Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

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Program of Study

The B.A. degree programs in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (NELC) are as varied as the wide subject matter they embrace. Areas of specialization within NELC include:

Archaeology and Art of the Ancient Near East
Classical Hebrew Language and Civilization
Cuneiform Studies (including Assyriology, Hittitology, and Sumerology)
Egyptian Languages and Civilization
Islamic and Modern Middle Eastern Studies (including Arabic, Armenian, Modern Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, and Uzbek)
Near Eastern Judaica

Students who major in NELC learn one or more of the primary native languages as a means of access to the cultures of the ancient Near East and the modern Middle East. (Students who plan to do advanced work in Near Eastern studies are strongly encouraged also to develop a reading knowledge of German and French.) In consultation with the counselor for undergraduate studies, each student chooses an area of specialization and devises a program of study that provides a sound basis for graduate work in that area or for a career in museology, business, government, and other disciplines.

Students who major in other fields of study may wish to minor in NELC. The minor program is described below, after the description of the major.

Program Requirements

Thirteen courses and a B.A. paper are required for a NELC major.

(1) Two or three quarters of one of the following civilization sequences:
NEAA 20001-20002-20003. Archaeology of the Ancient Near East I, II, III
NEHC 20001-20002-20003. Ancient Near Eastern History and Society I, II, III
NEHC 20011-20012-20013. Ancient Empires I, II, III
NEHC 20401-20402-20403. Jewish History and Society I, II, III
NEHC 20404-20405-20406. Jewish Thought and Literature I, II, III
NEHC 20411-20412-20413. Medieval Jewish History I, II, III
NEHC 20501-20502-20503. Islamic History and Society I, II, III
NEHC 20601-20602-20603. Islamic Thought and Literature I, II, III

Note that the course sequences on “Archaeology of the Ancient Near East” and “Medieval Jewish History” do not meet the general education requirement in civilization studies. All of the other NELC civilization sequences do meet the general education requirement.

(2) Six courses in one of the Near Eastern languages (e.g., Akkadian, Arabic, Armenian, Egyptian, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, Uzbek). Credit for language courses may not be granted by examination or placement.

(3) Three or four elective courses in the student’s area of specialization. These courses should be chosen in consultation with the counselor for undergraduate studies. They may consist of additional NELC language courses, an additional NELC civilization sequence, or approved courses in areas such as archaeology, art, literature in translation, history, and religion.

(4) The B.A. Paper Seminar (NEHC 29800) is required of all NELC majors. It is to be taken in the Autumn Quarter of the year in which the student expects to graduate. The seminar and B.A. paper are described below.

Summary of Requirements

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<th>Requirement</th>
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<tr>
<td>6 courses in one Near Eastern language at any level*</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>2 or 3 courses in one approved civilization sequence**</td>
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<td>4 or 3 approved electives relating to the Near East***</td>
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<td>1 B.A. Paper Seminar (NEHC 29800)</td>
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* Credit may not be granted by examination or placement.

** If a Near Eastern civilization sequence is used to meet the College general education requirement, a second Near Eastern civilization sequence is required for the NELC major.

*** May include one B.A. Paper Preparation (NEHC 29999).

Grading. All courses taken to meet requirements in the major must be taken for quality grades with the exception of the B.A. Paper Seminar (NEHC 29800), which is taken P/F.
Advising. Students must complete a form in the departmental office as soon as they declare their major in NELC and must consult the counselor for undergraduate studies when planning their programs.

B.A. Paper Seminar. Candidates for the B.A. degree in NELC are required to write a substantial B.A. paper. The paper gives the student the opportunity to research a topic of interest and to improve writing and presentation skills.

It is the student’s responsibility, in his or her third year, to approach a NELC faculty member with a request to serve as the student’s faculty research adviser. The student and the faculty adviser together decide on a topic for the B.A. paper. The topic must be registered in the NELC department office by Monday of tenth week in Spring Quarter of the student’s third year. Forms to register the topic are available in the departmental office.

Students are required to register for the B.A. Paper Seminar (NEHC 29800) in Autumn Quarter of their fourth year. A passing grade (P) for the seminar depends on full attendance and participation throughout the quarter. The B.A. Paper Seminar is a workshop course designed to survey the fields represented by NELC and to assist students in researching and writing their B.A. papers. Students continue working on their B.A. papers during the following quarters, meeting at intervals with their faculty research advisers. They may register for NEHC 29999 during the Winter Quarter to devote the equivalent of a one-quarter course to the preparation of the paper; the paper grade, reported in the Spring Quarter, will be the grade for the course NEHC 29999. See the course description below.

Students taking a double major may, with the permission of the NELC counselor for undergraduate studies, write a single B.A. paper that is designed to meet the requirements of both majors, provided that the faculty research adviser is a member of the NELC faculty. Approval from both program chairs is required. A consent form, to be signed by the chairs, is available from the College adviser. It must be completed and returned to the College adviser by the end of Autumn Quarter of the student’s year of graduation.

The completed B.A. paper must be submitted to the faculty research adviser by Monday of third week in Spring Quarter. The faculty research adviser will grade the paper and then will submit it to the NELC counselor for undergraduate studies by Monday of fifth week in Spring Quarter. Students who fail to meet the deadline will not be eligible for honors and may not be able to graduate in that quarter.

The above information assumes a Spring Quarter graduation. Students who expect to graduate in other quarters should consult the NELC counselor for undergraduate studies.

Honors. Students who complete their course work and their B.A. papers with distinction are considered for graduation with honors. To be eligible for honors,
students must have an overall GPA of 3.25 or higher, they must have a NELC GPA of 3.5 or higher, and they must have earned a grade of A on the B.A. paper.

**Minor Program in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations**

The minor in Near Eastern Languages and Civilization requires a total of six courses. Students may choose one of two tracks: (1) a language track that includes three courses of one NELC language at any level, or (2) a culture track that replaces language study with courses in such topics as archaeology, history, religion, or literature in translation. Both tracks require a two- or three-quarter NELC civilization sequence.

Students who wish to take a minor in NELC must meet with the counselor for undergraduate studies before the end of Spring Quarter of their third year to declare their intention to complete the minor. Courses should be chosen in consultation with the counselor. Students should submit the counselor’s approval for the minor program to their College adviser by the deadline above on a form obtained from the adviser.

Courses in the minor may not be double counted with a student’s major(s) or with other minors, and they may not be counted toward general education requirements. Courses in the minor must be taken for quality grades. More than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

Listed below are sample sets of courses that meet the requirements of the NELC minor.

**Language Track Sample Minor**

AKKD 10101-10102-10103. Elementary Akkadian*
NEHC 20001-20002-20003. Ancient Near Eastern History and Society

**Language Track Sample Minor**

ARAB 20101-20102-20103. Intermediate Arabic*
NEHC 20601-20602-20603. Islamic Thought and Literature

**Culture Track Sample Minor**

NEHC 20011-20012-20013. Ancient Empires
NEHC 20401-20402-20403. Jewish History and Society

* Consult the counselor for undergraduate studies about the level of the language (introductory, intermediate, or advanced) required to meet the language track requirement. Credit may not be granted by examination to meet the language requirement for the minor program.
Faculty

Courses: Akkadian (AKKD)

10101-10102-10103. Elementary Akkadian I, II, III. PQ: Second-year standing. The first two quarters of this sequence cover the elements of Babylonian grammar and the cuneiform writing system, with reading exercises in Old Babylonian texts (ca. 1900 to 1600 B.C.), such as the Laws of Hammurabi. The third quarter introduces Standard Babylonian, the literary language of ca. 1200 to 600 B.C., with readings in royal inscriptions and literary texts. W. Farber, Staff. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

Courses: Ancient Anatolian Languages (AANL)

10101-10102-10103. Elementary Hittite I, II, III. PQ: Second-year standing. This three-quarter sequence covers the basic grammar and cuneiform writing system of the Hittite language. It also familiarizes the student with the field’s tools (i.e., dictionaries, lexica, sign list). Readings come from all periods of Hittite history (1650 to 1180 B.C.). Th. van den Hout. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

20302. Hieroglyphic Luwian II. PQ: AANL 20301 and consent of instructor. This course focuses on the Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions of the second millennium B.C. This course does not repeat the grammatical overview covered by AANL 20301, but immediately starts with the texts. Th. van den Hout. Winter, 2007.

Courses: Arabic (ARAB)

10101-10102-10103. Elementary Arabic I, II, III. This sequence concentrates on the acquisition of speaking, reading, and aural skills in modern formal Arabic. The class meets for six hours a week. Autumn, Winter, Spring.


Courses: Aramaic (aram)


10401-10402-10403. Elementary Syriac I, II, III. PQ: Second-year standing. The purpose of this three-quarter sequence is to enable the student to read Syriac literature with a high degree of comprehension. The course is divided into two segments. The first two quarters are devoted to acquiring the essentials of Syriac grammar and vocabulary. The third quarter is spent reading a variety of Syriac prose and poetic texts and includes a review of grammar. This course is offered in alternate years. S. Creason. Autumn, Winter, Spring. Offered 2007-08; not offered 2006-07.

20301-20302-20303. Targum I, II, III. PQ: ARAM 10101. This course is a reading and analysis of Targumic texts from the Babylonian and Palestinian traditions. This course is offered in alternate years. Autumn, Winter, Spring. Offered 2007-08; not offered 2006-07.


Courses: Armenian (arme)

10101-10102-10103. Elementary Modern Armenian I, II, III. (=EEUR 21100-21200-21300/31100-31200-31300) This three-quarter sequence utilizes the most advanced computer technology and audio-visual aids enabling the students to master a core vocabulary, the alphabet, and basic grammatical structures, as well as to achieve a reasonable level of proficiency in modern formal and spoken Armenian (one of the oldest Indo-European languages). Considerable amounts of historical/political and social/cultural issues about Armenia are built into the course to prepare students who intend to conduct research in Armenian studies or to pursue work in Armenia. H. Haroutunian. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

10501. Introduction to Classical Armenian. This course focuses on the basic structure and vocabulary of the Classical Armenian language of Grabar, which is one of the oldest Indo-European languages. Course work enables the students
to acquire the alphabet, phonology, and grammar to achieve basic reading skills in the Classical Armenian language. Reading assignments include a selection of original Armenian literature. This course is recommended for students who intend to conduct research in Armenian studies, Indo-European studies, or general linguistics. H. Haroutunian. Winter, 2008.

20101-20102-20103. Intermediate Modern Armenian I, II, III. PQ: ARME 10103. The goal of this three-quarter sequence is to enable students to reach an advanced level of proficiency in the Armenian language. The course covers a rich vocabulary and complex grammatical structures in modern formal and colloquial Armenian. Reading assignments include a selection of original Armenian literature and excerpts from mass media. H. Haroutunian. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

30501. Readings in Classical Armenian. PQ: ARME 20103 or equivalent. This course, which further improves skills in reading original Classical Armenian literature, is recommended for students who plan to conduct research in Armenian or Indo-European studies. H. Haroutunian. Spring, 2008.

Courses: Egyptian (EGPT)


10103. Middle Egyptian Texts I. PQ: EGPT 10101-10102. This course features readings in a variety of genres, including historical, literary, and scientific texts. R. Ritner, 2007; J. Johnson, 2008. Spring.

10201. Introduction to Coptic. PQ: Second-year standing. Knowledge of earlier Egyptian language phases or of Classical or Koine Greek helpful but not required. This course provides an introduction to the last native language of Egypt, which was in common use during the Roman, Byzantine, and medieval Islamic periods (fourth to tenth centuries C.E.). Grammar and vocabulary of the standard Sahidic dialect are presented in preparation for reading biblical, monastic, and Gnostic literature, as well as a variety of historical and social documents. Staff. 2006; J. Johnson, 2007. Autumn.

10202. Coptic Texts. PQ: EGPT 10201. This course builds on the basics of grammar learned in EGPT 10201 and provides readings in a variety of Coptic texts, including monastic texts, biblical excerpts, tales, and Gnostic literature. Winter.

20101. Middle Egyptian Texts II. PQ: EGPT 10101-10103. This course features readings in a variety of genres, including historical, literary, and scientific texts. P. Dorman, 2006; Staff, 2007. Autumn.
20102. Introduction to Hieratic. PQ: EGPT 10101-10103 required; EGPT 20101 recommended. This course is an introduction to the cursive literary and administrative script of Middle Egyptian (corresponding to the Middle Kingdom period in Egypt) and is intended to provide familiarity with a variety of texts written in Hieratic, including literary tales, religious compositions, wisdom literature, letters, accounts, and graffiti. P. Dorman, 2007; R. Ritner, 2008. Winter.

20110. Introduction to Old Egyptian. PQ: EGPT 10101-10103 required; EGPT 20101 recommended. This course examines the hieroglyphic writing and grammar of the Old Kingdom (Egypt’s “Pyramid Age”), focusing on monumental readings from private tombs, royal and private stelae, administrative decrees, economic documents, and Pyramid texts. Some attention is given to Old Egyptian texts written in cursive Hieratic. Staff, 2007; P. Dorman, 2008. Spring.

20210. Introduction to Late Egyptian. PQ: EGPT 10101-10103 required; EGPT 20101 recommended. This course is a comprehensive examination of the grammar, vocabulary, and orthographic styles of the nonliterary vernacular of New Kingdom Egypt (Dynasties XVII to XXIV), as exhibited by administrative and business documents, private letters, and official monuments. We also study the hybrid “literary Late Egyptian” used for tales and other compositions. Texts from the various genres are read and analyzed in EGPT 20211. Spring.

20211. Late Egyptian Texts. PQ: EGPT 20210. Building on the basics of grammar, vocabulary, and orthographic styles learned in EGPT 20210, this course focuses on the reading and analysis of Late Egyptian texts from the various genres. Staff, 2006; P. Dorman, 2007. Autumn.

30120. Introduction to Demotic. PQ: EGPT 10201 and/or 20210. R. Ritner, 2007; Staff, 2008. Winter.


Courses: Hebrew (HEBR)

10101-10102-10103. Elementary Classical Hebrew I, II, III. (=JWSC 22000-22100-22200, JWSG 30100-30200-30300) The purpose of this three-quarter sequence is to enable the student to read biblical Hebrew prose with a high degree of comprehension. The course is divided into two segments: (1) the first two quarters are devoted to acquiring the essentials of descriptive and historical grammar (including translation to and from Hebrew, oral exercises, and grammatical analysis); and (2) the third quarter is spent examining prose passages from the Hebrew Bible and includes a review of grammar. The class meets five times a week. R. Hasselbach, Staff, 2006-07; S. Creason, 2007-08. Autumn, Winter, Spring.
10501-10502-10503. Introductory Modern Hebrew I, II, III. (=JWSC 25000-25100-25200, JWSG 35000-35100-35200, LGLN 20100-20200-20300/30100-30200-30300) This course introduces students to reading, writing, and speaking modern Hebrew. All four language skills are emphasized: comprehension of written and oral materials; reading of nondiacritical text; writing of directed sentences, paragraphs, and compositions; and speaking. Students learn the Hebrew root pattern system and the seven basic verb conjugations in both the past and present tenses, as well as simple future. At the end of the year, students can conduct short conversations in Hebrew, read materials at their level, and write short essays. A. Finkelstein. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

20001. Hebrew Letters and Inscriptions. PQ: One year of classical Hebrew. This course involves reading and analysis of the inscriptive material from Palestine written during the first millennium B.C. (including texts from Transjordan). D. Pardee. Autumn, 2007.

20002. Phoenician Inscriptions. PQ: HEBR 20001. This course involves reading and analysis of the inscriptions, primarily on stone and primarily from the Phoenician homeland, that belong to the early and middle first millennium B.C. D. Pardee. Winter, 2008.

20003. Punic Inscriptions. PQ: HEBR 20002. This course is a continuation of HEBR 20002 in which we study the texts resulting from the Phoenician expansion into the Western Mediterranean (primarily North Africa). D. Pardee. Spring, 2008.

20104-20105-20106. Intermediate Classical Hebrew I, II, III. (=JWSC 22300-22400-22500, JWSG 30400-30500-30600) PQ: HEBR 10103 or equivalent. This course is a continuation of HEBR 10103. The first quarter consists of reviewing grammar and of reading and analyzing further prose texts. The last two quarters are devoted to an introduction to Hebrew poetry with readings from Psalms, Proverbs, and the prophets. D. Pardee, 2006-07; Staff, 2007-08. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

20301-20302. Tannaitic Hebrew Texts I, II. PQ: Some basic knowledge of biblical and/or modern Hebrew, and consent of instructor. This course consists of readings in the Mishnah and Tosefta, the main corpus of legal and juridical texts assembled by the Palestinian academic masters during the second and early third centuries. Goals are to introduce: (1) views and opinions of early rabbinic scholars who flourished in the period immediately following that of the writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls; (2) aspects of the material culture of the Palestinian Jews during that same period; and (3) grammar and vocabulary of what is generally called “early rabbinic Hebrew” and thereby to facilitate the ability to read and understand unvocalized Hebrew texts. N. Golb. Autumn, Winter.

20501-20502-20503. Intermediate Modern Hebrew I, II, III. (=JWSC 25300-25400-25500, JWSG 35300-35400-35500, LGLN 20400-20500-20600/30400-30500-30600) PQ: HEBR 10503 or equivalent. This course is devised for students
who have previously taken either modern or biblical Hebrew courses. The main objective is to provide students with the skills necessary to approach modern Hebrew prose, both fiction and nonfiction. In order to achieve this task, students are provided with a systematic examination of the complete verb structure. Many syntactic structures are introduced, including simple clauses, and coordinate and compound sentences. At this level, students not only write and speak extensively but are also required to analyze grammatically and contextually all of the material assigned. A. Finkelstein. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

30501-30502-30503. Advanced Modern Hebrew I, II, III. (=JWSC 25600-25700-25800, JWSG 35600-35700-35800, LGLN 22900-23000-23100/32900-33000-33100) PQ: HEBR 20503 or equivalent. This course assumes that students have full mastery of the grammatical and lexical content at the intermediate level. However, there is a shift from a reliance on the cognitive approach to an emphasis on the expansion of various grammatical and vocabulary-related subjects. Students are introduced to sophisticated and more complex syntactic constructions, and instructed how to transform simple sentences into more complicated ones. The exercises address the creative effort on the part of the student, and the reading segments are longer and more challenging in both style and content. The language of the texts reflects the literary written medium rather than the more informal spoken style, which often dominates the introductory and intermediate texts. A. Finkelstein. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

Courses: Persian (PERS)

10101-10102-10103. Elementary Persian I, II, III. This sequence concentrates on modern written Persian as well as modern colloquial usage. Towards the end of the sequence, students are able to read, write, and speak Persian at an elementary level. Introducing the Iranian culture is also a goal. The class meets three hours a week with the instructor and two hours with a native informant who conducts grammatical drills and Persian conversation. S. Ghahremani. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

20101-20102-20103. Intermediate Persian I, II, III. PQ: PERS 10103 or the instructor’s approval. This sequence deepens and expands the students’ knowledge of modern Persian at all levels of reading, writing, and speaking. Grammar is taught at a higher level, and a wider vocabulary enables students to read stories, articles, and poetry and to be introduced to examples of classical literature towards the end of the sequence. Introducing the Iranian culture is continued. Class meets three hours a week with the instructor; and, with enough students, class meets two hours a week with a native informant who conducts grammatical drills and Persian conversation. S. Ghahremani. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

Courses: Sumerian (SUMR)

10101-10102-10103. Elementary Sumerian I, II, III. PQ: AKKD 10101. Sequence typically begins in Winter Quarter. This sequence covers the elements of
Sumerian grammar, with reading exercises in Ur III, pre-Sargonic, and elementary literary texts. C. Woods. Winter, Spring.

**Courses: Turkish (turk)**

**10101-10102-10103. Elementary Turkish I, II, III.** This sequence features proficiency-based instruction emphasizing grammar in modern Turkish. The course consists of reading and listening comprehension, as well as grammar exercises and basic writing in Turkish. Modern stories and contemporary articles are read at the end of the courses. *The class meets for five hours a week.* H. Özoglu. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

**20101-20102-20103. Intermediate Turkish I, II, III.** *PQ: TURK 10103 or equivalent.* This sequence features proficiency-based instruction emphasizing grammar in modern Turkish. The course consists of reading, speaking, and listening comprehension, as well as grammar exercises and basic writing in Turkish. Modern stories and contemporary articles are read towards the end of the sequence. H. Özoglu. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

**Courses: Ugaritic (ugar)**

**20101-20102-20103. Ugaritic I, II, III.** *PQ: Second-year standing and one year of Classical Hebrew.* This is the introductory sequence to Ugaritic, a language of the Northwest-Semitic group that is attested on tablets dating to the Late Bronze Age. D. Pardee. Autumn, Winter, Spring. Offered 2006-07; not offered 2007-08.


**Courses: Uzbek (uzbk)**

**10101-10102-10103. Elementary Modern Literary Uzbek I, II, III.** This sequence enables students to reach an intermediate level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing modern literary Uzbek, the most widely spoken Turkic language after Turkish. Students learn both the recently implemented Latin script and the older Cyrillic script versions of the written language and view audio-video materials in Uzbek on a weekly basis. *This course meets five days a week.* K. Arik. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

**20101-20102-20103. Intermediate Modern Literary Uzbek I, II, III.** *PQ: UZBK 10103 or proficiency examination.* This sequence enables students to reach
an advanced level of proficiency in modern literary Uzbek. The curriculum includes a selection of Uzbek literature and excerpts from the written media, as well as audio-visual materials from Uzbekistan. *K. Arik. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

30101-30102-30103. Advanced Modern Literary Uzbek I, II, III. PQ: UZBK 20103 or proficiency examination. This sequence further develops the reading, writing, and speaking proficiency skills of intermediate to advanced students of Uzbek. The curriculum draws on modern Uzbek literature, as well as on written and audio-visual media from Uzbekistan. *Second- and third-year classes meet together. K. Arik. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

Courses: Near Eastern Art and Archaeology (NEAA)

20001-20002-20003/30001-30002-30003. Archaeology of the Ancient Near East I, II, III. (=ANST 21510-21520-21530) *This sequence does not meet the general education requirement in civilization studies.* This sequence surveys the archaeology and art of the Near East from prehistoric times to the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Each course in the sequence focuses on a particular cultural region. *Autumn, Winter, Spring. Offered 2006-07; not offered 2007-08.*


20030/30030. The Rise of the State in the Near East. (=ANTH 26715/36715) This course provides an introduction to the archaeology of the Near East, focusing mainly on the origins of food production and complex societies in the period from 9000 to 2200 B.C. In the first half of the course, we examine the archaeological evidence for the first domestication of plants and animals and the earliest village communities in the Levant, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia. The second half of the course focuses on the economic and social transformations that took place during the development from village-based communities through the emergence of the urbanized state societies in the fourth and third millennia B.C. in Mesopotamia. *G. Stein. Autumn, 2006.*

20035/30035. Zooarchaeology. (=ANTH 28410/38810) PQ: Introductory archaeology course. This course introduces the use of animal bones in archaeological research. Students gain hands-on experience analyzing faunal remains from an archaeological site in the Near East. The class also addresses some of the major theoretical and methodological issues involved in the use of animal bones as a source of information about prehistoric societies. The course consists of lectures, lab sessions, and original research projects using collections of animal bone from the archaeological excavations at Hacınebi, Turkey. *G. Stein. Spring, 2007.*
20051/30051. Method and Theory in Near Eastern Archaeology. (=ANST 21901) This course introduces the main issues in archaeological method and theory with emphasis on the principles and practice of Near Eastern archaeology. Topics are (1) the history of archaeology, (2) trends in social theory and corresponding modes of archaeological interpretation, (3) the nature of archaeological evidence and issues of research design, (4) survey and excavation methods and associated recording techniques, (5) the analysis and interpretation of various kinds of excavated materials, and (6) the presentation and publication of archaeological results. D. Mahoney. Winter, 2007.

20062-20063/30062-30063. Ancient Landscapes I, II. (=ANST 22600-22601, ANTH 26710-26711/36710-36711, GEOG 25400-25800/35400-35800) The landscape of the Near East contains a detailed and subtle record of environmental, social, and economic processes that have obtained over thousands of years. Landscape analysis is therefore proving to be fundamental to an understanding of the processes that underpinned the development of ancient Near Eastern society. This class provides an overview of the ancient cultural landscapes of this heartland of early civilization from the early stages of complex societies in the fifth and sixth millennia B.C. to the close of the Early Islamic period around the tenth century A.D. S. Branting. Autumn, Winter.

20232/30232. Continuity and Innovation in Late Antique Egypt. This course considers continuity and innovation in the art, architecture, and material culture of late antique Egypt. We introduce the major archaeological sites of the period and some of the major issues surrounding the study of those sites. A secondary focus is the distinctiveness of late antique Egyptian visual culture, to what extent it can be seen as part of a continuum reaching back to Pharaonic times, and to what degree it participates in a broader Mediterranean cultural idiom. Topics include the evolution of public spaces and urban topography, shifting patterns in the use of sacred space, funerary arts and the expression of identity, the evolution of Coptic (Egyptian Christian) architectural forms and iconography, and the interplay of Egyptian and Hellenistic styles in late antique painting and sculpture. J. Westerfeld. Spring, 2007.

20501/30501: Introduction to Islamic Archaeology. (=ANST 21605) This course is a survey of the regions of the Islamic world from Arabia to North Africa and from Central Asia to the Gulf. Our aim is a comparative stratigraphy for the archaeological periods of the last millennium. A primary focus is the consideration of the historical archaeology of the Islamic lands, the interaction of history and archaeology, and the study of patterns of cultural interaction over this region, which may also amplify understanding of ancient archaeological periods in the Near East. D. Whitcomb. Autumn.

20522/30522. Late Levant: Archaeology of Islamic Syria-Palestine. This course is an exploration of the cultural patterns in the Levant from the late Byzantine period down to modern times, a span of some 1,500 years. While the subject matter is archaeological sites of this period in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and
Israel, the focus is on the role of medieval archaeology in amplifying the history of economic and social systems. It is this connective quality of Islamic archaeology that contributes to an understanding of the earlier history and archaeology of this region. D. Whitcomb. Autumn, 2006.

20531/30531. Problems in Islamic Archaeology: Islamic Art and Artifacts. PQ: Advanced standing and consent of instructor. This course is intended as an exploration of the differing conceptual frameworks of archaeology and art history bearing on artifacts and monuments of Islamic art. This analysis begins with the numerous new texts on Islamic art and examines specific categories of artifacts in typological detail. D. Whitcomb. Winter, 2007.

29700. Reading and Research Course: Near Eastern Art and Archaeology. PQ: Consent of faculty adviser and counselor of undergraduate studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

30161. The Ubaid Horizon. (=ANTH 36725) PQ: Introductory course in archaeology and consent of instructor. The Ubaid period (sixth to fifth millennia B.C.) saw the earliest agricultural settlement of the south Mesopotamian alluvium, the beginnings of social complexity, innovations in craft technology, and the coalescence of an interaction system that extended from southeast Anatolia to the western littoral of the Persian gulf. This seminar examines the Ubaid horizon from perspectives that include a close examination of key Ubaid sites as well as a consideration of the main theoretical issues involved in understanding inter-regional variation in the social, economic, and political organization of this period. G. Stein. Winter, 2007.

Courses: Near Eastern History and Civilization (NEHC)

10101. Introduction to the Middle East. Prior knowledge of the Middle East not required. This course aims to facilitate a general understanding of some key factors that have shaped life in this region, with primary emphasis on modern conditions and their background, and to provide exposure to some of the region’s rich cultural diversity. The course can serve as a basis for the further study of the history, politics, and civilizations of the Middle East. F. Donner. Spring, 2007.


20001/30001. Ancient Near Eastern History and Society I: Egypt. (=ANST 21300) This course surveys the political, social, and economic
history of ancient Egypt from pre-dynastic times (ca. 3400 B.C.) until the advent of Islam in the seventh century of our era. J. Johnson, R. Ritner, Staff. Autumn, 2007.

20002/30002. Ancient Near Eastern History and Society II: Mesopotamia. (=ANST 21400) This course provides an introduction to the history of Mesopotamia: from the origins of writing and cities in Sumer (ca. 3200 B.C.); up through the great empires of Assyria, Babylon, and Persia; to the arrival of Alexander the Great in the late fourth century B.C. S. Richardson. Winter, 2008.

20003/30003. Ancient Near Eastern History and Society III: Anatolia and Levant. (=ANST 21500) This course surveys the political, social, and economic history of ancient Anatolia and the Levant (Syria-Palestine) from ca. 2300 B.C. until the conquest of the region by Alexander that inaugurated the Hellenistic period in the Near East. D. Schloen, Th. van den Hout. Spring, 2008.

20004-20005-20006/30004-30005-30006. Ancient Near Eastern Thought and Literature I, II, III. This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. May be taken in sequence or individually. Students in this sequence explore the thought and literature of the ancient Near East, where writing was invented more than 5,000 years ago, yielding documents in diverse languages and genres that shed light on politics, religion, and society at the dawn of civilization. Each course in the sequence focuses on a particular cultural region. Texts in English. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

20004/30004. Ancient Near Eastern Thought and Literature I: Mesopotamian Literature. This course surveys a wide range of poetic and prose compositions written in Sumerian and Akkadian in the period from ca. 2500 to 500 B.C.E, including the famous Epic of Gilgamesh. The role these compositions played in ancient Mesopotamian society is considered, in addition to questions of content and style. C. Woods. Autumn.

20005/30005. Ancient Near Eastern Thought and Literature II: West Semitic Literature. In this course we read literature that was composed in the area of Syria and Palestine in the period from ca. 1300 B.C.E. to 400 C.E. We start with the mythological texts from the north Syrian city of Ugarit (1300-1200 B.C.E.), which have often been compared with biblical poetry in style and content and which provide important insights into the cultural and religious background of early West Semitic societies. In addition, we read selected passages from the Hebrew Bible and Hebrew texts from Qumran (i.e., the Dead Sea Scrolls), as well as Phoenician inscriptions and then move on to literary texts from the vast corpus of Aramaic writings that span the period from ca. 500 B.C.E. to 400 C.E. and various cultural and religious groups. Texts in English. R. Hasselbach. Winter.
20006/30006. Ancient Near Eastern Thought and Literature III: Classical Arabic Literature. Knowledge of Arabic helpful but not required. Spanning seven centuries and three continents, classical Arabic literature developed in diverse artistic directions. Poetic genres (e.g., brigand poetry, love lyrics, court panegyrics, satires, mystical poetry) and prose genres (e.g., scripture, orations, epistles, fables, mirrors for princes, popular tales) all developed their own fascinating features. Students read the texts (in English translation) to explore the culture and thought of the medieval Arabic-speaking world. *T. Qutbuddin. Spring.*

20011-20012-20013. Ancient Empires I, II, III. (=CLCV 25700-25800-25900) May be taken in sequence or individually. This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. Three great empires of the ancient world are introduced in this sequence. Each course focuses on a particular empire, with attention to the similarities and differences among the empires covered in the sequence. By exploring the rich legacy of documents and monuments that these empires produced, students are introduced to ways of understanding imperialism and its cultural and societal effects—both on the imperial elites and on those they conquered. Extensive use is made of visual materials, including artifacts on display in the Oriental Institute Museum. *Autumn, Winter, Spring.*


20074. Gender Theory and Ancient Near Eastern History. (=GNDR 20074) This lecture/discussion class addresses key topics and theories popular in gender theory classes throughout the academy today in conjunction with relevant lectures on the ancient Near East primarily Egypt). Students are asked to think critically about how the ancient evidence confirms or rebuts theories under discussion, whether ancient realities offer new insights into critical theories, how the theoretical positions of authors might have been different with more precise knowledge of the ancient world and how theories might be usefully employed to pose new questions of the historical evidence. *M. Williams. Winter, 2007.*

20139. International Relations and Statecraft in Mesopotamia. (=PLSC 20139) This course introduces the dynamics of statecraft and international relations in Mesopotamia. It focuses on the Old Babylonian Period, but also includes comparative elements from the Amarna Age and Neo-Assyrian Period. Students are introduced to ancient Near Eastern history and are exposed to the fundamental issues of what constituted a “state,” the mechanisms of statecraft, and how international relations were conducted in these contexts. *A. Miglio. Spring, 2007.*
20160/30160. Nomads and Fellahin in the Ancient Near East. (=ANST 22650, HIST 15800) Is a social history, a “history from below,” of the Ancient Near East possible? Most ancient texts document only the lives and concerns of a small sphere of élites, who are then the usual subjects of our histories. This course will try to re-set the frame of inquiry around people on the periphery, the other 90 percent of the population. In examining ethnic and social identity, the organization of economic production, and the political order of the state, we develop a clearer picture of the pastoralists, villagers, and tribesmen who maintained (but sometimes radically changed) the apex of the urban social order. S. Richardson. Autumn, 2007.

20211/30211. Ugarit: Late Bronze Metropolis. (=ANST 28400) The site of Ras Shamra on the north coast of Syria has been under excavation since 1929. It has revealed a Late Bronze city named Ugarit that was destroyed in ca. 1185 B.C. Among the discoveries have been thousands of tablets that reveal much about everyday life and about the religious practices and beliefs of the time. The purpose of the course is to illustrate life in the Late Bronze Age Levant by studying the artifacts from this city. Most of the course is devoted to reading and discussing the texts from the site and to comparing them with those from similar cultures, in particular the Hebrew Bible. D. Pardee. Spring, 2007.

20218/30218. A Survey of Old Kingdom Archaeology. The primary goal of this course is to examine the art, architecture, and settlements of Egypt’s Old Kingdom (2707-2170 B.C.), broadly defined as Dynasties Three through Eight, in historical and cultural context. While we focus on the great masterpieces of representational art and statuary, as well as the significant architectural achievements, of the Old Kingdom, we also consider the cultural and political history of the times in which they were created. Evidence from various Old Kingdom settlement sites throughout Egypt (e.g., Ain Asil (Balat), Elephantine, Giza, Tell Ibrahim Awad, Buto, Buhen (in Nubia), Kom el-Hisnz), supplement and complete the art historical survey. J. Nolan. Winter, 2007.


20404-20405-20406/30404-30405-30406. Jewish Thought and Literature I, II, III. (=JWSC 20004-20005-20006, JWSG 30004-30005-30006) This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. May be taken in sequence or individually. For course description, see Jewish Studies. Texts in English. Autumn, Winter, Spring.


20411-20412-20413/30411-30412-30413. Medieval Jewish History I, II, III. (=HUMA 23000-23100-23200, JWSC 23000-23100-23200, JWSG 38100-38200-38300) PQ: Consent of instructor. This sequence does not meet the general education requirement in civilization studies. This three-quarter sequence deals with the history of the Jews over a wide geographical and historical range. First-quarter work is concerned with the rise of early rabbinic Judaism and development of the Jewish communities in Palestine and the Eastern and Western diasporas during the first several centuries C.E. Topics include the legal status of the Jews in the Roman world, the rise of rabbinic Judaism, the rabbinic literature of Palestine in that context, the spread of rabbinic Judaism, the rise and decline of competing centers of Jewish hegemony, the introduction of Hebrew language and culture beyond the confines of their original home, and the impact of the birth of Islam on the political and cultural status of the Jews. An attempt is made to evaluate the main characteristics of Jewish belief and social concepts in the formative periods of Judaism as it developed beyond its original geographical boundaries. Second-quarter work is concerned with the Jews under Islam, both in Eastern and Western Caliphates. Third-quarter work is concerned with the Jews of Western Europe from the eleventh through the fifteenth centuries. N. Golb. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

20419/30419. Social and Literary Ideologies in Modern Hebrew Literature. (=JWSC 26900, JWSG 37900) Knowledge of Hebrew recommended. This course is a discussion of the interaction between social and national ideologies related to the future of Judaism and the Jewish people and the literary-critical writings of the most influential figures in the Modern Hebrew Literature. Readings include essays by Ahad-Ha’am, Berdichevsky, Frishman, and Brenner. M. Brinker. Spring, 2007.


20461. Contemporary Israeli Fiction. (=CMLT 25400) For course description, see Comparative Literature. Classes conducted in English, but students with knowledge of Hebrew are encouraged to read texts in the original. N. Stahl. Spring, 2007.

20465/30465. New Approaches to Biblical Narrative. (=JWSC 28700, JWSG 38700) Knowledge of Hebrew not required. The traditional field of Biblical Criticism was revolutionized in the last generation. As history, it was transformed by new Archaeological findings; as art, by the introduction of categories and methods of modern literary theory. Some of these innovations are exemplified by new studies of narratives related to King David and King Solomon. M. Brinker. Spring, 2007.

20648/30648. History of the Mamluk Sultanate. This course is a survey of the Mamluk sultanate (1250 to 1517) with a focus on its place in Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, and world history. We pay particular attention to military slavery, legitimacy, ideology, politics, and Mamluk institutions, as well as the local, regional, and global developments that influenced the sultanate’s evolution from coup d’état to Great Power to conquest by the Ottomans. B. Craig. Spring, 2007.

20501-20502-20503/30501-30502-30503. Islamic History and Society I, II, III. (=HIST 25704-25804-25904/35704-35804-35904) This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. May be taken NEHC 20501 and 20502, or 20501 and 20503, or 20501-20502-20503. This sequence surveys the main trends in the political history of the Islamic world, with some attention to economic, social, and intellectual history.

20501/30501. Islamic History and Society I: The Rise of Islam and the Caliphate. (=HIST 25704/35704) This course covers the period from ca. 600 to 1100, including the rise and spread of Islam, the Islamic empire under the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, and the emergence of regional Islamic states from Afghanistan and eastern Iran to North Africa and Spain. F. Donner. Autumn.

20502/30502. Islamic History and Society II: The Middle Period. (=HIST 25804/35804) This course covers the period from ca. 1100 to 1750, including the arrival of the Steppe Peoples ( Turks and Mongols), the Mongol successor states, and the Mamluks of Egypt and Syria. We also study the foundation of the great Islamic regional empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Moghuls. J. Woods. Winter.

20503/30503. Islamic History and Society III: The Modern Middle East. (=HIST 25904/35904) This course covers the period from ca. 1750
to the present, focusing on Western military, economic, and ideological encroachment; the impact of such ideas as nationalism and liberalism; efforts at reform in the Islamic states; the emergence of the “modern” Middle East after World War I; the struggle for liberation from Western colonial and imperial control; the Middle Eastern states in the cold war era; and local and regional conflicts. H. Shisler. Spring.

20539/30539. The Renaissance East and West. (=HIST 23100/33100) PQ: Advanced standing. This course examines the Renaissance (ca. 1400 to 1600) as a global rather than purely Western European phenomenon. We emphasize comparison and interaction between Christendom and Islamdom. C. Fleischer. Winter.


20601-20602-20603/30601-30602-30603. Islamic Thought and Literature I, II, III. (=SOSC 22000-22100-22200) Students can meet the general education requirement in civilization studies by taking NEHC 20601 and 20602, and/or 20603. This sequence surveys Islamic civilization from the rise of Islam in the seventh century to modern times. Texts in English.

20601/30601. Islamic Thought and Literature I. (=SOSC 22000) This course covers the period from ca. 600 to 1100, concentrating on the career of the Prophet Muhammad; Qur’an and Hadith; the Caliphate; the development of Islamic legal, theological, philosophical, and mystical discourses; sectarian movements; and Arabic literature. W. Kadi. Autumn.

20602/30602. Islamic Thought and Literature II. (=SOSC 22100) This course covers the period from ca. 1100 to 1800, surveying Islamic political, social, and cultural development in the eras of the Crusades, the Mongol invasions, and the “gunpowder empires” of the Ottomans, the Safavids, and the Mughals, as represented in works of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish literature and the art and architecture of selected regions. J. Perry. Winter.

20603/30603. Islamic Thought and Literature III. (=SOSC 22200) This course covers the period from ca. 1800 to the present, exploring works of Arab intellectuals who interpreted various aspects of Islamic philosophy, political theory, and law in the modern age. We look at diverse interpretations concerning the role of religion in a modern society, at secularized and historicized approaches to religion, and at the critique of both religious establishments and nation-states as articulated by Arab intellectuals. Generally, we discuss secondary literature first and the primary sources later. O. Bashkin. Spring.

20634/30634. North Africa, Late Antiquity—Islam. (=CLAS 30200, CLCV 20200, HIST 25701/35701) For course description, see History. Readings
in translated primary sources as well as the latest modern scholarship. W. Kaegi. Autumn.

20645/30645. History of the Fatimid Caliphate. This course covers the history of the Fatimid (Shiite) caliphate, from its foundation in the North Africa in about 909 until its end in Egypt in 1171. Sections of the course deal with Fatimid history treated chronologically and others with separate institutions and problems as they changed and developed throughout the whole time period. Recommended texts in are in English, including *Exploring an Islamic Empire* by P. Walker that contains a full bibliography that lists books in other languages (e.g., Arabic, French, German). P. Walker. Winter, 2007.


20691/30691. Al-Jahiz: Polymath, Thinker and Litterateur. PQ: ARAB 20103 or equivalent; and knowledge of Islamic history and civilization. This course focuses on the Arabic litterateur/theologian al-Jahiz (255 to 869), emphasizing the diversity of his interests and his pivotal role in the development of Arabic prose with its varied genres, disciplines, and registers. The course materials are a combination of the available translations and selected original texts of Arabist scholarship and literary theory. In addition to developing skills in reading classical materials, the course fosters an awareness of the problems involved in reconstructing meaning from pre-modern texts. Texts in English and the original. T. Hefter. Winter, 2007.

20710/30710. Iranian Cinema. (=CMST 24801/34801) This course introduces the history of the Iranian cinema. We discuss the major directors and films from the 1960s through the 1990s, situating them in the political and historical context of modern Iranian society. Our focus is on feature films made in Iran, but we also include some documentaries, shorts, and films made outside Iran. In addition to analyzing the films as artistic constructs, we consider larger questions (e.g., how the political and intellectual history and ideology of modern Iran is reflected in its films, the aesthetics of Iranian cinema, Third World cinema and the economics of the Iranian film industry, the image of women, the system of film censorship). F. Lewis. Autumn, 2006.

20761/30761. Introduction to the History and Cultures of Central Asia. (=HIST 25801/35801, SLAV 20300/30300) This survey course introduces the linguistic, cultural, and historical backgrounds of the peoples of Central Eurasia. The period covered is approximately 400 B.C. to 1200 A.D., and the methodology draws upon historical anthropology. Film presentations and lectures by guest scholars are featured. K. Arik. Winter, 2007.
20762/30762. Contemporary Central Asia. (=HIST 25600/35600) This survey course, which follows NEHC 20761, does not require the former as a prerequisite. The period covered is approximately 1700 A.D. to present with an emphasis on the genesis of the modern nations of Central Eurasia, including the post-Soviet republics and adjacent areas in the periphery of Central Eurasia. K. Arik. Winter, 2008.

20765/30765. Introduction to the Musical Folklore of Central Asia. (=ANTH 25905, EEUR 23400/33400, MUSI 23503/33503) This course explores the musical traditions of the peoples of Central Asia, both in terms of historical development and cultural significance. Topics include the music of the epic tradition, the use of music for healing, instrumental genres, and Central Asian folk and classical traditions. Basic field methods for ethnomusicology are also covered. Extensive use is made of recordings of musical performances and of live performances in the area. K. Arik. Spring, 2007.

20766/30766. Shamans and Oral Poets of Central Asia. (=ANTH 25906, EEUR 23500/33500) This course follows NEHC 20765 and explores the rituals, oral literature, and music associated with the nomadic cultures of Central Eurasia. K. Arik. Spring, 2008.

20825/30825. Modernization of the Ottoman Empire I. (=HIST 46001) PQ: Advanced standing and consent of instructor. Knowledge of Modern and Ottoman Turkish helpful. This reading colloquium addresses problems of modernization and reform in the Ottoman Empire and their relationship to questions of patriotism and identity, focusing on the period from the Tanzimat to the end of World War I. H. Shissler. Autumn.

20855. History of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic since 1750. This course examines the last period of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the creation and development of the Turkish Republic. Attention is paid to topics such as efforts at bureaucratic, economic, and educational reform; international diplomacy; nationalist movements; and the formation of democratic institutions. The course also examines questions of continuity and change from the imperial to the republican periods. H. Shissler. Winter.

20907/30907. The Arab Press. PQ: Advanced knowledge of modern Arabic. This class looks at the ways in which the Arab press shaped, and was shaped by, sociopolitical processes in the Middle East. We cover official and private newspapers, as well as cultural magazines, produced by Muslim, Christian, and Jewish intellectuals. We likewise reflect upon the links between the press and such genres as the novel, the autobiography, and the film. More broadly, we use the Arab press as a way of thinking about such issues as Arab nationalism, the Arab public sphere, democracy in the Arab world, and gender relations. O. Bashkin. Spring, 2007.

20952/30952. Introduction to the History of Modern Iraq. This class surveys the modern history of Iraq. It considers the state’s changing relationships with the
British Empire and reflects on the ways in which colonized Iraqi elites responded to and appropriated the Western civilizing mission. The course likewise focuses on disciplinary institutions that emerged during colonial and post-colonial periods, as well as attempts to investigate how they changed over time. In particular, we examine such institutions as the Iraqi educational system, the modern Iraqi army, and the Baath party. O. Bashkin. Autumn.

20996. History of Israeli-Arab Conflict. (=HIST 25902/35902, INRE 36000) For course description, see History. B. Wasserstein. Autumn.

29500/39500. Contemporary Armenia: Introduction to the History and Culture of Armenia. This survey course is designed to depict a true picture of history, social life and lifestyle, surviving culture (i.e., art, architecture, literature, music, myth, popular beliefs, religion), and traditions and customs (i.e., festivals and feasts, childhood and wedding rituals, funerary cult) of Armenia. It also discusses transformations of Armenian identity and symbols of “Armenianness” in the modern times, especially in the post-Soviet era, based on elements of national identity such as language, religion, or shared history. H. Haroutunian. Winter, 2007.

29700. Reading and Research Course. PQ: Consent of faculty adviser and counselor for undergraduate studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

29800. B.A. Paper Seminar. PQ: Consent of instructor and counselor for undergraduate studies. Required of fourth-year NELC majors. This is a workshop course designed to survey the fields represented by NELC and to assist students in researching and writing their B.A. paper. Autumn.

29999. B.A. Paper Preparation. PQ: Consent of instructor and counselor for undergraduate studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. In consultation with a faculty research adviser and with the permission of the counselor for undergraduate studies, students devote the equivalent of a one-quarter course to the preparation of the B.A. paper. Winter.

Courses: Near Eastern Languages (nelg)

29700. Reading and Research Course: Near Eastern Languages. PQ: Consent of faculty adviser and counselor of undergraduate studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Autumn, Winter, Spring.