient sites show close connections with the Graeco-Roman World on the western border and with the Sassanid Empire in the East. The Christianization of the Kingdom of Kartli in the early fourth century resulted in close ties with the development of early Christian art in Syria, the Holy Land, and Byzantium. While the Christian religion remained an identifying factor during several hundred years of Muslim rule (736 to 1122) during which the city of Tbilisi was the capital of an emirate, Islamic motifs and style became an important factor for art works in medieval Georgia. Art and architecture with a specific Byzantine profile flourished in particular after the reunification of Georgia during the reign of King David the Builder (1073- 1125) and Queen Tamar (1184 to 1213). The cathedral and monastery of Gelati and Mzcheta, the murals in the royal monasteries of Vardzia and Khintsvisi, and the countless icons are a testimony to this relationship. We will discuss the specific diverse aesthetics and materiality (stone, enamel and metal works) of Georgian art with the goal to reassess the map of medieval art and architecture that currently does not include the Eastern Frontier. A mandatory c. 10 days field trip to Georgia is planned after classes end in May 2020.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

Medicine, Science and the Humanities**AS.145.101. Death and Dying in Art, Literature, and Philosophy:****Introduction to Medical Humanities. 3 Credits.**

In this course, four essential aspects of the theme of death and dying will be examined: Death and Medicine; Emotional Responses to Death; Burying and Commemorating the Dead; and Conceptions of Death. Specific topics relating to each of these aspects that will be covered include illness and causes of death; prevention of death; suicide; death and grief; burial practices; mourning the dead; public commemoration of the dead; life after death; and death and rebirth. Students will explore these topics from a historical-anthropological perspective with Paul Delnero, a specialist in the history and culture of the ancient Near East (Near Eastern Studies); from a literary perspective, by reading and writing poetry relating to these subjects with the acclaimed poet James Arthur (Writing Seminars); and from a musical perspective, through direct encounters with the music and creative process of the award-winning composer, Michael Hersch (Peabody).

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

Program in Museums and Society**AS.389.315. Ancient Color: The Technologies and Meanings of Color in Antiquity. 3 Credits.**

What role did the colorful surfaces of sculptures, vessels and textiles play in the ancient world? We examine historical texts and recent scholarly and scientific publications on the technologies and meanings of color in antiquity, and use imaging and analytical techniques to study polychromed objects from the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

For current faculty and contact information go to <http://neareast.jhu.edu/people/>