NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES AND CIVILIZATIONS

Arnold Hall, 304 Elm Street, 203-432-2944
http://nelc.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
Shawkat Toorawa

Director of Graduate Studies
Kevin van Bladel

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

Senior Lecturer Kathryn Slanski

Lecturers Karen Foster, Christina Geisen, Agnete Lassen, Klaus Wagensonner

Senior Lecturer II Shiri Goren

Senior Lecturers I Sarab al-Ani, Muhammad Aziz, Jonas Elbousty, Dina Roginsky, Farkhondeh Shayesteh

Lectors Elham Alkasimi, Ozgen Felek, Selim Tiryakiol, 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. 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 full-year 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 three full years of course work: four yearlong courses or eight term courses per 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.

Of the twenty-four 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.

Advanced standing In exceptional cases, upon presenting evidence of successful completion of graduate courses at other universities or at Yale prior to their matriculation in the Ph.D. program, students with significant prior knowledge in their primary fields of study may apply for a waiver of up to eight courses toward the twenty-four required for candidacy. The faculty adviser and the DGS will normally present such applications to the faculty of the department, with a recommendation, no later than the end of the second year.

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 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, 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. For students who enter with advanced standing, the qualifying examination could be taken at the end of the second 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 Applicants who do not enroll in the Ph.D. program may pursue a Master of Arts degree. Students enrolled in the M.A. program should complete a minimum of twelve term courses with at least two term grades of Honors and an average of High Pass in the remaining courses, and will be required to submit a master’s thesis no later than April 1 of the fourth term of study. No financial aid is available. Students enrolled in the Ph.D. program are also eligible for this degree by meeting the same requirements. Automatic petition for the M.A. degree is not available to students in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.
COURSES

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

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

AKKD 545a, Neo-Babylonian and Late Babylonian Historical and Archival Texts  Eckart Frahm
Study and interpretation of royal inscriptions, chronicles, letters, and contracts from seventh- to second-century B.C.E. Babylonia.

AKKD 546b, Mythological and Ritual Texts from Ancient Mesopotamia  Eckart Frahm
A survey of mythological and ritual texts from ancient Mesopotamia.

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 510b, Intermediate Classical Arabic II  Adeel Mohammadi
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 530a or b, Arabic Seminar: Early Adab  Staff
Study and interpretation of classical Arabic texts for advanced students. Prerequisite: ARBC 510 or permission of the instructor.

ARBC 567a, Modern Arab Writers  Muhammad Aziz
Study of novels and poetry written by modern Arab writers, including Taha Hussein, Zaid Dammaj, Hoda Barakat, Nizar Qabbani, al-Maqilah, and Mostaghanimi. Prerequisite: ARBC 504 or permission of the instructor.

ARBC 595b / CPLT 548b / NELC 584b, The Trilogy of Mosteghanemi  Jonas Elbousty
Examination of the social injustices of the conservative, post-colonial Maghreb as they are clearly—and intentionally—visible in twentieth-century, contemporary literature of the region. Because of the candid themes of poverty, unemployment, prostitution, drug and alcohol use, corruption, homosexuality, isolation, and rape, much of the literature has been banned in North Africa, finding audiences instead in Europe and North America.
ARBC 849a or b, Directed Readings: Arabic  Shawkat Toorawa

EGYP 500a, Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian I  Christina Geisen
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  Christina Geisen
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  Thomas Schmidt
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  Thomas Schmidt
Continuation of EGYP 510. Prerequisite: EGYP 510.

EGYP 577a, Egyptian Rock Inscriptions  John Darnell

EGYP 579a, Directed Readings: Egyptology  John Darnell

HEBR 500a, Elementary Modern Hebrew I  Staff
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  Staff
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  Dina Roginsky
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 506b, Dynamics of Israeli Culture  Shiri Goren
The course explores contemporary controversies of Israeli society by examining recent cultural production such as novelistic writing, films, poetry, newspaper articles, new media, advertisement, and television shows. Discussions include migration and the construction of the Sabra character; ethnicity and race: the emergence of Mizrachi voice; women in Israeli society; private and collective memory; minority discourse: Druze, Russian Jews; Israeli masculinity and queer culture. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 502 or permission of the instructor.

HEBR 510a, Conversational Hebrew: Israeli Media  Shiri Goren
An advanced Hebrew course for students interested in practicing and enhancing conversational skills. The course aims to improve the four language skills while stressing listening comprehension and various forms of discussions including practical situations, online interactions, and content analysis. Prerequisite: HEBR 502 or permission of the instructor.

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

HEBR 516a, Israeli Popular Music  Dina Roginsky
Changes in the development of popular music in Israel explored as representations of changing Israeli society and culture. The interaction of music and cultural identity; the role of modern popular music in representing, shaping, challenging, and criticizing social conventions; songs of commemoration and heroism; popular representation of the Holocaust; Mizrahi and Arab music; feminism, sexuality, and gender; class and musical consumption; criticism, protest, and globalization. Prerequisite: HEBR 502 or equivalent.

HEBR 524b / JDST 671b, Creative Writing in Hebrew  Orit Yeret
An advanced language course with focus on creative writing and self-expression. Students develop knowledge of modern Hebrew, while elevating writing skills based on special interests, and in various genres, including short prose, poetry, dramatic writing, and journalism. Students engage with diverse authentic materials, with emphasis on Israeli literature, culture, and society.

HEBR 563b / JDST 694b, 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.
MESO 506b, Selected Mesopotamian Texts: Bilingual Texts  Eckart Frahm

MESO 577a, Sumerian School Dialogues: The Eduba through the Eyes of the Old Babylonian Literati  Klaus Wagensonner
An investigation of scribal apprenticeship as vividly reflected in Sumerian literary texts, in particular the so-called school dialogues. Dialogues and diatribes are fairly but unjustifiably underrepresented in modern scholarship. The course takes examples from primary sources in the Yale Babylonian Collection and other collections.

NELC 518a, Assyria: The First Near Eastern Empire (Seminar)  Eckart Frahm
Survey of the history and culture of ancient Assyria, with a focus on its imperial phase in the first millennium B.C.E. Assyria’s aggressive foreign policy; the role of the military; Assyrian royal ideology, religion, literature, art, and court life; Assyria’s impact on the Bible; Assyria’s image in classical sources. Readings from primary sources in translation.

NELC 535b / ANTH 531b / ARCG 531b / CLSS 815b / EALL 773 / HIST 502b / HSAR 564 / JDST 653b / RLST 803b, Sensory Experiences in Ancient Ritual  Noel Lenski and Benedict Kiernan
A comparative exploration of the role the senses played in the performance of ancient and premodern ritual, drawing from a range of ancient traditions including those of Greece, Rome, and Egypt, and from cultural traditions of the Near East, India, China, and the New World. Placing particular emphasis on the relationship between art and ritual, we discuss the methods available for reconstructing ancient sensory experience, how the ancient cultures conceived of the senses and perception, and how worshippers’ sensory experiences, whether visual, sonic, olfactory, gustatory, or haptic, were integral aspects in their engagement with the divine within religious ritual. This seminar incorporates material in the Yale Art Gallery.

NELC 547a, Survey of Mesopotamian and Akkadian Literature  Benjamin Foster
Introduction to Sumerian and Akkadian literature, in translation, from their beginnings through the Hellenistic period.

NELC 548a / MDVL 580a, Ancient and Medieval Astronomy: From Babylonian to Greek to Arabic to Latin  Kevin Van Bladel
Astronomy was one of the seven classical liberal arts. This course introduces the history and methods of classical astronomy as practiced by ancient and medieval astronomers of Assyria and Babylonia, Greece, Rome, and Persia; and by medieval scholars in Latin, Arabic, and Sanskrit, down to the time of Copernicus and Kepler.

NELC 549b / MDVL 581b, Reading Classical Arabic Scholarship  Kevin Van Bladel
This course studies a tenth-century overview of the sciences in classical Arabic and meaningful excerpts of additional texts representing each science covered. Students acquire a large vocabulary of scholarly and technical terms of art as used in classical Arabic, facilitating further research in traditional Arabic scholarship.

NELC 556a, Classics: The Arabic-Islamic World  Shawkat Toorawa
Survey of the literary tradition of the Arabic-Islamic world (West Asia, North Africa, and Muslim Spain). Prose and poetry from the Qur’an to the Arabian Nights; attention to the interdependence of the works and their cultural setting, the agendas authors pursued, and the characters they portrayed.

NELC 562a / CLSS 607a / LING 513a, Indo-European Linguistics  Kevin Van Bladel
An introduction to the inner workings and prehistory of the Indo-European languages both as a language family and in individual branches. It is a course in historical linguistics devoted to the best understood of language families, Indo-European. The emphasis is on using the theoretical framework obtained by this knowledge, especially through practical applications for readers of ancient languages such as Greek, Latin, Hittite, Sanskrit, Avestan, and Middle Persian.

NELC 574a, Intermediate Biblical Hebrew I  Eric Reymond
This course focuses on the reading of biblical texts but also offers a review of the elementary grammar of Biblical Hebrew and the introduction of more complicated grammatical concerns. More specifically, the first term focuses on prose texts and reviews the morphology of verbs and nouns as well as basic components of Hebrew syntax; the second term introduces students to Biblical Hebrew poetry while continuing the study and review of Hebrew morphology and syntax. In addition, the form and function of *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) are introduced.

NELC 575b, Intermediate Biblical Hebrew II  Eric Reymond
This course focuses on the reading of biblical texts but also offers a review of the elementary grammar of Biblical Hebrew and the introduction of more complicated grammatical concerns. More specifically, the first term focuses on prose texts and reviews the morphology of verbs and nouns as well as basic components of Hebrew syntax; the second term introduces students to Biblical Hebrew poetry while continuing the study and review of Hebrew morphology and syntax. In addition, the form and function of *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) are introduced.

NELC 582a, Death and Burial in Ancient Egypt  Salima Ikram
Study of the funerary practices and beliefs of ancient Egypt from the Old Kingdom to the Graeco-Roman period, with a strong section devoted to animals. Topics include the process of mumification and the spells used during the operation; development of coffins, sarcophagi, amulets, canopic jars, canopic chests, shabtis, and other tomb furnishings; the evolution and decoration of the tomb, both royal and private; and religious rituals associated with funerals, the afterlife, and the mortuary cult.

NELC 583a, Food and Drink in Ancient Egypt  Salima Ikram
Investigation of how food helped shape the culture, economy, and history of ancient Egypt and the role of different foods in various social and religious settings. Consideration of the types of food eaten by various levels of society; the raw materials that could have been
used as food; the domestication of plants and animals, farming techniques, irrigation, land use, and tools; and methods of cooking and preserving foods.

**NELC 584b / ARBC 593b / CPLT 548b, The Trilogy of Mosteghanemi** Jonas Elbouz
Examination of the social injustices of the conservative, post-colonial Maghreb as they are clearly—and intentionally—visible in twentieth-century, contemporary literature of the region. Because of the candid themes of poverty, unemployment, prostitution, drug and alcohol use, corruption, homosexuality, isolation, and rape, much of the literature has been banned in North Africa, finding audiences instead in Europe and North America.

**NELC 585b, Yale Babylonian Collection Exhibition Seminar** Eckart Frahm and Agnete Lassen
Working on the upcoming exhibition of objects from the Yale Babylonian Collection at the Peabody Museum, students learn how to design an exhibition of cuneiform tablets, seals, and other artifacts from ancient Mesopotamia. Students experience hands-on aspects of museum work, determining how best to display objects in the museum space and present them in the exhibition catalog, for which they write individual entries.

**NELC 586b / ARGC 584b / RLST 829b, The Afterlife of the Ancient Egyptian: The Interplay of Funerary Texts and Material Culture** Christina Geisen
The course discusses the idea of the afterlife and its development in ancient Egyptian culture by examining funerary text corpora and highlighting their interplay with their material carriers, such as tombs, coffins, and ushebtis.

**NELC 588b / ANTH 773b / ARGC 773b, Abrupt Climate Change and Societal Collapse** 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 597b / JDST 762b, Marginal Groups in Islam** Liran Yadgar
What can we learn about Islamic civilization by studying those who live on its margins? What barriers do we face when we study these people? Instead of focusing on the history of caliphs and sultans, and of the social and religious elite, this course examines how pre-modern Muslim societies conceptualized, identified and treated marginalized groups and minorities, such as the poor, slaves, criminals, non-Muslims, heretics, the physically and mentally ill, and homosexuals. Studying these marginal groups contributes to the understanding of the socially and economically unprivileged segments of the society throughout history and in our times.

**NELC 605a, Global Environmental History** Harvey Weiss

**NELC 606a, Agriculture: Origins, Evolution, Crises** Harvey Weiss
Analysis of the societal and environmental drivers and effects of plant and animal domestication, the intensification of agroproduction, and the crises of agroproduction: land degradation, societal collapses, sociopolitical transformation, sustainability, and biodiversity.

**NELC 607a, Mesopotamian History: First Millennium** Benjamin Foster
A survey of Mesopotamian history in the first millennium.

**NELC 608b, Readings in Christian Arabic Texts** Stephen Davis
This seminar provides the opportunity for close reading and analysis of Christian Arabic texts. Primary sources—either original literature composed in Arabic or early Christian writings translated into Arabic—may include biblical commentaries, church canons, theological and ascetic treatises, sermons, and/or saints’ lives. Special attention is paid to matters of genre, histories of reception, and the cultural context of Christian-Muslim encounter. Topic for spring 2018: The Kephalaia Gnostica of Evagrius Ponticus in Arabic. The focus is on the only two extant manuscripts of this work, both preserved in the Monastery of the Syrians in Wadi al-Natrun, Egypt. Students engage in critical analysis of the text and raise questions related to the transmission of early Christian contemplative/ascetic theologies (including the reception of Origen’s thought) in Arabic.

**NELC 609b, Old Persian** Kevin Van Bladel
Study of the ancient Iranian language, Old Persian, in its historical and material context in the Achaemenian Empire, with intensive philological investigation of the inscriptions of the Achaemenid kings. Students learn to read the language in the original cuneiform script and cover almost the entire corpus of texts. They also study the place of Old Persian in Indo-European linguistics and within the Iranian languages as a family. Permission of instructor is required.

**NELC 610b / PERS 563b, 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.

**NELC 703b / JDST 721b, Introduction to Judaism in the Ancient World: From Temple to Talmud** Steven Fraade
The emergence of classical Judaism in its historical setting. Jews and Hellenization; varieties of early Judaism; apocalyptic and postapocalyptic responses to suffering and catastrophe; worship and atonement without sacrificial cult; interpretations of scriptures; law and life; the rabbi; the synagogue; faith in reason; Sabbath and festivals; history and its redemption.

**NELC 706b / RLST 719b, Problems in Early Islamic History** Travis Zadeh
An examination of questions and problems in the origins and development of Islamic history as explored by modern scholarship. Particular focus is placed on early source material.
NELC 850a, Introduction to Arabic and Islamic Studies  Dimitri Gutas
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.

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 562a, Cinema of Iran, Past and Present  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
A thematic survey of Iranian cinema, past and present. Prominent Iranian directors such as Kiarostami, Beyzai, Panahi, Banietemad, and Farhadi are explored through discussion and in-class viewing of clips from assigned films. Students enhance their awareness of Persian culture through Iranian films while advancing their language skills.

PERS 563b / NELC 610b, 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 520b / RLST 840b, Introductory Ugaritic  Jimmy Daccache
The Ugaritic texts from the Bronze Age found at Ras Shamra on the Mediterranean coast of Syria provide the earliest well-attested example of the use of alphabet writing. The Ugaritic corpus comprises more than 2,000 texts of several genres (myths, rituals, incantations, “scientific” manuals, letters, administrative documents, and others), written in a “cuneiform” script. This two-term course prepares students to read, transcribe, and analyze texts written in Ugaritic by using basic grammar rules.

SMTC 523a / RLST 826a, Intermediate Syriac I  Jimmy Daccache
This two-term course is a continuation of SMTC 521. Reading and analysis of Syriac texts from various genres and time periods. Prerequisite: SMTC 521 or knowledge of Syriac.

SMTC 524b / RLST 827b, Intermediate Syriac II  Jimmy Daccache
This two-term course is a continuation of SMTC 521. Reading and analysis of Syriac texts from various genres and time periods. Prerequisite: SMTC 521 or knowledge of Syriac.

SMTC 534a, Introduction to Babylonian Aramaic  Elitzur Bar-Asher
An introduction to the language of the Jewish Babylonian Aramaic. This course covers the grammar of this dialect followed by reading of texts of different genres. In addition this class introduces some of the major philological aspects for approaching Talmudic texts.

SMTC 535b, Readings in Babylonian Aramaic Texts  Elitzur Bar-Asher
This course builds on SMTC 534. We read different texts from all sources of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, with concentration on a variety of linguistic topics.

SMTC 545a, Northwest Semitic Inscriptions: Aramaic  Jimmy Daccache
This course is designed to familiarize students with Aramaic epigraphy from the first millennium B.C.E. The Aramaic grammar is illustrated through early monumental inscriptions on stone from Anatolia and the abundant papyri of the Persian period from Egypt.

SMTC 836b, Northwest Semitic Inscriptions: Hebrew and Moabite  Jimmy Daccache
The aim of this course is to provide students with an overview of the Hebrew epigraphy from the first millennium B.C.E., including inscriptions on stone, jars, and ostraca. The second part of the term is devoted to the study of Moabite monumental inscriptions and seal inscriptions.