

# 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:	3
ASYR 0800 The Cradle of Civilization? An Introduction to the Ancient Near East or ARCH 1600 Archaeologies of the Near East	
ASYR 1000 Introduction to Akkadian	
ASYR 1010 Intermediate Akkadian	
Foundational Courses (at least one course from each of the following three areas):	
History and Culture of Ancient Western Asia: <sup>1</sup>	1
ASYR 1100 Imagining the Gods: Myths and Myth-making in Ancient Mesopotamia (WRIT)	
ASYR 1300 The Age of Empires: The Ancient Near East in the First Millennium BC	
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: <sup>1</sup>	1
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: <sup>1</sup>	1
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 ASYR or ARCH dealing with ancient Western Asia. These courses must be approved by the undergraduate concentration advisor. 2

Breadth Requirement: At least one course offered in EGYT or ARCH on the archaeology, art, history, culture, or language of ancient Egypt. 1

Elective: At least one elective course on the ancient world broadly defined. Usually this course will be offered in Assyriology, Anthropology, Archaeology, Classics, Comparative Literature, East Asian Studies, Egyptology, History, History of Art and Architecture, Judaic Studies, Philosophy, or Religious Studies. The elective course must be approved by the undergraduate concentration advisor. 1

Total Credits 10

<sup>1</sup> 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:	6
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) <sup>1</sup>	
EGYT 1430 & EGYT 1440 History of Egypt I and History of Egypt II <sup>1</sup>	
ARCH 0150 Introduction to Egyptian Archaeology and Art <sup>1</sup>	
EGYT 1420 Ancient Egyptian Religion and Magic or ARCH 1625 Temples and Tombs: Egyptian Religion and Culture	
Depth Courses:	2
EGYT 1330 Selections from Middle Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts <sup>1</sup>	
EGYT 1410 Ancient Egyptian Literature <sup>2</sup>	
Breadth Course - Any course covering the ancient Near East or Mediterranean world outside Egypt, such as:	1
ASYR 0800 The Cradle of Civilization? An Introduction to the Ancient Near East or ARCH 1600 Archaeologies of the Near East	
Elective 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 Assyriology, 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 Assyriology (EGYT and ASYR), 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.	1
Total Credits	10
<sup>1</sup> Required for all students pursuing the Egyptology track.	
<sup>2</sup> Or an EGYT or ARCH course in material culture.	
Capstone	
All concentrators in Egyptology and Assyriology 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 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:

- Secure a faculty advisor and discuss plans for the proposed thesis project well before the established deadline; this can be done by email when a student is abroad.
- Prepare a thesis prospectus (see below).
- 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 returns to the research question and assures the reader that the project will add value to our understanding of the topic; and a bibliography. The prospectus will ordinarily be in the range of 5-7 pages in length, exclusive of bibliography. The prospectus will include proper citations throughout.

Determination of whether or not a student may pursue the proposed project will be made on review of the prospectus by the readers and department chair. Prospectuses will be evaluated on the following scale:

1. No concerns about the viability of the project.
2. No concerns about the viability of the project, but minor weaknesses in the execution of the prospectus.
3. Concerns about the viability of the project, but willingness to reevaluate a revised prospectus submitted within two weeks of receipt of evaluation.
4. Reservations that the prospectus does not describe an honors-worthy project.
5. Poorly conceived and shoddy work.

Prospectuses will be returned to the student with this numerical evaluation and comments one week after submission of the prospectus. A prospectus must receive an evaluation of 1 or 2 prior to the third week of the seventh semester for a student to be admitted to the honors track. Students who submit an original prospectus that is graded 4 or 5 will not be permitted to rework the prospectus for the second submission.

### 2. *Developing, completing and submitting the honors project*

Once accepted as honors candidates, students will pursue a course of study that goes beyond what is expected of a regular concentrator. This includes:

- Enrollment in two semesters of independent study in Egyptology or Assyriology (these do not fulfill course requirements towards the concentration).
- Twice-monthly meetings with the thesis advisor and once-monthly meetings with the second reader. These meetings will be scheduled at the beginning of each term.
- Submission of a comprehensive outline to both readers no later than October 15 (for May graduates)
- Regular submission of drafts. A partial draft including a complete version of at least one chapter or section is due before Reading Period of the seventh semester.
- A complete draft is due to both readers no later than March 15 (for May graduates).
- The revised final thesis is due in both electronic and physical form to both readers and department chair April 5 (for May graduates).

Failure to meet any deadline will result in automatic termination of the honors process. No extensions will be granted. If a thesis is turned in late but before the end of the term, credit and grade for the Independent Study may still be granted.

### 3. *Evaluating the submitted work of honors candidates*

In order to receive honors a student must be found to have:

- Remained in good academic standing throughout the academic year.
- Not violated the Academic Code of Conduct during honors candidacy.
- Complete or be about to complete all concentration requirements.
- Produced a thesis that is judged by the readers to meet the department's expectations for honors work (see below), and turned it in by the established deadlines.
- Successfully defended the thesis during a half hour public presentation held during the final exam period of the eighth semester.

Students who submit theses that are deemed to fall short of the expectations will graduate without honors. In that case, the theses will count as a capstone project.

### 4. *Expectations for honors theses:*

Originality:

An honors thesis in Egyptology or Assyriology is expected to add to existing scholarship. The thesis must be based on close work with primary sources (usually in publication rather than in person), supplemented by critical engagement with a substantial amount of relevant secondary literature. While the resulting study is not necessarily expected to be ground-breakingly original, 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 question upon which the honors thesis is based should be focused enough to allow an in-depth treatment, generally in under 100 pages or 30,000 words (exclusive of bibliography and illustrations). Appropriate length will vary considerably depending on the topic itself and the nature of the primary sources being considered, particularly if substantial translation of ancient textual sources is required.

Argument:

The thesis should present a sustained analytic argument in answer to its structuring question. A thesis should not be primarily descriptive or narrative in nature. Each chapter should contain a sub-argument that is clearly related to the overall argument of the thesis. The significance of the argument and its relationship to prior scholarship should be clearly articulated. Honors theses are not expected to demonstrate comprehensive familiarity with the secondary literature, but they are expected to engage critically and maturely with important works on the defined topic.

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.