NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES AND CIVILIZATIONS

Humanities Quadrangle, 203.432.2944
http://nelc.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
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Professors John Darnell, Benjamin Foster, Eckart Frahm, Dimitri Gutas (Emeritus), Bentley Layton (Emeritus), Nadine Moeller, Shawkat Toorawa, Kevin van Bladel, Harvey Weiss

Senior Lecturer Kathryn Slanski

Lecturers and Lectors Sarab al-Ani, Muhammad Aziz, Jonas Elbousty, Ozgen Felek, Shiri Goren, Agnete Lassen, Gregory Marouard, Dina Roginsky, Farkhondeh Shayesteh, Klaus Wagensonner, M. Ezgi Yalcin, Orit Yeret

FIELDS OF STUDY
Fields include Arabic Humanities, Assyriology, the Classical Near East, and Egyptology.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS
Applicants should state their specific field of study and intended specialization and must submit scores from the General Test of the GRE. Evidence of reading knowledge of both French and German is required of all Ph.D. students. Proficiency in one of these languages is normally a prerequisite for admission and is demonstrated by passing a departmental examination upon registration at Yale. Proficiency in the second language must be achieved before admission to the second year of study. Ph.D. students admitted with only one of the two required languages or who fail the departmental examination are expected to enroll in an appropriate course given by the French or German department at Yale (or the equivalent elsewhere, with the approval of the director of graduate studies [DGS]). Completion of such a course with a grade of A or B will be accepted as fulfilling the proficiency requirement in either language; exceptions, for instance, for native speakers of French or German, may be made by the department upon recommendation of the DGS. For students in the M.A. program, evidence of reading knowledge of either French or German is sufficient.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Course Work
The department normally requires that students take twenty-three courses distributed over three full years of course work: four yearlong courses or eight term courses per year (seven in the last year) are considered a full load. Normal progress in course work is considered to be consistent achievement of grades of High Pass or better, and at least four term courses or two yearlong courses with Honors per year. Students entering the program with an M.A. may ask that up to three graduate courses they took before arrival at Yale be counted toward the course requirement. If the request is approved by their adviser and the DGS, they can meet the requirement within two and a half years.

Of the twenty-three required courses for graduate study, at least eighteen should be taken within the department, usually within the student's primary field of study. Courses taken outside of the department should be clearly related to the student's primary field or constitute a coherent second field. For students who take no courses outside of the department, minimum competence in a second field within NELC is required, defined as follows: at least two terms of a Near Eastern language, to be evaluated either by examination or a course grade of High Pass or better, or at least two terms of nonlanguage courses outside the area of specialization.

Committees
While doing course work, students are mentored by a faculty adviser from their field and by the DGS. Students writing dissertations may, if they so wish, be mentored by a committee headed by a primary adviser from NELC (not necessarily the faculty adviser from the course work years) and staffed with one, two, or more additional members, from either inside or outside the department, depending on the student's specific needs. Committees are to be approved by the DGS. Interested students are encouraged to seek out suitable and willing faculty to serve on their advisory committees.

Special Language and Course Requirements
Course work should be planned to meet two departmental general standards: core languages for the primary fields of study, and minimum competence in a secondary field. The core languages in each of the major fields of study are as follows: Arabic Humanities: Arabic and one other Near Eastern language, typically Hebrew, Persian, or Turkish. Assyriology: Sumerian and Akkadian. Classical Near
Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

East: Arabic and at least two of the following: Armenian, Aramaic (Babylonian or Syriac), Coptic, Greek, Hebrew, Middle Persian, New Persian, or Sanskrit. Egyptology: Egyptian and at least four terms of Demotic or Coptic.

Minimum competence in a secondary field of study is defined as follows: at least two terms of a Near Eastern language to be evaluated either by examination or with a course grade of High Pass or better, or at least two terms of nonlanguage courses outside the area of specialization. A minimum grade of High Pass in these courses will be considered successful fulfillment of this requirement.

In Arabic Humanities, the minimum competence can be extended to an interdisciplinary course of study in a minor field. Minors may include six to eight term courses in such departments and programs as Comparative Literature, French, History, History of Science and Medicine, Italian Studies, Judaic Studies, Linguistics, Medieval Studies, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Spanish and Portuguese, or others as applicable.

Students in all four fields of the department will be expected to declare their choice of a secondary language or area, or a minor field, by their third term of study.

Training in Teaching

NELC students normally acquire four terms of teaching experience, between their second and fourth years in residence. Teaching Fellow assignments will be made by the DGS in consultation with the relevant faculty and will, whenever possible, take student preferences into account.

Examinations and the Dissertation

The qualifying examination is normally taken at the end of the third year of study or no later than the beginning of the fourth year of study. Students meeting the course requirement with only twenty courses (see above) may take the qualifying examination at the end of the fall term of their third year. Qualifying examinations normally include three written and one oral examination, including language, literature, history, and other topics to be determined by the DGS in consultation with the student and the relevant faculty. Qualifying examinations may be based in part on reading lists of primary core texts and secondary literature compiled in advance by the student and the relevant faculty. Primary texts and secondary literature from course work may also be topics of the examination. For language examinations, unseen texts may also be included. In the case of the program in Arabic Humanities, for students electing to do a minor, the written portion will consist of two language examinations and one subject in the minor field, and the oral will consist of two subjects in Arabic studies and one in the minor field. Written examinations are set by the individual faculty members responsible for particular areas of study, but the oral portion may be conducted by the full staff of the department. The dissertation proposal is normally submitted one month after completing the qualifying examination.

In their final term of course work, students may, with the permission of the DGS and the relevant faculty, enroll in a Directed Readings course related to the general field of the prospective dissertation topic. Course work should include preparation of a comprehensive, annotated bibliography for the prospective topic and exploration of selected aspects of the topic in a research paper. Students availing themselves of this option may present some of their work at the NELC Roundtable.

The dissertation prospectus may comprise up to thirty pages, excluding the bibliography. A two-page summary of the prospectus will normally be circulated among and voted upon by the faculty, though the full prospectus will be available for consideration.

Successful completion of the comprehensive examination and submission of an acceptable prospectus will qualify the student for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. After completion of the dissertation, the candidate may receive a final examination concerned primarily with the defense of the thesis.

ARCHAIA GRADUATE QUALIFICATION

Students can participate in the Yale Program for the Study of Ancient and Premodern Cultures and Societies (Archaia) and receive a graduate qualification by fulfilling the necessary requirements. For further information, see Archaia, under Non-Degree-Granting Programs, Councils, and Research Institutes.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

Terminal Master’s Degree Program The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations occasionally admits students to pursue a terminal M.A. degree. No financial aid is available. Students enrolled in the M.A. program must complete a minimum of twelve term courses, with an average of High Pass and at least two grades of Honors.

Students in the Ph.D. program who leave the program prior to completion of the doctoral degree may be eligible to receive the terminal M.A. degree upon completion of a minimum of twelve courses, with an average of High Pass and at least two grades of Honors. Automatic petition for the M.A. degree is not available to students in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.
COURSES

AKKD 500a, Elementary Akkadian I  Pavla Rosenstein
Introduction to the language of ancient Babylonia and its cuneiform writing system, with exercises in reading, translation, and composition.

AKKD 501b, Elementary Akkadian II  Staff
Introduction to the language of ancient Babylonia and its cuneiform writing system, with exercises in reading, translation, and composition.

AKKD 510b, Akkadian Dialects  Benjamin Foster

ARBC 500a, Elementary Modern Standard Arabic I  Staff
A two-term course for students who have no previous background in Arabic. Students learn the Arabic alphabet, basic vocabulary and expression, and basic grammatical structures and concepts, and concentrate on developing listening and speaking skills. The course aims at developing the following skills: reading to extract the gist of written Modern Standard Arabic texts; speaking with increased ease, good pronunciation, sound grammatical forms, and correct usage; writing to respond to simple daily life issues; forming and recognizing grammatically correct Modern Standard Arabic.

ARBC 501b, Elementary Modern Standard Arabic II  Staff
A two-term course for students who have no previous background in Arabic. Students learn the Arabic alphabet, basic vocabulary and expression, and basic grammatical structures and concepts, and concentrate on developing listening and speaking skills. The course aims at developing the following skills: reading to extract the gist of written Modern Standard Arabic texts; speaking with increased ease, good pronunciation, sound grammatical forms, and correct usage; writing to respond to simple daily life issues; forming and recognizing grammatically correct Modern Standard Arabic.

ARBC 502a, Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic I  Muhammad Aziz
A two-term course for students with previous background in Arabic. It is designed to improve proficiency in aural and written comprehension as well as in speaking and writing skills. The course aims to develop the following skills: reading to extract the gist as well as key details of written Modern Standard Arabic texts on a variety of academic, social, cultural, economic, and political topics; speaking with greater fluency and enhanced engagement in conversations on a variety of topics; mastering writing, easily forming and recognizing grammatically correct Arabic sentences. Prerequisite: ARBC 501 or successful completion of a placement test.

ARBC 503b, Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic II  Muhammad Aziz
A two-term course for students with previous background in Arabic. It is designed to improve proficiency in aural and written comprehension as well as in speaking and writing skills. The course aims to develop the following skills: reading to extract the gist as well as key details of written Modern Standard Arabic texts on a variety of academic, social, cultural, economic, and political topics; speaking with greater fluency and enhanced engagement in conversations on a variety of topics; mastering writing, easily forming and recognizing grammatically correct Arabic sentences. Prerequisite: ARBC 501 or successful completion of a placement test.

ARBC 504a, Advanced Modern Standard Arabic I  Jonas Elbousty
Focus on improving the listening, writing, and speaking skills of students who already have a substantial background in the study of modern standard Arabic. Prerequisite: ARBC 503 or permission of the instructor.

ARBC 505b, Advanced Modern Standard Arabic II  Jonas Elbousty
Focus on improving the listening, writing, and speaking skills of students who already have a substantial background in the study of modern standard Arabic. Prerequisite: ARBC 503 or permission of the instructor.

ARBC 509a, Intermediate Classical Arabic I  Christopher Mezger
Introduction to classical Arabic, with emphasis on grammar to improve analytical reading skills. Readings include Qur’anic passages, literary material in both poetry and prose, biographical entries, and religious texts. Prerequisite: ARBC 501 or permission of the instructor. May be taken concurrently with ARBC 502 or ARBC 504.

ARBC 510b, Intermediate Classical Arabic II  Staff
Introduction to classical Arabic, with emphasis on analytical reading skills, grammar, and prose composition. Readings from the Qur’an, Islamic theology, and literature and history of the Middle East, as well as Jewish and Christian religious texts in Arabic.

ARBC 527b / NELC 598b, Hunger in Eden: Mohamed Choukri’s Narratives  Jonas Elbousty
A survey of the work of Mohamed Choukri, one of the most prominent Moroccan, if not Arab, writers to have shaped the modern Arabic literary canon. His influence has been instrumental in forming a generation of writers and enthusiastic readers, who cherish his narratives. Students dive deep into Choukri’s narratives, analyzing them with an eye toward their cultural and political importance. The class looks to Choukri’s life story to reveal the roots of his passion for writing and explores the culture of the time and places about which he writes. Through his narratives, students better understand the political environment within which they were composed and the importance of Choukri’s work to today’s reader regarding current debates over Arab identity. This class surveys the entirety of his work, contextualizing within the sphere of Arabic novelistic tradition. Prerequisite: ARBC 505 or permission of the instructor.

ARBC 560a or b, Graduate Arabic Seminar: al-Suyuti  Shawkat Toorawa
Study and interpretation of classical Arabic texts for advanced students. The focus this term is on Arabic scholarly texts.
ARBC 578a, Yemeni Literature and Culture  Muhammad Aziz
This course introduces students to a variety of Yemeni novels, short stories, poetry, history, movies, songs, and culture. We delve deeply into the major Arabic literary styles, in their forms of poetry, prose, movies, and series, and gain a general sense of the transitional period between past and present in the modern era. Students are expected to read the material at home and prepare for class discussions. Students grasp some sense of Yemeni history as well as literature in general. Yemeni series and films are an essential part of the course. Evaluation is based on participation, a midterm paper, and a final project. Prerequisite: ARBC 503.

ARBC 549a or b, Directed Readings: Arabic  Shawkat Toorawa

EGYP 500a, Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian I  Lingxin Zhang
A two-term introduction to the language of ancient pharaonic Egypt (Middle Egyptian) and its hieroglyphic writing system, with short historical, literary, and religious texts. Grammatical analysis with exercises in reading, translation, and composition.

EGYP 501b, Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian II  Lingxin Zhang
A two-term introduction to the language of ancient pharaonic Egypt (Middle Egyptian) and its hieroglyphic writing system, with short historical, literary, and religious texts. Grammatical analysis with exercises in reading, translation, and composition.

EGYP 510a, Elementary Biblical Coptic I  Camille Angelo
The native Egyptian language in the Roman and Byzantine periods. Thorough grounding in grammar and vocabulary of the Sahidic dialect as a basis for reading biblical, monastic, and Gnostic texts. Credit only on completion of EGYP 520.

EGYP 520b, Elementary Biblical Coptic II  Ramona Teepe
Continuation of EGYP 510. Prerequisite: EGYP 510.

EGYP 531b, Historical Texts of Egypt and Nubia  John Darnell
This course examines textual evidence regarding Egypt’s relationship with Nubia from the Old Kingdom through the Ramesside Period, focusing on close reading of the texts of royal monuments, private autobiographical inscriptions, military dispatches, and graffiti from the Nubian deserts. Background reading about the history and archaeology of ancient Nubia supplements the interpretation of the texts. Some texts are read in the original hieratic script. Prerequisite: EGYP 501 or permission of the instructor.

EGYP 533a, Intermediate Egyptian I: Literary Texts  John Darnell
Close reading of Middle Egyptian literary texts; introduction to the hieratic (cursive) Egyptian script. Readings include the Middle Kingdom stories of “Sinuhe” and the “Eloquent Peasant” and excerpts from wisdom literature. Prerequisite: EGYP 501.

EGYP 540a, Ancient Egyptian Epistology  John Darnell
Readings (in hieroglyphic and hieratic scripts) of Egyptian letters, from the Old Kingdom through the Third Intermediate Period, including the Letters to the Dead, Kahun Letters, and Late Ramesside Letters.

EGYP 541b, Intermediate Egyptian II: Historical Texts  Lingxin Zhang
Close reading of Middle Egyptian historical texts in original hieroglyphic and hieratic script. Initial survey of ancient Egyptian historiography and grammatical forms peculiar to this genre of text. Prerequisite: EGYP 501.

EGYP 550a, Introduction to Demotic  Lingxin Zhang
Introduction to the script and grammar of demotic, including readings of the Instruction of Onkheshonqy and excerpts from the bilingual decrees.

EGYP 551b, Demotic Texts  Lingxin Zhang
Close reading of Demotic texts of various genres, including wisdom texts, literary compositions, historical inscriptions, documentary texts, and graffiti.

EGYP 567a, Medinet Habu Texts  John Darnell
Overview of a complete temple from the New Kingdom, the “Temple of Millions of Years” of Ramesses III located on the west bank at Thebes. Readings of historical and religious texts that discuss the temple’s historical significance. Ramesside religious texts with discussion of their transmission, “grammar of the temple,” etc. Additional readings cover supporting materials, such as passages from the Great Papyrus Harris, other monuments of Ramesses III, and late variants of the Book of the Dead.

EGYP 599b, Directed Readings: Egyptology  John Darnell

HEBR 500a, Elementary Modern Hebrew I  Dina Roginsky
A two-term introduction to the language of contemporary Israel, both spoken and written. Fundamentals of grammar; extensive practice in speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension under the guidance of a native speaker. No previous knowledge required. Successful completion of the fall term required to enroll in the spring term.

HEBR 501b, Elementary Modern Hebrew II  Orit Yeret
A two-term introduction to the language of contemporary Israel, both spoken and written. Fundamentals of grammar; extensive practice in speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension under the guidance of a native speaker. No previous knowledge required. Successful completion of the fall term required to enroll in the spring term.

HEBR 502a, Intermediate Modern Hebrew I  Shiri Goren
A two-term review and continuation of grammatical study leading to a deeper comprehension of style and usage. Focus on selected readings, writing, comprehension, and speaking skills. Prerequisite: HEBR 501 or equivalent.
HEBR 503b, Intermediate Modern Hebrew II  Orit Yeret
A two-term review and continuation of grammatical study leading to a deeper comprehension of style and usage. Focus on selected readings, writing, comprehension, and speaking skills. Prerequisite: HEBR 502 or equivalent.

HEBR 504a, Advanced Modern Hebrew: Daily Life in Israel  Orit Yeret
An examination of major controversies in Israeli society. Readings include newspaper editorials and academic articles as well as documentary and historical material. Advanced grammatical structures are introduced and practiced.

HEBR 505b, Contemporary Israeli Society in Film  Shiri Goren
Examination of major themes in Israeli society through film, with emphasis on language study. Topics include migration, gender and sexuality, Jewish/Israeli identity, and private and collective memory. Readings in Hebrew and English provide a sociohistorical background and basis for class discussion. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 502, placement test, or permission of the instructor.

HEBR 513a, Intermediate Biblical Hebrew I  Staff
A two-term review and continuation of instruction in grammar and vocabulary, supplemented by readings from the Bible. Prerequisite: HEBR 510 or equivalent.

HEBR 514b, Intermediate Biblical Hebrew II  Staff
Continuation of HEBR 513.

HEBR 519a / JDST 835a, Israel in Ideology and Practice  Dina Roginsky
An advanced Hebrew class that focuses on changing ideology and politics in Israel. Topics include right- and left-wing political discourse, elections, state-religion dynamics, the Jewish-Arab divide, and demographic changes. Materials include newspapers, publications, online resources, speeches of different political and religious groups, and contemporary and archival footage. Also, this course draws comparisons to American political and ideological discourse. Prerequisite: HEBR 502 or equivalent.

HEBR 563b / JDST 695b, From Biblical to Modern Hebrew  Dina Roginsky
This course aims to support students who have reading knowledge of Biblical Hebrew but cannot read or converse in Modern Hebrew. The course concentrates on reading and aims at enabling students to use Modern Hebrew for research purposes. The texts chosen are tailored to students’ particular areas of interest. Prerequisite: two years of Biblical or Modern Hebrew studies, or permission of the instructor. Conducted in English.

HEBR 570a, Contemporary Israeli Art (1948 until Today)  Orit Yeret
An advanced Modern Hebrew course that focuses on contemporary Israeli art, from 1948 until today. The course aims to expand students’ knowledge of the Hebrew language and refine their writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills through exposure to authentic materials in the field of the visual arts. Students engage with diverse Israeli visual art productions—such as paintings, drawings, sculpture, photography, new media, etc. – and employ critical thinking to discuss and analyze a variety of art pieces. Prerequisite: completion of L4 (Modern Hebrew) or a placement exam.

HEBR 578b / JDST 674b, Languages in Dialogue: Hebrew and Arabic  Dina Roginsky
Hebrew and Arabic are closely related as sister Semitic languages. They have a great degree of grammatical, morphological, and lexical similarity. Historically, Arabic and Hebrew have been in cultural contact in various places and in different aspects. This advanced Hebrew language class explores linguistic similarities between the two languages as well as cultural comparisons of the communities, built on mutual respect. Students benefit from a section in which they gain a basic exposure to Arabic, based on its linguistic similarity to Hebrew. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 503, or placement test, or permission of the instructor.

MESO 506b, Selected Mesopotamian Texts: Sumerian  Benjamin Foster
Survey of selected Mesopotamian texts in Sumerian.

MESO 530a, Beginning Sumerian I  Staff
A two-term introduction to the Sumerian language.

MESO 531b, Beginning Sumerian II  Staff
A two-term introduction to the Sumerian language.

Sumerian literature employs two “dialects” or registers: a main dialect called Emegir, a language of myths, poems, and hymns, which was also used in texts outside literature such as royal inscriptions, letters, and contracts; and a register referred to as Emesal. In compositions, this register was employed by women or female characters such as goddesses. Emesal is characterized by a number of phonological differences from the main dialect. As such, Emesal is frequently written syllabically. In the first session we highlight previous research on Emesal, the extant sources, and modern tools to work with Emesal texts. In the remainder of the course, we read a selection of literary compositions and passages in texts that employ Emesal. The main focus is on the Old Babylonian period, but we also address later bilingual texts such as liturgical texts and lamentations. Prerequisite: previous study of Sumerian.

MESO 544b, Mesopotamian Scholarly Texts  Eckart Frahm
Study and interpretation of Mesopotamian scholarly texts, which could include omen treatises, medical texts, and commentaries from Babylonia and Assyria. Prerequisite: knowledge of Akkadian.
MESO 574a, Reading, Editing, and Copying Cuneiform Tablets Benjamin Foster
Students work with previously unpublished Akkadian texts and learn how to copy tablets both manually and in digital form. They are also introduced to new electronic aids in Assyriology. Prerequisite: knowledge of Akkadian.

NELC 500b / ARCG 500b / CLSS 808b, Environmental History of West Asia, Egypt, and the Mediterranean Harvey Weiss
The new linkages of high-resolution paleoclimate and archaeological and epigraphic records revise earlier historiography for the major disjunctions, including societal genesis, collapse, habitat tracking, and technological and ideological innovations, from 4000 to 40 BCE across west Asia, Egypt, and the Aegean. The seminar synthesizes speleothem and lake, marine, and glacial core records for abrupt climate changes and coincident societal adaptations previously unexplained.

NELC 512b, Egyptian Religion through the Ages John Darnell
Diachronic approach to topics in Egyptian religion. Religious architecture, evidence for protodynastic cults, foreigners in Egyptian religious celebrations, music and vocal expression in Egyptian religion, Re and Osiris, the Amarna interlude and the Ramesseide solar religion, and the goddess of the eye of the sun. READINGS IN TRANSLATION.

NELC 535b, The Bible in Its Ancient Near Eastern Setting (Seminar) Eckart Frahm
History of the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires of the first millennium BCE, and how their rise and fall influenced the politics, religion, and literary traditions of biblical Israel. Topics include the role of prophecy and (divine) law, political and religious justifications of violence, the birth of monothelism, and the historical reliability of the Hebrew Bible.

NELC 520a, Mesopotamian History of the Third Millennium Benjamin Foster
Readings and discussion of issues and evidence for a selected 500-year period of Mesopotamian history.

NELC 539a / ARCG 539a, Era of the Pyramids: Archaeology and Material Culture of the Old Kingdom, Egypt Gregory Marouard
This seminar examines in detail the Old Kingdom period, covering about eight hundred years of this crucial phase of the Egyptian civilization, from the late phase of the Early Dynastic state formation period (ca. 2850 BCE) to the First Intermediate period (ca. 2050 BCE), encompassing the Third to the Sixth Dynasty. The course is based on an archaeological approach and is not a language or history course. All major archaeological sites of this period are investigated through the scope of material culture, art, and architecture, using as much as possible information from recent excavations and discoveries. The approach includes the study of the large mortuary complexes, from Saqqara to Dahshur, Giza, Abu Rawash, and Abusir, as well as several settlement sites from the central state capital in the Memphite region, the lower and upper provinces to the Egyptian borders. Several aspects of the connections established by Egypt with its neighboring areas such as Nubia and the Levant and desert areas at the periphery of the Nile Valley are included to illustrate the extensive exchange network and the complex economy and administrative system established to support the major construction projects of the period. Material culture, artistic aspects, and typologies (within an overview of reliefs and statuary), craft productions, everyday life activities, and burial practices are addressed. This course constitutes the first in a series of chronological survey courses in Egyptian archaeology.

NELC 557b, Israeli Narratives Shiri Goren
Close reading of major Israeli novels in translation with attention to how their themes and forms relate to the Israeli condition. Focus on topics and theories of war and peace, migration, nationalism, and gender. Authors include Oz, Yehoshua, Grossman, Matalon, Castel-Bloom, Shalev, and Kashua.

NELC 588a / ANTH 773a / ARCG 773a, Climate Change, Societal Collapse, and Resilience Harvey Weiss
Collapse documented in the archaeological and early historical records of the Old and New Worlds, including Mesopotamia, Mesoamerica, the Andes, and Europe. Analysis of politicoeconomic vulnerabilities, resiliencies, and adaptations in the face of abrupt climate change, anthropogenic environmental degradation, resource depletion, “barbarian” incursions, or class conflict.

NELC 598b / ARBC 527b, Hunger in Eden: Mohamed Choukri’s Narratives Jonas Elbousty
A survey of the work of Mohamed Choukri, one of the most prominent Moroccan, if not Arab, writers to have shaped the modern Arabic literary canon. His influence has been instrumental in forming a generation of writers and enthusiastic readers, who cherish his narratives. Students dive deeply into Choukri’s narratives, analyzing them with an eye toward their cultural and political importance. The class looks to Choukri’s life story to reveal the roots of his passion for writing and explores the culture of the time and places about which he writes. Through his narratives, students better understand the political environment within which they were composed and the importance of Choukri’s work to today’s reader regarding current debates over Arab identity. This class surveys the entirety of his work, contextualizing within the sphere of Arabic novelistic tradition. Prerequisite: ARBC 505 or permission of the instructor.

NELC 610a / PERS 653a, Reading Persian Texts Farokhdeh Shayesteh
Students enhance their knowledge of Persian, with primary focus on reading skills. The course involves reading, analyzing, and in-class discussion of assigned materials. Excerpts from history, art, philosophy, and literature, as well as art history materials from medieval to modern times, are used. Conducted in Persian. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

NELC 627a / ARCG 645a, Archaeology of Ancient Egypt: An Introduction Gregory Marouard
This seminar examines in detail the archaeology of ancient Egypt following the chronological order of Egyptian history and covering almost 4,000 years, from the late Neolithic period to the end of the Greco-Roman period. The aim is not only to give a comprehensive overview of major sites and discoveries but also to use as much as possible information from recent excavations, discuss problems and priorities concerning this field, and offer an introduction to new fieldwork methods and approaches used in Egypt as well as a short history of this discipline.
NELC 662b, Death, Memorial, and Immortality in the Hebrew Bible and Its World  Jacqueline Vayntrub
What does the Hebrew Bible have to say about human mortality, divine immortality, and the afterlife? Are these ideas more consistent with later Jewish and Christian notions of death and the afterlife, or are they closer to the views of their ancient Near Eastern neighbors? In this course we examine the development of biblical and ancient Near Eastern concepts of death and life-after-death. We look at a variety of different types of texts that touch upon these themes, such as narrative, poetry, ritual, and law in biblical and other ancient Near Eastern texts. Topics include the depiction of human mortality and divine immortality in literature; dying as a social process; the development of the notion of an afterlife and the concept of the "soul"; communication with the dead; how these texts have been received in the West; and how they have shaped inherited ideas of the immortality of the soul, human suffering, and divine justice. The aim of the course is to develop an awareness of the ancient historical and cultural context in which these texts were authored, and to deepen our understanding of modern views of mortality. Prerequisite: an introductory course in the Bible at some level is preferred.

NELC 669b / MDVL 679b, Near Eastern Manuscript Research  Kevin van Bladel
Introduction to research using manuscripts in Near Eastern languages. Topics include codicology, palaeography, manuscript history, textual criticism and edition, and a variety of other matters specific to Near Eastern manuscripts. Prerequisites: reading ability in one premodern Near Eastern language and permission of the instructor.

NELC 768a, Sasanian Seminar  Kevin van Bladel
This is an intensive introduction to the primary sources for the study of the Sasanian Persian kingdom (third–seventh century CE) and the state of research on the topic.

NELC 802b, The Islamic Near East from Muhammad to the Mongol Invasion  Kevin van Bladel
The shaping of society and polity from the rise of Islam to the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in 1258. The origins of Islamic society; conquests and social and political assimilation under the Umayyads and Abbasids; the changing nature of political legitimacy and sovereignty under the caliphate; provincial decentralization and new sources of social and religious power.

NELC 829a, History of the Arabic Language  Kevin van Bladel
The course covers the development of the Arabic language from the earliest epigraphic evidence through the formation of the Classical 'Arabiyya and further, to Middle Arabic and Neo-Arabic. Readings of textual specimens and survey of secondary literature.

NELC 850a, Introduction to Arabic and Islamic Studies  Frank Griffel
Comprehensive survey of the various subjects treated in Arabic and Islamic studies, with representative readings from each. Detailed investigation into the methods and techniques of scholarship in the field, with emphasis on acquiring familiarity with the bibliographical and other research tools.

OTTM 630a, Intermediate Ottoman I  Ozgen Felek
This course is focused on developing skills that will enable students to read intermediate-level texts in Ottoman Turkish and pursue independent work in Ottoman studies. Original Ottoman texts and excerpts are read and analyzed. These texts could include chronicles, heroic narratives, advice books, physiognomy texts, travel accounts, and hagiographical stories. In addition, using Korkut Bu#day's The Routledge Introduction to Literary Ottoman for grammar and reading passages, the course covers the principles of Turkish grammar, syntax, and textual criticism. Prerequisite: OTTM 620 or permission of the instructor.

OTTM 640b, Intermediate Ottoman II  Ozgen Felek
A continuation of OTTM 630 focused on developing skills that will enable students to read intermediate texts in Ottoman Turkish and pursue independent work in Ottoman studies. Original Ottoman texts and excerpts are read and analyzed. These texts could include chronicles, heroic narratives, advice books, physiognomy texts, travel accounts, and hagiographical stories. The principles of Turkish grammar, syntax, and textual criticism are covered as well. Prerequisite: OTTM 620 or permission of the instructor.

PERS 500a, Elementary Persian I  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
A two-term introduction to modern Persian with emphasis on all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The objective is to allow students to develop the foundational knowledge necessary for further language study. Designed for nonnative speakers.

PERS 501b, Elementary Persian II  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
A two-term introduction to modern Persian with emphasis on all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The objective is to allow students to develop the foundational knowledge necessary for further language study. Designed for nonnative speakers.

PERS 502a, Intermediate Persian I  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
This two-term course is a continuation of PERS 501 with emphasis on expanding vocabulary and understanding of more complex grammatical forms and syntax. Designed for nonnative speakers. Prerequisite: PERS 501 or permission of the instructor.

PERS 503b, Intermediate Persian II  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
This two-term course is a continuation of PERS 501 with emphasis on expanding vocabulary and understanding of more complex grammatical forms and syntax. Designed for nonnative speakers. Prerequisite: PERS 501 or permission of the instructor.
PERS 563a / NELC 610a, Reading Persian Texts  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
Students enhance their knowledge of Persian, with primary focus on reading skills. The course involves reading, analyzing, and in-class discussion of assigned materials. Excerpts from history, art, philosophy, and literature, as well as art history materials from medieval to modern times, are used. Conducted in Persian. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

SMTC 523a / RLST 848a, Intermediate Syriac I  Jimmy Daccache
This two-term course is designed to enhance students' knowledge of the Syriac language by reading a selection of texts, sampling the major genres of classical Syriac literature. By the end of the year, students are familiar with non-vocalized texts and are capable of confronting specific grammatical or lexical problems. Prerequisite: RLST 839/SMTC 514 or knowledge of Syriac.

SMTC 547a / RLST 837a, Northwest Semitic Inscriptions: Official Aramaic  Jimmy Daccache
Official Aramaic is the lingua franca of the Persian Empire during the sixth and fourth centuries BCE. This course is designed to familiarize students with texts from Achaemenid Egypt (the abundant papyri of Elephantine and Hermopolis), Bactria, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia. The Aramaic grammar is illustrated through the texts. Prerequisite: RLST 835, or some knowledge of Aramaic or a related Semitic language.

SMTC 553a / RLST 874a, Advanced Syriac I  Jimmy Daccache
This course is designed for graduate students who are proficient in Syriac and is organized topically. Topics vary each term and are listed in the syllabus on Canvas.

SMTC 554b / RLST 875b, Advanced Syriac II  Jimmy Daccache
This course, designed for graduate students who are proficient in Syriac, is organized topically. This term's topics: language (the language of Adam, the language of Paradise); hagiography (Persian martyr acts); scientific texts (pandemic of bubonic plague, Medicine); and philosophy.