NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES AND CIVILIZATIONS

Director of undergraduate studies: Jonas Elbousty, Arnold Hall, 304 Elm Street, Room B41A, 432-2944, jonas.elbousty@yale.edu; nelc.yale.edu

The major in Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations is an interdisciplinary liberal arts major. Students acquire language proficiency and skills in critical analysis in order to study the long-lived and rich civilizations of the Near East, ranging from ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, to the Medieval Near East and Classical Islam, to modern cultures represented by modern Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish.

The Near East is studied for its own intrinsic literary, historic, and artistic interest, as well as its cultural and historical legacies, while also providing new ways of understanding developments and challenges in the modern world. Majors go on to careers in government, foreign service, law, medicine, education, and academic research. The major also provides an excellent basis for graduate study.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

The major for the Class of 2020 and previous classes With DUS approval, the following changes to the requirements of the major may be fulfilled by students who declared their major under previous requirements.

The major for the Class of 2021 and subsequent classes The Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations major has two tracks from which students may choose. In track A, students focus, in depth, on a particular language, civilization, period, or region. In track B, students focus on Near Eastern languages and civilizations more broadly and comparatively.

Twelve term courses in the department, or their equivalent, are required for the major, including the senior essay course. There are no prerequisites. Students develop coherent programs of study in one of two tracks:

**Track A, Language and Civilization (depth),** offers students a rigorous and intellectually coherent foundation in line with their own specific interests. Through in-depth study of Near Eastern languages and texts in their original languages, richly contextualized through study of literature, religion, visual arts, archaeology, political and social history, students focus on the Ancient Near East, the Classical Near East, Medieval Islam, or Modern Hebrew language and culture. Requirements include: six term courses of one or two Near Eastern languages; one NELC Foundations course; five electives, chosen in consultation with the DUS and assigned faculty adviser; and the senior essay.

**Track B, Languages, Civilization, and Culture (breadth),** provides students the opportunity to study the Near East in its historical and cultural breadth, and to explore its rich and long-lived civilizations and cultures. This flexible program allows students to take a range of classes and to design their course of study in line with their interests. Areas of interest include languages, literature, history, religion, art and archaeology, and philosophy. Requirements include four term courses of one or more languages; two NELC Foundations courses; and five electives, including one on the ancient Near East, one on the medieval Near East, and one on the modern Middle East, chosen in consultation with the DUS and assigned faculty adviser; and the senior essay.

All students are also encouraged to take related courses in other departments and programs, such as Anthropology, Archaeology, Classics, History, History of Art, History of Science, Medicine & Public Health, Judaic Studies, Literature, Philosophy, and Religious Studies. Such courses, including college seminars, will routinely be accepted for credit toward the major if they deal with Near Eastern topics, at the discretion of the assigned faculty adviser and DUS.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

The senior essay is a research paper of at least thirty pages prepared under the supervision of a departmental faculty member. It may be written under the rubric of NELC 492 and/or 493, or as an extended seminar paper in a departmental seminar course, in which case the instructor serves as the essay adviser. The topic and a prospectus signed by an adviser are to be submitted to the DUS by the end of the fourth week of classes in either term of the senior year. The particular subject matter and theoretical approach of the essay are decided by the student after consultation with the faculty adviser.

In cases in which students demonstrably need more time for an extended research paper, the senior essay may be approved as a yearlong course after consultation with the adviser and the DUS. Only those students who have advanced language skills and whose project is considered to be of exceptional promise are eligible. The requirements for the two-term essay are the same as for the one-term essay, except that the essay should be at least sixty pages.

ADVISING

All course schedules must be discussed with the assigned faculty adviser and approved by the DUS.

Languages currently offered by the Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations include Akkadian, Arabic, Egyptian, Hebrew, Ottoman Turkish, Persian, Syriac, and Turkish. Students who take a foreign language during a term, year, or summer abroad must complete a departmental placement examination after they return to Yale; there are no exceptions to this requirement.

Well-qualified students who have acquired the requisite background in undergraduate courses may, with the permission of the instructor, the DUS, and the director of graduate studies, be admitted to graduate courses where no suitable undergraduate courses exist.
REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Prerequisites  None

Number of courses  12 term courses (incl senior essay)

Distribution of courses  Language and Civilization track A (depth) — 6 term courses of up to 2 Near Eastern language courses; 1 foundations course; and 5 electives, with DUS consultation; Languages, Civilization, and Culture track B (breadth) — 4 term courses of 1 or more Near Eastern language courses; 2 foundations courses; 5 electives to include 1 ancient, 1 medieval, and 1 modern course, with DUS consultation

Senior requirement  Senior essay in NELC 492 and/or 493 or in dept seminar

FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES AND CIVILIZATIONS

Professors  John Darnell, Benjamin Foster, Eckart Frahm, Shawkat Toorawa, Kevin Van Bladel, Harvey Weiss

Senior Lectors and Senior Lecturers  Sarab Al Ani, Muhammad Aziz, Jonas Elbousty, Shiri Goren, Dina Roginsky, Farkhondeh Shayesteh, Kathryn Slanski

Lectors and Lecturers  Julien Cooper, Ozgen Felek, Christina Geisen, Agnete Lassen, Selim Tiryakiol, Klaus Wagensonne, Orit Yeret

Professors Emeritus  Dimitri Gutas, Bentley Layton

First-Year Seminars

* NELC 001a / AFST 001a / ARCG 001a, Egypt and Northeast Africa: A Multidisciplinary Approach  John Darnell
Examination of approximately 10,000 years of Nile Valley cultural history, with an introduction to the historical and archaeological study of Egypt and Nubia. Consideration of the Nile Valley as the meeting place of the cultures and societies of northeast Africa. Various written and visual sources are used, including the collections of the Peabody Museum and the Yale Art Gallery. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU

* NELC 026b / ARCG 031b / CLCV 059b / EVST 030b / HIST 020b, Rivers and Civilization  Harvey Weiss and Joseph Manning
The appearance of the earliest cities along the Nile and Euphrates in the fourth millennium B.C. Settlements along the rivers, the origins of agriculture, the production and extraction of agricultural surpluses, and the generation of class structures and political hierarchies. How and why these processes occurred along the banks of these rivers; consequent societal collapses and their relation to abrupt climate changes. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. HU, SO

Foundations Courses

History and Civilization Courses

NELC 156a / HUMS 233a / LITR 178a / MMES 201a, Classics of the Arabic-Islamic World  Shawkat Toorawa
Survey of the literary tradition of the Arabic-Islamic world (West Asia, North Africa, and Muslim Spain), a textual conversation among diverse authors from late antiquity to the Mamluk period. 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. HU TR

NELC 167a / WGSS 168a, Women in the Ancient World  Karen Foster
Introduction to the roles of women in ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Aegean society, as reflected in painting, sculpture, decorative arts, and literature, as well as in the earliest women’s writings known. HU

NELC 191b / ARCG 218b, Ancient Ships and Maritime Archaeology  Karen Foster
Introduction to the world of the ancient mariners, with special attention to new discoveries and interpretations. HU, SO

* NELC 223a / EGYP 225a, 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 mummification 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 230a / CLCV 113a / HUMS 434a, Mesopotamia’s Literary Legacy  Kathryn Slanski
Major works of ancient Near Eastern literature; relationships with literary traditions in the Hebrew Bible and ancient Greece. Readings include myths, epics, wisdom literature, love poetry, and humorous stories. HU

* NELC 231b / JDST 235b / MMES 235b / RLST 147b, Introduction to Judaism in the Ancient World  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. No prior background in Jewish history assumed. HU

* NELC 234a / EGYP 226a, 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 250a, Assyria: The First Near Eastern Empire  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.  HU

NELC 268a / ARCG 226a / EVST 226a, Global Environmental History  Harvey Weiss
The dynamic relationship between environmental and social forces from the Pleistocene glaciations to the Anthropocene present. Pleistocene extinctions; transition from hunting and gathering to agriculture; origins of cities, states, and civilization; adaptations and collapses of Old and New World civilizations in the face of climate disasters; the destruction and reconstruction of the New World by the Old. Focus on issues of adaptation, resilience, and sustainability, including forces that caused long-term societal change.  SO

* NELC 385b / ANTH 389b / MMES 376b / PLSC 469b / SOCY 359b, Politics of Culture in Iran  Nahid Siamdoust
Examination of cultural production in post-revolutionary Iran (1979 to the present) through works of noteworthy cultural and sociopolitical content in cinema, music, and newspaper journalism. Consideration of the policies the new Islamic Republic has put in place in order to regulate the field of cultural production, and the strategies that cultural producers have devised to navigate the given constraints.  HU

* NELC 399a / ANTH 478a / ARCG 399a / EVST 399a, 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.  SO

* NELC 473b / ANTH 473b / ARCG 473b / EVST 473b, Abrupt Climate Change and Societal Collapse  Harvey Weiss
The coincidence of societal collapses throughout history with decadal and century-scale abrupt climate change events. Challenges to anthropological and historical paradigms of cultural adaptation and resilience. Examination of archaeological and historical records and high-resolution sets of paleoclimate proxies.  HU, SO

Languages and Literatures

AKKADIAN

Students wishing to study Akkadian should consult the director of undergraduate studies.

ARABIC

ARBC 110a, Elementary Modern Standard Arabic I  Staff
Development of a basic knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic. Emphasis on grammatical analysis, vocabulary acquisition, and the growth of skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.  L1  1½ Course cr

ARBC 120b, Elementary Modern Standard Arabic II  Staff
Continuation of ARBC 110. Prerequisite: ARBC 110 or requisite score on a placement test.  L2  RP  1½ Course cr

* ARBC 130a, Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic I  Muhammad Aziz
Intensive review of grammar; readings from contemporary and classical Arab authors with emphasis on serial reading of unvoweled Arabic texts, prose composition, and formal conversation. Prerequisite: ARBC 120 or requisite score on a placement test.  L3  RP  1½ Course cr

ARBC 140b, Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic II  Muhammad Aziz
Continuation of ARBC 130. Prerequisite: ARBC 130 or requisite score on a placement test.  L4  RP  1½ Course cr

ARBC 146b, Intermediate Classical Arabic II  Adeel Mohammadi
Continuation of ARBC 136. Prerequisite: ARBC 136 or permission of instructor. May be taken concurrently with ARBC 140 or 151.  L4  RP

* ARBC 150a, Advanced Modern Standard Arabic I  Jonas Elbousty
Further development of listening, writing, and speaking skills. For students who already have a substantial background in Modern Standard Arabic. Prerequisite: ARBC 140 or requisite score on a placement test.  L5  RP

* ARBC 151b, Advanced Modern Standard Arabic II  Jonas Elbousty
Continuation of ARBC 150. Prerequisite: ARBC 150 or requisite score on a placement test.  L5  RP

* ARBC 165a or b / MMES 465a or b, Arabic Seminar: Early Adab  Staff
Study and interpretation of classical Arabic texts for advanced students. The subtitle of this course changes depending on the materials covered. This term the course focuses on "Early Adab." Prerequisite: ARBC 146, 151, or permission of instructor. May be repeated for credit.
EGYPTIAN

* EGYP 110a, Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian I  Christina Geisen
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. L1

* EGYP 117a, 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 127. L1 RP

* EGYP 126b, Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian II  Christina Geisen
Continuation of EGYP 110. Prerequisite: EGYP 110. L1 RP

* EGYP 127b, Elementary Biblical Coptic II  Thomas Schmidt
Continued study of 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. Prerequisite: EGYP 117. L2 RP

* EGYP 131a, Intermediate Egyptian: Literary Texts  Christina Geisen
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 120. L3 RP

* EGYP 177a, Egyptian Rock Inscriptions  John Darnell
Examination of Egyptian rock inscriptions (graffiti) from desert sites (Eastern and Western Deserts of Egypt and Nubia), as well as "parasitic" inscriptions from Egyptian and Nubian temples. Texts range in date from the Protodynastic through the New Kingdom, with some later material, and include an introduction to lapidary hieratic and the available tools for deciphering this cursive script.

* EGYP 225a / NELC 234a, 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 mummification 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.

* EGYP 226a / NELC 234a, 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.

HEBREW

* HEBR 110a, Elementary Modern Hebrew I  Staff
Introduction to the language of contemporary Israel, both spoken and written. Fundamentals of grammar; extensive practice in speaking, reading, and writing under the guidance of a native speaker. L1 1½ Course cr

* HEBR 120b, Elementary Modern Hebrew II  Orit Yeret
Continuation of HEBR 110. Introduction to the language of contemporary Israel, both spoken and written. Fundamentals of grammar; extensive practice in speaking, reading, and writing under the guidance of a native speaker. Prerequisite: HEBR 110 or equivalent. L2 RP 1½ Course cr

* HEBR 130a, Intermediate Modern Hebrew I  Staff
Review and continuation of grammatical study, leading to a deeper understanding of style and usage. Focus on selected readings and on writing, comprehension, and speaking skills. Prerequisite: HEBR 120 or equivalent. L3 RP

* HEBR 137a, Intermediate Biblical Hebrew I  Matthew Glassman
Review and continuation of grammatical study leading to a deeper comprehension of biblical Hebrew style. Focus on extended reading of biblical narrative, poetry, prophecy, and Wisdom texts. Prerequisite: HEBR 127 or equivalent. L3 RP

* HEBR 140b, Intermediate Modern Hebrew II  Dina Roginsky
Continuation of HEBR 130. Review and continuation of grammatical study leading to a deeper comprehension of style and usage. Focus on selected readings and on writing, comprehension, and speaking skills. Prerequisite: HEBR 130 or equivalent. L4 RP

* HEBR 147a, Intermediate Biblical Hebrew II  Staff
Continuation of HEBR 137. Prerequisite: HEBR 137 or equivalent. L4 RP

* HEBR 156b / JDST 405b / MMES 216b, Dynamics of Israeli Culture  Shiri Goren
Controversies in Israeli society as revealed in novels, films, poetry, newspaper articles, Web sites, art, advertisements, and television shows. Themes include migration and the construction of the Sabra character; ethnicity and race; the emergence of the Mizrahi voice; women in Israeli society; private and collective memory; the minority discourse of the Druze and Russian Jews; and Israeli masculinity and queer culture. Conducted in Hebrew. Papers may be written in English or Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor. L5, HU RP
*HEBR 159a / JDST 409a / MMES 159a, Conversational Hebrew: Israeli Media  Shiri Goren
An advanced Hebrew course for students interested in practicing and enhancing conversational skills. Focus on listening comprehension and on various forms of discussion, including practical situations, online interactions, and content analysis. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor. L5 RP

HEBR 161a / JDST 407a / MMES 156a, 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; modern popular music and 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. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or equivalent. L5

*HEBR 164b / JDST 417b / MMES 167b, Biblical to Modern Hebrew for Reading Knowledge  Dina Roginsky
Instruction in the linguistic needs of students who have reading knowledge of Biblical Hebrew but cannot read or converse in Modern Hebrew. Concentration on reading comprehension of Modern Hebrew for research purposes, particularly scholarly texts tailored to students’ areas of interest. Two years of Biblical or Modern Hebrew studies, or permission of the instructor. RP

OTTOMAN TURKISH
Students wishing to study Ottoman Turkish should consult the director of undergraduate studies.

PERSIAN
PERS 110a, Elementary Persian I  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
Introduction to modern Persian, with emphasis on all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. L1 1½ Course cr

PERS 120b, Elementary Persian II  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
Continuation of PERS 110, with emphasis on all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Prerequisite: PERS 110 or permission of instructor. L2 RP 1½ Course cr

PERS 130a, Intermediate Persian I  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
Continuation of PERS 120, with emphasis on expanding vocabulary and understanding more complex grammatical forms and syntax. Prerequisite: PERS 120 or permission of instructor. L3 RP 1½ Course cr

PERS 140b, Intermediate Persian II  Farkhondeh Shayesteh
Continuation of PERS 130, with emphasis on expanding vocabulary and understanding more complex grammatical forms and syntax. Prerequisite: PERS 130 or permission of instructor. L4 RP 1½ Course cr

*PERS 161a / MMES 176a, 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, Baniyemad, 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. L4 and instructor permission. L5

SYRIAC
Students wishing to study Syriac should consult the director of undergraduate studies.

TURKISH
TKSH 110a, Elementary Modern Turkish I  Gül Deniz Demirel Aydemir
Integration of basic listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills through a variety of functional, meaningful, and contextual activities. Students become active users of modern Turkish and gain a deeper understanding of Anatolian culture through lessons based on real-life situations and authentic materials. L1 RP 1½ Course cr

TKSH 120b, Elementary Modern Turkish II  Gül Deniz Demirel Aydemir
Continuation of TKSH 110. Prerequisite: TKSH 110 or permission of instructor. L2 RP 1½ Course cr

TKSH 130a, Intermediate Turkish I  Israfil Boyaci
Continued study of modern Turkish, with emphasis on advanced syntax, vocabulary acquisition, and the beginnings of free oral and written expression. Prerequisite: TKSH 120 or permission of instructor. L3 RP

Senior Essay
*NELC 472b, Directed Reading and Research  Staff
For students who wish to pursue a topic or body of texts not available in the department's regular curriculum. Approval of the plan of study by both the director of undergraduate studies and a member of the department who agrees to serve as instructor is required. Student and instructor meet regularly throughout the term. The course culminates in either a piece of written work or a final examination.

*NELC 490a / MMES 490a, Introduction to Arabic and Islamic Studies  Dimitri Gutas
Comprehensive survey of subjects treated in Arabic and Islamic studies, with representative readings from each. Methods and techniques of scholarship in the field; emphasis on acquiring familiarity with bibliographical and other research tools. Enrollment limited to senior majors in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, except by permission of instructor.
*NELC 492a and NELC 493b, The Senior Essay*  Jonas Elbousty
Preparation of a research paper of at least thirty pages (sixty pages for a two-term essay) under the supervision of a departmental faculty member, in accordance with the following schedule: (1) by the end of the second week of classes of the fall term, students meet with advisers to discuss the topic, approach, sources, and bibliography of the essay. Note: students planning to write the essay in the second term (NELC 493) should also meet with their prospective advisers by this deadline; (2) by the end of the fourth week of classes a prospectus with outline, including an annotated bibliography of materials in one or more Near Eastern languages and of secondary sources, is signed by the adviser and submitted to the director of undergraduate studies. The prospectus should indicate the formal title, scope, and focus of the essay, as well as the proposed research method, including detailed indications of the nature and extent of materials in a Near Eastern language that will be used; (3) at the end of the tenth week of classes (end of February for yearlong essays), a rough draft of the complete essay is submitted to the adviser; (4) two copies of the finished paper must be submitted to the director of undergraduate studies, Rm 314 HGS, by 4 p.m. on the last day of reading period. Failure to comply with the deadline will be penalized by a lower grade. Senior essays will be graded by departmental faculty unless, for exceptional reasons, different arrangements for an outside reader are made in advance with the director of undergraduate studies and the departmental adviser.

**GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL COURSES OF INTEREST TO UNDERGRADUATES**
Some Graduate School courses are open to qualified undergraduates with permission of the instructor and of the director of graduate studies. For course descriptions see the Online Course Information Website. (Also see "Courses in the Yale Graduate and Professional Schools" under "Special Arrangements" in the Academic Regulations.)