AKKADIAN (AKKD)

AKKD 110a, Elementary Akkadian I  Staff
Akkadian was one of the primary languages of ancient Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), with an attested history of more than 2000 years (from the second half of the 3rd millennium BCE to the beginning of the Common Era). It is a Semitic language, similar to Arabic, Aramaic, and Hebrew, written on clay tablets in the Cuneiform script. Hundreds of thousands of documents in Akkadian have come down to us. They include everything from great works of literature like the Gilgamesh Epic, to everyday texts such as letters that document the lives of people from all walks of life, from great kings to commoners and slaves. Whether it be a letter to a paranoid emperor who refuses to eat and shuts himself in his own palace, or a particularly inept spy reporting to his superiors about the suspicious dreams of a suspected enemy of the state, knowledge of Akkadian opens a window into the world of those who lived thousands of years ago, the struggles they faced and the stories they told. Akkadian for Beginners provides students with the tools to begin to explore that ancient and once-forgotten world of ancient Mesopotamia. After finishing the course, students will have acquired a sound knowledge of Akkadian grammar and syntax, along with practice in Cuneiform.

AKKD 120b, Elementary Akkadian II  Staff
Continuation of AKKD 110. Prerequisite: AKKD 110.

* AKKD 350b / AFST 352b / HIST 352Jb, Culture and Politics in Lusophone Africa, 1885-1992  Benedito Machava
The peculiar nature of Portugal as a colonial power produced a very distinct history in the five Portuguese-speaking African countries, namely Angola, Guiné-Bissau (Guinea-Bissau), Moçambique (Mozambique), and the Atlantic islands of Cabo-Verde (Cape Verde) and São Tomé e Príncipe. Lusophone Africa is a lose term that refers to the world created by Portugal’s colonialism in Africa. This course explores this distinct history through the lens of culture and politics. Focusing on the long twentieth-century, we consider Lusophone Africa as a study unit, dissecting its disparate societies, cultures, and political trajectories, while remaining anchored in the general context of Africa. Military conquest, colonial rule, race/lsruotropicalism, nationalism, and liberation struggle are some of the core themes of the course. We begin with a brief assessment of Portugal’s efforts to retain its colonial enclaves amid the voracious expansion of British, French, Belgian, and German presence in Africa in the late 19th century. But our focus is on the twentieth-century, from the establishment of the colonial administration in the early 1900s to the fall of the Portuguese empire in 1974. We dedicate a good portion of the term to exploring the multiple ways (cultural and political) in which Africans responded to Portugal’s encroachment and how they navigated the color bar that came to dictate their social mobility under colonial rule. We end with the multifaceted longings for self-determination that led to the longest and bloodiest liberation wars in Africa. Our readings include scholarly essays (old and recent), primary sources, literary works (novels, poetry and short stories), photographs, music and films. We become acquainted with Portuguese-speaking African voices, faces, and places. Luís Bernardo Honwana’s collection of short stories in We Killed Mangy Dog and Other Stories (1964) and Zezé Gamboa’s film The Great Kilapy (2012) carry us through the important theme of race and race relations. While cautious in situating the discussion of race in its
historical context, these and other materials challenge us to think about race relations and emancipation in our time. WR, HU