Egyptology and Assyriology

The concentration in Egyptology and Assyriology offers students a choice of two tracks: Assyriology or Egyptology. The department promotes collaborations with other academic units at Brown devoted to the study of antiquity including Archaeology, Classics, Judaic Studies, and Religious Studies. Egyptology and Assyriology also collaborates with Brown’s Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World.

**Assyriology Track**

Also known as the Near East or Middle East, Western Asia includes present-day Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and other neighboring states, a broad geographic area that was connected in antiquity with the wider world—the Mediterranean, North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Central Asia, and the Asian subcontinent. Students will be exposed to the critical study of the ancient cultures of this region (ca. 3400 B.C.E.–100 C.E.) using the tools of archaeology, epigraphy, and historical inquiry. A variety of interdisciplinary, comparative, and theoretical approaches will be introduced to give students the tools and methods to explore this region’s ancient languages and literatures, political and socio-economic modes of organization, art and architecture, religious traditions and other systems of knowledge, such as early science.

The Assyriology (ASYR) track requires a total of at least ten (10) courses that are determined in the following way:

**Introductory courses:**

- ASYR 0800 - Introduction to the Ancient Near East
- or ARCH 0370 - Before the Islamic State: The Archaeologies of Ancient Mesopotamia
- or ARCH 1600 - Archaeologies of the Near East
- ASYR 0200 - Introduction to Akkadian
- ASYR 0210 - Intermediate Akkadian

**Foundation Courses** (at least one course from each of the following three areas):  

- History and Culture of Ancient Western Asia:  
  - ASYR 1100 - Imagining the Gods: Myths and Myth-making in Ancient Mesopotamia (WRIT)
  - ASYR 1500 - Ancient Babylonian Magic and Medicine
  - ASYR 2310B - Assyriology I (WRIT)
  - ASYR 2310C - Assyriology II (WRIT)
  - ASYR 2600 - Topics in Cuneiform Studies

- Ancient Scholarship in Western Asia:  
  - ASYR 1600 - Astronomy Before the Telescope
  - ASYR 1650 - Time in the Ancient World (WRIT)
  - ASYR 1700 - Astronomy, Divination and Politics in the Ancient World (WRIT)
  - ASYR 1750 - Divination in Ancient Mesopotamia (WRIT)
  - ASYR 2310A - Ancient Scientific Texts: Akkadian

- Archaeology of Ancient Western Asia:  
  - ARCH 1200F - City and the Festival: Cult Practices and Architectural Production in the Ancient Near East (WRIT)
  - ARCH 1200I - Material Worlds: Art and Agency in the Near East and Africa
  - ARCH 1810 - Under the Tower of Babel: Archaeology, Politics, and Identity in the Modern Middle East (WRIT)
  - ARCH 2010C - Architecture, Body and Performance in the Ancient Near Eastern World (WRIT)
  - ARCH 2300 - The Rise of the State in the Near East

**Depth Requirement:** At least two additional courses offered in AWAS or ARCH dealing with ancient Western Asia. These courses must be approved by the undergraduate concentration advisor.

**Elective Requirement:** At least one elective course offered in EGYT or ARCH on the archaeology, art, history, culture, or language of ancient Egypt.

**Capstone**

All students pursuing either the Assyriology or Egyptology tracks are required to complete a capstone project. The project can take many forms, but the common feature shared among all possible projects will be a public presentation. Typically in the final semester before graduating, the concentrator will give this capstone presentation before faculty, fellow students, and other interested audiences. If the concentrator is writing an undergraduate honors thesis, the procedure for which is detailed below, this work should provide the content for the capstone presentation. Students not writing an honors thesis will base their presentation on a comprehensive research paper.  

Students not writing an honors thesis will base their presentation on a capstone project that must be taken by all concentrators, but the remaining four can be chosen from a fairly broad range of courses, to suit individual interests.

**Introductory Courses:**

- EGYT 1310 & EGYT 1320 - Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian Writing and Language (Middle Egyptian I) and Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian Writing and Language (Middle Egyptian II)  
- EGYT 1430 & EGYT 1440 - History of Egypt I and History of Egypt II  
- ARCH 0150 - Introduction to Egyptian Archaeology and Art  
- EGYT 1420 - Ancient Egyptian Religion and Magic
  
- or ARCH 1625 - Temples and Tombs: Egyptian Religion and Culture

**Depth Courses:**

- EGYT 1330 - Selections from Middle Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts
- EGYT 1410 - Ancient Egyptian Literature
- ARCH 1600 - Archaeologies of the Near East

**Elective Course:** Any course covering the ancient Near East or Mediterranean world outside Egypt, such as:

- ASYR 0800 - Introduction to the Ancient Near East
- or ARCH 1600 - Archaeologies of the Near East

**Capstone Course:** Any course germane to ancient Egypt or the ancient Near East or Mediterranean world. Alternative and elective courses must be approved by the undergraduate concentration advisor.

Such courses will normally be offered by Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies, the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World, Religious Studies, Classics, Judaic Studies, Anthropology, History of Art and Architecture, History, or Philosophy. Concentrators are welcome to take most courses offered by Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies (EGYT and AWAS), Archaeology (ARCH), or related departments, though some may require the instructor’s approval. Concentrators should consult with the concentration advisor to discuss the courses most suitable to their interests.

**Total Credits:**

1. This list contains possible offerings but should not be considered exhaustive.

**Egyptology Track**

The Egyptology track requires a total of at least ten courses. Six of these must be taken by all concentrators, but the remaining four can be chosen from a fairly broad range of courses, to suit individual interests.

**Introductory Courses:**

- EGYT 1310 & EGYT 1320 - Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian Writing and Language (Middle Egyptian I) and Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian Writing and Language (Middle Egyptian II)
- EGYT 1430 & EGYT 1440 - History of Egypt I and History of Egypt II
- ARCH 0150 - Introduction to Egyptian Archaeology and Art
- EGYT 1420 - Ancient Egyptian Religion and Magic
- or ARCH 1625 - Temples and Tombs: Egyptian Religion and Culture

**Depth Courses:**

- EGYT 1330 - Selections from Middle Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts
- EGYT 1410 - Ancient Egyptian Literature
- ARCH 1600 - Archaeologies of the Near East

**Elective Course:** Any course covering the ancient Near East or Mediterranean world outside Egypt, such as:

- ASYR 0800 - Introduction to the Ancient Near East
- or ARCH 1600 - Archaeologies of the Near East

**Capstone Course:** Any course germane to ancient Egypt or the ancient Near East or Mediterranean world. Alternative and elective courses must be approved by the undergraduate concentration advisor.

Such courses will normally be offered by Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies, the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World, Religious Studies, Classics, Judaic Studies, Anthropology, History of Art and Architecture, History, or Philosophy. Concentrators are welcome to take most courses offered by Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies (EGYT and AWAS), Archaeology (ARCH), or related departments, though some may require the instructor’s approval. Concentrators should consult with the concentration advisor to discuss the courses most suitable to their interests.

**Total Credits:**

1. Required for all students pursuing the Egyptology track.
2. Or an EGYT or ARCH course in material culture.

**Capstone**

All students pursuing either the Assyriology or Egyptology tracks are required to complete a capstone project. The project can take many forms, but the common feature shared among all possible projects will be a public presentation. Typically in the final semester before graduating, the concentrator will give this capstone presentation before faculty, fellow students, and other interested audiences. If the concentrator is writing an undergraduate honors thesis, the procedure for which is detailed below, this work should provide the content for the capstone presentation. Students not writing an honors thesis will base their presentation on a comprehensive research paper.
research project more in depth than a class project, though the topic may stem from a course project or paper. The format of the presentation may vary; suggestions range from an illustrated lecture to a video or an installation presented with discussion. Both the content and the format of the capstone project should be discussed with and agreed upon by the concentration advisor no later than the end of the first semester of the senior year.

**Honors in Egyptology and Assyriology**

1. **Becoming an honors candidate**

   Students who wish to consider pursuing honors should meet with the Undergraduate Concentration Advisor in the first half of their sixth semester. Eligibility is dependent on:
   - Being in good standing
   - Having completed at least two thirds of the concentration requirements by the end of the sixth semester.
   - Having earned two thirds "quality grades" in courses counted towards the concentration. A "quality grade" is defined as a grade of "A" or a grade of "S" accompanied by a course performance report indicating a performance at the "A" standard.

   To pursue honors candidacy, eligible students must:
   - Submit the prospectus to the advisor, one other proposed faculty reader (at least one of the readers must be in the department) and the department chair no later than the first week of the seventh semester.

   The structure of a thesis prospectus:

   An honors thesis in Egyptology or Assyriology is a substantial piece of research with some degree of originality that demonstrates the student's ability to frame an appropriate question and deal critically with the range of original and secondary sources. A thesis prospectus is a short analytical document consisting of several parts. It will normally include a concise and focused research question; a justification for that question that demonstrates familiarity with previous research on the topic; a project description that includes a discussion of the types of evidence available and appropriate to answering the proposed question; a discussion of methods of collecting and analyzing that evidence; a conclusion that is clearly related to the overall argument of the thesis. Honors theses are expected to demonstrate a high degree of originality and may engage with a well-studied topic, it will usually include a new insight into or interpretation of the material considered.

   **Scope:**

   An honors thesis is not a book or dissertation. It is, however, a very serious piece of research and writing for which two dedicated study courses have provided substantial time to the honors student. The thesis will present a sustained analytic argument in answer to the question upon which the honors thesis is based.

   **Methodology:**

   Egyptology and Assyriology are very broad fields, and the appropriate methods will be determined in conjunction with the thesis advisor on the basis of the questions and types of evidence - textual, archaeological, art historical - under consideration. With very few exceptions the
methodology of the thesis is expected to be conventional rather than innovative, rooted in the accepted practices of the field in question.

Organization and writing:
An honors thesis must be well organized and written. It should include an introduction and conclusion as well as well-considered chapters that allow the reader to follow the line of reasoning easily. The relationship of any section to the larger whole should be clear, and segues should help the reader move between sections. Writing should be grammatically correct, well copy-edited, professional, and consistent. Citations and bibliography must be in an accepted style as determined in consultation with the advisor.
Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Helvetica was used instead of Arial.
The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.