

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:

Language Courses (two courses) 2

One course in cuneiform-based language, normally Introduction to Akkadian, Introduction to Sumerian, or Introduction to Hittite.
One additional language course, either Intermediate Akkadian or another language with the EGYT or ASYR course code.

ASYR 1000 Introduction to Akkadian
or ASYR 1400 Introduction to Sumerian
or ASYR 1900 Introduction to Hittite Language and Literature

And one of the Following:

ASYR 1010 Intermediate Akkadian
ASYR 1400 Introduction to Sumerian
ASYR 1900 Introduction to Hittite Language and Literature

EGYT 1310 Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian Writing and Language (Middle Egyptian I)

EGYT 1320 Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian Writing and Language (Middle Egyptian II)

Foundations (Four Courses): One course in each of the following areas: 4

History

EGYT 0600 Ancient True Crime: Murder, Conspiracy, and Law in the Ancient World
ASYR 0300 Babylon: Myth and Reality
ASYR 0800 The Cradle of Civilization? An Introduction to the Ancient Near East

Archaeology:

ASYR 0800 The Cradle of Civilization? An Introduction to the Ancient Near East
ARCH 0372 Meeting with Mesopotamia
ARCH 0760 Palaces: Built to Impress
ARCH 1475 Petra: Ancient Wonder, Modern Challenge
ARCH 1635 The Great Heresy: Egypt in the Amarna Period
ARCH 1879 A World in Color: Seeing and Experiencing Colors in Ancient Times

Religion and Literature

EGYT 0300 In the Beginning: Cosmos and Creation in the Ancient World

ARCH 0255 Monsters

ASYR 0310 Thunder-gods and Dragon-slayers: Mythology + Cultural Contact - Ancient Mediterranean and Near East

ASYR 1100 Imagining the Gods: Myths and Myth-making in Ancient Mesopotamia

ASYR 1110 Literature of Ancient Iraq

Making Knowledge - Ancient and Modern

ASYR 0320 The Origin(s) of Science

ASYR 0500 Mathematics in the Ancient World

ASYR 1160 Color and Culture in the Ancient Near East

ASYR 1500 Ancient Babylonian Magic and Medicine

ASYR 1600 Astronomy Before the Telescope

ASYR 1700 Astronomy, Divination and Politics in the Ancient World

ASYR 1725 Scientific Thought in Ancient Iraq

ARCH 1538 Heritage Under Fire: From Conflict to Understanding, Memory, and Reconciliation

ARCH 1830 Fake! History of the Inauthentic

Depth Requirement (Two Courses) 2

At least two additional courses at the 1000 level or higher that include ancient Mesopotamia as a major component of the syllabus, usually in ASYR or ARCH. Subject to the approval of the concentration advisor and DUS.

Breadth Requirement (Two Courses) 2

Two additional courses on some aspect of the ancient/premodern world, at least one of which should be with the department's faculty. Subject to the approval of the concentration advisor and DUS.

Total Credits 10

Egyptology Track

Language Courses (two courses) 2

One course in the ancient Egyptian language, ordinarily Middle Egyptian I. However, other phases of the ancient Egyptian language can be substituted for one or both of these, such as Late Egyptian or Coptic. One additional language course, either Middle Egyptian II or another language with the EGYT or ASYR course code.

EGYT 1310 Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian Writing and Language (Middle Egyptian I)

And one of the Following:

EGYT 1320 Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian Writing and Language (Middle Egyptian II)

EGYT 2210 Introduction to Coptic

EGYT 2410 Late Egyptian

EGYT 2610 Introduction to Demotic

ASYR 1000 Introduction to Akkadian

ASYR 1010 Intermediate Akkadian

ASYR 1400 Introduction to Sumerian

ASYR 1900 Introduction to Hittite Language and Literature

Foundations (Four Courses): One course in each of the following areas: 4

History

EGYT 0500	The Pyramids in Context: Archaeology of Life and Religion of Death in Old Kingdom Egypt	
EGYT 0550	Black Pharaohs: Nubian Kings and Queens of Ancient Egypt	
EGYT 0600	Ancient True Crime: Murder, Conspiracy, and Law in the Ancient World	
EGYT 1030	Collapse! Ancient Egypt after the Pyramid Age	
EGYT 1430	History of Egypt I ¹	
EGYT 1465	Life on the Nile: Ancient Egypt beyond the Pharaohs	
Archaeology:		
EGYT 1510	Ancient Egyptian Art II	
ARCH 0150	Introduction to Egyptian Archaeology and Art	
ARCH 0760	Palaces: Built to Impress	
ARCH 1630	Fighting Pharaohs: Ancient Egyptian Warfare	
ARCH 1635	The Great Heresy: Egypt in the Amarna Period	
ARCH 1879	A World in Color: Seeing and Experiencing Colors in Ancient Times	
Religion and Literature		
EGYT 0300	In the Beginning: Cosmos and Creation in the Ancient World	
EGYT 1100	Ancient Voices: The Literature of Ancient Egypt	
EGYT 1420	Ancient Egyptian Religion and Magic	
ARCH 0255	Monsters	
Making Knowledge - Ancient and Modern		
EGYT 1400	Ethiopia Shall Stretch Forth Her Hands: Black Reception of Ancient Egypt and Nubia	
EGYT 1485	Magic, Mummies, and Drugs: Medicine and Physicians in Ancient Egypt	
EGYT 1490	Calendars and Chronology in Ancient Egypt and the Ancient World	
ASYR 0320	The Origin(s) of Science	
ASYR 0500	Mathematics in the Ancient World	
ASYR 1160	Color and Culture in the Ancient Near East	
ASYR 1600	Astronomy Before the Telescope	
ARCH 1538	Heritage Under Fire: From Conflict to Understanding, Memory, and Reconciliation	
ARCH 1830	Fake! History of the Inauthentic	
Depth Requirement (Two Courses)		2
At least two additional courses at the 1000 level or higher that include ancient Egypt as a major component of the syllabus, usually in EGYT or ARCH. Subject to the approval of the concentration advisor and DUS.		
Breadth Requirement (Two Courses)		2
Two additional courses on some aspect of the ancient/premodern world, at least one of which should be with the department's faculty. Subject to the approval of the concentration advisor and DUS.		
Total Credits		10

Senior Capstone Project

All concentrators in Egyptology and Assyriology are required to complete a capstone project. Under normal circumstances a concentrator will complete a capstone project in their last undergraduate year, the idea being that the project will be a culmination of the student's academic path

at Brown and in the department. Students have three options for fulfilling the capstone requirement in Egyptology and Assyriology:

1. Honors Thesis (see policies and procedures for Honors in Egyptology and Assyriology)
2. Independent Study: A one-semester reading and research independent study course under the direction of a faculty advisor in the department (this course may count toward the concentration Depth or Breadth requirement subject to the approval of the concentration advisor and DUS). The independent study should result in a research paper (at least 5000 words) or a significant original translation and analysis of an ancient text or a coherent group of related texts.
3. Course Project: a project undertaken in connection with an EGYT/ASYR/ARCH course at or above the 1000 level (this course may count toward the concentration Depth or Breadth requirement). The specific project should be discussed with, and must be approved by, the instructor of the relevant course and the DUS

The capstone 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 the department community. The format of the presentation may vary: students may give an illustrated lecture, present and discuss a video or installation, or propose a novel presentation modality. Both the content and the format of the capstone project must be discussed beforehand and approved by the concentration advisor and DUS 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.