

AS.130-134 (NEAR EASTERN STUDIES)

Courses

AS.130

AS.130.101. Ancient Middle 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4), Democracy (FA4.1)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution 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. From the Predynastic period, in 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?

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.130.154. Giving Birth and Coming to Life in Ancient Egypt: The Tree and the Fruit. 3 Credits.

Childbirth is an event that is highly cultural, and is accompanied by gestures and beliefs that say a lot about the society in which they can be observed. This class will be based on Ancient Egyptian texts (translated), images and objects related to beliefs and practices surrounding pregnancy, birth-giving and the first moments of human life. We will discover the Egyptian views on procreation, the objects, the spells and the formulas used to protect pregnancy and childbirth – one of the most dangerous moments in a woman's life –, the divine entities invoked, the reactions caused by non-ordinary births (for example, twins), and the purification rites that punctuate the post-partum period. Finally, we will see that the first biological birth is a model on which many beliefs about life after death are based. Several guest researchers will present birth and childbirth in other ancient societies in order to broaden the discussion and establish comparisons.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.130.155. Sacred Signs: The History and Mystery of Egyptian Hieroglyphs. 3 Credits.

Everybody has heard of the hieroglyphs, but few know much about them. In this class we will begin by learning how the hieroglyphic writing system works. We will then think about the role that hieroglyphs and writing itself plays in Ancient Egypt. Knowledge of the hieroglyphs died out about 450 CE, but Renaissance and Early Modern scholars were still intensely interested in them. Why? Progress in true decipherment began about 1800 CE, the time of Napoleon. We will devote time to the fascinating story of the brilliant scholars (e.g., Champollion) who competed for the honor of decipherment and the different theories which they offered. No prior knowledge of Ancient Egypt or the Ancient Egyptian Language required.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.130.156. It's Pharaonic Egypt, hon! Intro to Anc Egyptian Culture, Society & Art at the Walters Art Museum. 3 Credits.

The Walters Art Museum in Baltimore is home to one of the finest collections of Egyptian art in the United States. This course will provide an introduction to the culture and society of pharaonic Egypt and ancient Egyptian art based upon this collection. Most of the sessions will take place in the museum's galleries, in front of the objects. The course will be divided into thematic sessions: Living in Ancient Egypt; Believing and Worshipping; Writing and Creating Art; Dying in Ancient Egypt. One session will also be devoted to the history of the Walters Art Museum and its Egyptian department, with a "behind-the-scenes experience" provided by the museum's curators. The goal of this course is not only to provide a general introduction to ancient Egypt to the students, but also to educate them in the observation, description, and analysis of ancient art and daily life objects. In this way, students will be able to place them in a broader context and understand how objects and artworks contribute to our knowledge and understanding of societies of the past.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Democracy (FA4.1), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.130.216. History of the Jews in Pre-Modern Times, From the Middle-Ages to 1600. 3 Credits.

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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?

Distribution 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.130.271. Scribes, Scribal Education, and Literacy in the Ancient Middle East. 3 Credits.

In the ancient Middle East, the term "scribe" refers to individuals skilled in writing cuneiform, the writing system developed in Mesopotamia. Their intellectual work, preserved primarily on clay tablets, is associated with various aspects of society, including politics, administration, trade, law, religion and culture. This course will introduce students to the core subjects that junior scribes learned to read and write in school. We will also explore scribes' diverse roles within specific social and historical contexts and understand how these skilled writers engaged in social activities and preserved and shaped their past.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.130.314. 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.130.315. 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.130.314

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

AS.130.352. 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.

Distribution 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.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Science and Data (FA2), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Science and Data (FA2), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.130.364. Archaeology of Arabia. 3 Credits.

This course examines the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula from the earliest Paleolithic in the region (ca. 1.5 million years ago) through the first millennium of the Islamic era (ca. AD 1600). We will review basic geology and environmental conditions, examine the development of animal herding and crop cultivating lifeways, and study the rise of ancient complex societies and civilizations.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

AS.130.366. Reading Talmud Pre-Modern Jewish Culture: Marital Abuse/ Marriage Annulment Post-Talmudic Rabbinic Li. 3 Credits.

The evolution of Talmudic thinking resulted in laws which made marriage too easy, divorce too difficult. This generated centuries of attempts to grapple with the consequences of this conundrum in real-life situations. This course analyzes the literature produced by these attempts. Students will read texts in original Hebrew. Knowledge of Hebrew required.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.130.368. Nomads and Empires: Water in the Ancient Near East. 3 Credits.

Water and its histories reveal deep similarities and pivotal differences among human societies that are critical to understanding the human past and our future. Environments are often defined by water availability and periodicity, water is a frequent theme of religious traditions and a common point of political conflict. The hydraulic hypothesis, one of the longest-standing potential explanations for the rise of the world's earliest civilizations, claims that organizational requirements of large-scale irrigation spawned ancient political hierarchies and cities. Archaeologists now know irrigation was not the only factor responsible for the origins of ancient states, but water management was important to agriculture in every region of ancient state formation. This course explores economic and social histories of water in the ancient Near East. It examines water's diverse roles in ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Levantine and South Arabian agriculture, politics, ritual and religion, including water's interconnected significance in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.130.369. Law in the Ancient Middle East. 3 Credits.

The Middle East offers the earliest and most abundant source material for reconstructing ancient legal systems. From stone monuments like the Code of Hammurabi to clay tablets the size of postage stamps, the cuneiform record provides a window into not just legal thought but actual legal practice in the ancient Middle East. Surveying a span of more than two thousand years, we will explore the law in both its deep structure and its regional and temporal diversity. Specific topics will include homicide and personal injury law, family law, the legal status of women, codes and codification, and ancient Israelite law in its Middle Eastern context. No background is required and all texts are read in translation, but every enrolled student is expected to actively participate in this seminar-style course.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Science and Data (FA2), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

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

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.130.396. Readings in a Talmudic Sugya ("Zonah" and "Lav"-Struggling to Define Prohibited Sexual Relationships in pre-Modern Jewish Thought). 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. The problem was that the texts were not easily understandable, and the norms unclear. In premodern times, certain literary-approaches evolved which were taken by contemporaries as yielding significant meaning. Among the most interesting of these was the broad-sugya. In this course, students will follow the reasoning-process of a broad-sugya as they read a guided-series of passages and commentaries located throughout the Babylonian Talmud on the subject of the valence of human-life. All readings will be in the original Hebrew and Aramaic. Ability to read Hebrew and Aramaic required.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.130.420. Research Methods: Arts of the Mesopotamian World: Crafters & Consumers. 3 Credits.

This hybrid seminar examines in depth a series of artistic case studies over a 3000 year period in the region of what is today Iraq, Syria, and southeastern Turkey, from c. 3500-500 BCE. Discussion will focus on processes of making and contexts of using myriad forms of art and architecture. Topics will include the invention of writing and complex imagery; portraiture and ritual practice; the symbolic value of materials; visual narration; and the uses of space for expressive purposes. We will approach these and other topics through critical engagement with existing scholarship, as well as by direct study of objects in nearby museum collections.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

Writing Intensive

AS.130.440. Elementary Biblical Hebrew. 3 Credits.

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.130.501. Readings & Research. 3 Credits.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Customized Academic Learning using the Customized Academic Learning form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

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

Prerequisite(s): You must request Customized Academic Learning using the Customized Academic Learning form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.130.520. Near Eastern Studies Major Honors Thesis. 3 Credits.

Thesis writing related to Near Eastern Studies major.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Customized Academic Learning using the Customized Academic Learning form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.130.521. Near Eastern Studies Major Honors Thesis. 3 Credits.

Thesis writing related to Near Eastern Studies major.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Customized Academic Learning using the Customized Academic Learning form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.131

AS.131.600. Seminar Near Eastern History. 3 Credits.

Seminar in Near Eastern History.

AS.131.601. Seminar Near Eastern History. 3 Credits.

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.131.615. Nomads and Empires: Water in the Ancient Near East.

Water and its histories reveal deep similarities and pivotal differences among human societies that are critical to understanding the human past and our future. Environments are often defined by water availability and periodicity, water is a frequent theme of religious traditions and a common point of political conflict. The hydraulic hypothesis, one of the longest-standing potential explanations for the rise of the world's earliest civilizations, claims that organizational requirements of large-scale irrigation spawned ancient political hierarchies and cities. Archaeologists now know irrigation was not the only factor responsible for the origins of ancient states, but water management was important to agriculture in every region of ancient state formation. This course explores economic and social histories of water in the ancient Near East. It examines water's diverse roles in ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Levantine and South Arabian agriculture, politics, ritual and religion, including water's interconnected significance in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.131.634. Seminar: Near Eastern Archaeology. 3 Credits.

Topic varies but can include the archaeology of Mesopotamia, Syria, or Palestine, or thematic discussions (e.g., on ideology, state collapse, etc.). In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.131.635. Seminar: Near East Archaeology. 3 Credits.

Topic varies but can include the archaeology of Mesopotamia, Syria, or Palestine, or thematic discussions (e.g., on ideology, state collapse, etc.). In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.131.653. 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.130.353.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.131.654. Advanced 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.131.657. 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.130.357.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

AS.131.664. Archaeology of Arabia. 3 Credits.

This course examines the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula from the earliest Paleolithic in the region (ca. 1.5 million years ago) through the first millennium of the Islamic era (ca. AD 1600). We will review basic geology and environmental conditions, examine the development of animal herding and crop cultivating lifeways, and study the rise of ancient complex societies and civilizations.

AS.131.678. 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.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.131.800. Readings & Research. 3 Credits.**AS.131.801. Readings And Research. 3 Credits.**

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.131.848. Dissertation Research. 9 Credits.**AS.131.849. Dissertation Research. 9 Credits.****AS.131.850. Summer Independent Research. 9 Credits.**

Independent summer research

AS.132

AS.132.600. 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.132.601. 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.132.606. Intermediate Akkadian Texts. 3 Credits.

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. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.132.607. Intermediate Akkadian Texts. 3 Credits.

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. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.132.609. Research Methods: Arts of the Mesopotamian World: Crafters & Consumers. 3 Credits.

This hybrid seminar examines in depth a series of artistic case studies over a 3000 year period in the region of what is today Iraq, Syria, and southeastern Turkey, from c. 3500-500 BCE. Discussion will focus on processes of making and contexts of using myriad forms of art and architecture. Topics will include the invention of writing and complex imagery; portraiture and ritual practice; the symbolic value of materials; visual narration; and the uses of space for expressive purposes. We will approach these and other topics through critical engagement with existing scholarship, as well as by direct study of objects in nearby museum collections.

Distribution Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.132.612. Advanced Akkadian. 3 Credits.

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). In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.132.630. Akkadian Literary & Religious Texts. 3 Credits.

Students will read a variety of Akkadian texts commonly described as literary in the original cuneiform. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.132.643. 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.132.700. 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.132.701. Elementary Sumerian II. 3 Credits.

In this course, students will continue to learn the fundamental aspects of Sumerian grammar and lexicography needed to read Sumerian texts. To review and develop the basics of the languages that were learned in the first semester of this course, intermediate texts like the Cylinders of Gudea and Inana's Descent to the Netherworld will be studied. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.132.710. Advanced Sumerian. 3 Credits.

We will read Letter Collection B and related materials in the original cuneiform. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.132.711. Advanced Sumerian. 3 Credits.

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. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.132.800. Mesopotamian Seminar. 3 - 9 Credits.

Research and discussion on topics of current interest.

AS.132.801. Mesopotamian Seminar. 3 - 9 Credits.

Research and discussion on topics of current interest.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.133

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 (or contradict) 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 BCE, 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. 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. The course will consist mainly of lectures given by the professor, with several guest researchers. Examinations will be divided into three parts: two knowledge quizzes during the semester; at the end of the semester, an essay on an Egyptian game of the student's choice.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.133.418. Egyptian Art & Material Culture: Principles, Materiality and Challenges. 3 Credits.

This course is dedicated to the study of the art and material culture of ancient Egypt, spanning from the 5th millennium BCE to the Roman period. The objective of the course is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of Egyptian art, with a focus on materiality, effective methods of description and analysis, and a command of bibliography. It will also enable students to practice two fundamental aspects of their future professional life: presenting a paper at a conference and submitting an article to an academic journal. In the initial sessions, we will examine the fundamental principles and conventions that define Egyptian art. We will then investigate the natural resources available to Egyptian craftsmen and artists, including nature, origin, networks, and uses. We will analyze the production of works of art through several case studies, focusing on materiality. Finally, we will reflect on the presence of Egyptian works of art in museums around the world. Moreover, the course will provide an opportunity for discourse on professional matters pertaining to engagement with Egyptian antiquities and works of art. The course will be structured around: lectures by the professor or by guest researchers, with the students participating in a dialogue with the lecturers; sessions dedicated to discussions of articles to be read (with two/three articles per session); oral presentations by the students, with the aim of reproducing the conditions of a colloquium or conference. These will include formal presentations and question-and-answer sessions, with all students taking part. At the conclusion of the semester, students will be required to submit a paper in connection with the oral presentation they have prepared. This paper will be presented as a scientific article, and the instructor will evaluate it in the same manner as an anonymous referee.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.133.451. Workshop: Egyptian Objects from Eton College Myers Collection at the JHU Arch Museum. 3 Credits.

This course is designed as a workshop in which students will actively participate in the study of unpublished Egyptian objects currently housed at the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum. In small groups, students will work in particular on supposedly ludic objects (dice, ball models, pawns, "dolls", etc.) from the Eton College Myers Collection. They will participate in cataloguing objects in the museum's database, conduct personal research on a selected set of objects, and produce an exhibit (online/in one of the museum's display cases) that will showcase their research outcomes.

Prerequisite(s): AS.130.153 OR AS.133.304 OR AS.133.451

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

Writing Intensive

AS.133.600. Introduction To Middle Egyptian. 3 Credits.

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.133.610. Middle Egyptian Texts. 3 Credits.

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. 3 Credits.

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

AS.133.616. 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 (or contradict) 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 BCE, 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. 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. The course will consist mainly of lectures given by the professor, with several guest researchers. Examinations will be divided into three parts: two knowledge quizzes during the semester; at the end of the semester, an essay on an Egyptian game of the student's choice.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.133.617. Workshop: Egyptian Objects from Eton College Myers Collection at the JHU Arch Museum. 3 Credits.

This course is designed as a workshop in which students will actively participate in the study of unpublished Egyptian objects currently housed at the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum. In small groups, students will work in particular on supposedly ludic objects (dice, ball models, pawns, "dolls", etc.) from the Eton College Myers Collection. They will participate in cataloguing objects in the museum's database, conduct personal research on a selected set of objects, and produce an exhibit (online/in one of the museum's display cases) that will showcase their research outcomes.

Distribution Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive

AS.133.618. Egyptian Art & Material Culture: Principles, Materiality, and Challenges. 3 Credits.

This course is dedicated to the study of the art and material culture of ancient Egypt, spanning from the 5th millennium BCE to the Roman period. The objective of the course is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of Egyptian art, with a focus on materiality, effective methods of description and analysis, and a command of bibliography. It will also enable students to practice two fundamental aspects of their future professional life: presenting a paper at a conference and submitting an article to an academic journal. In the initial sessions, we will examine the fundamental principles and conventions that define Egyptian art. We will then investigate the natural resources available to Egyptian craftsmen and artists, including nature, origin, networks, and uses. We will analyze the production of works of art through several case studies, focusing on materiality. Finally, we will reflect on the presence of Egyptian works of art in museums around the world. Moreover, the course will provide an opportunity for discourse on professional matters pertaining to engagement with Egyptian antiquities and works of art. The course will be structured around: lectures by the professor or by guest researchers, with the students participating in a dialogue with the lecturers; sessions dedicated to discussions of articles to be read (with two/three articles per session); oral presentations by the students, with the aim of reproducing the conditions of a colloquium or conference. These will include formal presentations and question-and-answer sessions, with all students taking part. At the conclusion of the semester, students will be required to submit a paper in connection with the oral presentation they have prepared. This paper will be presented as a scientific article, and the instructor will evaluate it in the same manner as an anonymous referee. Restricted to: Near Eastern Studies, Museum Studies, History of Art, or Archaeology students.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.133.619. Ancient Egyptian Art, A Journey Through Time. 3 Credits.

The course is devoted to the study of Egyptian art from the Predynastic period to the Roman era. The course is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of art history, with a particular focus on the evolution of style, iconography and artistic practices across time. Several thematic sessions will also be dedicated to specific aspects of ancient Egyptian culture (notably related to religion). The course will be primarily based on several key Egyptological collections, including the musée du Louvre, the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the British Museum. Additionally, the course will include visits to the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum and the Walters Art Museum. The course will comprise lectures delivered by the professor, which will be structured chronologically, and discussion sessions with students on the mandatory readings. The examinations will be divided into three sections: an oral presentation of an object selected by the students; an oral presentation of a theme chosen by the students; and the composition of an essay of substantial length on the theme and the object.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.133.620. Hieratic. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the cursive scripts of Ancient Egypt from the Old Kingdom through the Roman Period.

AS.133.621. Hieratic. 3 Credits.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.133.622. Ancient Egyptian Art, A Journey Through Time II: From the New Kingdom to the Roman Period. 3 Credits.

The course is devoted to the study of Egyptian art from the Predynastic period to the Roman era. This semester follows on from the first part of the course, given in the Spring Semester 2025: we will study works from the New Kingdom to the end of the Roman period. The course is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of art history, with a particular focus on the evolution of style, iconography and artistic practices across time. Several thematic sessions will also be dedicated to specific aspects of ancient Egyptian culture, history, and archaeology. The course will be primarily based on the collection of the musée du Louvre, complemented with several other key Egyptological collections, including the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the Metropolitan Museum of The course will comprise lectures delivered by the professor, which will be structured chronologically; lectures delivered by guest lecturers; and discussion sessions with students on the mandatory readings.

Prerequisite(s): AS.133.619

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.133.631. Old Egyptian. 3 Credits.

Continuation of the study of this stage of Ancient Egyptian, introduced in AS.133.630. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.133.646. Demotic Texts. 3 Credits.

An introduction both to the stage of Ancient Egyptian language from ca. 750 BCE-400 CE and the cursive script associated with this stage. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.133.647. Demotic Texts. 3 Credits.

Continuation of the study of Demotic as introduced in AS.133.646. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.133.648. Intro To Coptic. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the stage of Ancient Egyptian language in use from ca. 300 CE onward; still the liturgical language of the Coptic Church.

AS.133.649. Advanced Coptic. 3 Credits.

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

AS.133.751. Seminar in Egyptian Art and Archaeology: Egyptian Art in Museums. 3 Credits.

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**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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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).

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4), Democracy (FA4.1)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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?"

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

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".

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.134.604. 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)

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.134.606. 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.134.608. 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. Cross-listed with Jewish Studies. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.134.609. 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?"

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.134.613. Seminar in the Minor Prophets. 3 Credits.

This course surveys the group of 12 prophetic works known as the "minor" prophets. In addition to reading the Hebrew text, we will also engage with scholarly readings about the socio-political, religious, and historical backdrop of this group of writings.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.134.623. Pentateuch. 3 Credits.

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. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.134.624. The History of Hebrew. 3 Credits.

This course offers an introduction to the history of the Hebrew language , with a focus on its linguistic development and also its changing sociolinguistic contexts.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.134.650. Seminar in Hebrew: Archaic Biblical Poetry. 3 Credits.

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

AS.134.652. Seminar in Ancient Israelite Religion. 3 Credits.

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. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.134.660. History of Ancient Syria/Palestine. 3 Credits.

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

AS.134.661. History: Ancient Syria-Palestine II. 3 Credits.

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.134.700. 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. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

AS.134.721. Advanced Ugaritic. 3 Credits.

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. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.134.747. Archaic Aramaic. 3 Credits.

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. In addition to seminar times, students are expected to complete online discussions, supplemental readings and assignments, and attend several guest lecture events.

Distribution Area: Humanities