

HIS 323 & REL 303

ANCIENT NEAR EAST

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Now then, if thou dost these things, thou art skilled in the writings. As for those learned scribes from the time of those who lived after the gods, they who could foretell what was to come, their names have become everlasting, (even though) they are gone, they completed their lives, and all their relatives are forgotten (“In Praise of Learned Scribes,” from Chester Beatty Papyrus IV; ANET, 431).

A study of the history, cultures, and religions of the ancient Near East from the rise of civilization to 333 B.C. Prerequisites: REL 101, HIS 101.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

I was brave, I was exceedingly strong . . . and I have struggled with the heavens, . . . I have solved the laborious problems of division and multiplication, which were not clear, I read the artistic script of Sumer and the dark obscure Akkadian, which is hard to master, taking pleasure in the reading of the stones from before the flood, now being angered because I was stupid and addled by the beautiful script. This is what was done all of my days

(Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, from a tablet now in the British Museum [K3050, K2694]).



Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. be able to describe the topographical and geographical features of the ancient Near East,
2. be able to describe the course of events in antiquity—with special attention to how they affected the Israelite nations,
3. be able to describe the development of civilizations and certain ideas and values which conflicted with or became a part of western civilization,
4. be able to describe the importance of relating biblical events with extra-biblical sources, and both to their physical setting in order to gain a fuller understanding of the text, and
5. be able to describe the religious environment of the ancient Near East in which Hebrew theology developed.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT NOTICE

Let not his cloak have a moldy cast, Let it be wholly new
(The Epic of Gilgamesh 11.246).

Students with disabilities who are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and require special accommodations, should contact Ms. Brenda Waldrip at 601-318-6188. Ms. Waldrip is located in the Student Services Office in Lawrence Hall.

 **DISASTER CONTINGENCY** 

*Six days and six nights blows the flood wind, an the south-storm sweeps the land. . . .
all of mankind had returned to clay. The landscape was as level as a flat roof*
(The Epic of Gilgamesh 11.127-32).

In the event of closure or cancellations due to natural disaster or other emergency causes, general information will be forwarded to local media, posted on the WCU website <http://wmcarey.edu>, and sent via automated process to your WCU student e-mail address. Specific information regarding the continuation of coursework will be posted on the university's course management system at <https://elearning.wmcarey.edu>. For up-to-the-minute alerts regarding emergency situations, sign up to receive notifications through *Sader Watch*, the WCU emergency text message service. Sign up instructions can be found under [current students](#) on the WCU homepage.

 **TEXTS** 

[Tasmisu] spoke again to Tessub, “[Hear] my words, my lord Tessub. Incline [Your ear] to the words which I speak to you. Come, let us go to Apzuwa, before Ea [. . .]. Let us ask for the tablets containing the ancient words”
(The Song of Ullikummi §49; Hoffner, Hittite Myths, 58).

The following texts are required (reading assignments appear under Course Schedule, below):

William H. Stiebing, Jr., *Ancient Near Eastern History and Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Pearson Longman, 2009).

James B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1959).

 **ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION** 

As long as a man does not exert himself, he will gain nothing
(an Akkadian Proverb; ANET, 425).

If the body of a man is yellow, his face yellow and black, and the surface of his tongue black, it is ahazu For such a disease the physician should do nothing: this man will die; he cannot be cured
(from an Assyrian medical text, quoted by Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, 369).

? **Grading Components.** The student's grade will be determined according to the following items/percentages:

Research Paper (details below)	= 25%
Daily Reading Quizzes	= 25%
Mid-term Exam	= 25%
Final Exam	= 25%

? **Grading Scale:** a ten-point grading scale will be used for this course.

? **Research Assignments.** One research paper will be required with due date dependant on the topics assigned. Details and schedules for these assignments are provided in separate sections below.

? **Reading quizzes:** Daily reading assignments will be subject to random and unannounced reading quizzes. The number of these quizzes will be determined by the instructor. Missed quizzes may not be made up, but at least 20% of the lowest quiz scores will be dropped (e.g., the 10 best quiz scores would be counted out of 13). **Some quizzes may be administered using D2L with prior notice.**

? The grading system and/or class schedule may be modified for the benefit of the class as a whole as the professor sees fit. Any changes will be accompanied by written notification.



RESEARCH ASSIGNMENTS

Do not confuse a man with pen upon papyrus— (Instruction of Amen-em-opet 13.15.20).

One research project is required for this course. Students should pay attention to the following:

- The student will be assigned a topic (after requests are made by the students) on which to write a paper
- It is strongly recommended that the student **consult with the instructor** at certain stages of the paper writing process; for example on 1) bibliography, 2) paper outline, and 3) rough draft
- The due dates for individual topics are listed in a special section of the syllabus; papers ARE DUE BY 11:00 AM ON THE DATE LISTED AND WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE BEGINNING OF CLASS!
- An **oral review** of the paper will be scheduled just after the paper's due date; at this time, the instructor will examine the student on the subject of the paper as well as on the content of the paper itself; this review will assess the student's comprehension and integration of the topic material; thus, a significant component of the paper grade will be based on this review (additional details will be given in class)
- Papers must be presented **using footnotes** according to *The SBL Handbook of Style*, a "Turabian"-type format. A "Paper Writing Guide" with attention to common issues for this subject is available on the instructor's web page
- Plagiarism—representing another's work as your own—*whether intentional or not*, will be met with a zero-tolerance policy; see "Academic Integrity" below



ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Young man, because you did not neglect my word, did not forsake it, may you reach the pinnacle of the scribal art, my you achieve it completely. . . . Of your brothers may you be their leader, of your friends may you be their chief, may you rank the highest of the schoolboys. . . . You have carried out well the school's activities, you have become a man of learning (a schoolteacher to his pupil in a Sumerian essay, about 2000 BC; translated by S. N. Kramer).

COLLEGE STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: William Carey seeks to create an environment that encourages continued growth of moral and ethical values, which include personal honesty and mutual trust. The college places the highest value on academic integrity and regards any act of academic dishonesty as a serious offense. Academic dishonesty is considered unethical and in violation of William Carey's academic standards and Christian commitment. If such an incident occurs, students, faculty, and/or staff are obligated to initiate appropriate action. Depending on the seriousness of the offense, sanctions could include failure of the assignment, failure of the course, and could lead to suspension or dismissal from the college. A full explanation of the procedures for responding to instances of academic dishonesty is contained in the college's *Policies and Procedures Manual* and in the student handbook, *The Lance*.

INSTRUCTOR'S POLICY FOR THIS COURSE: ALL incidents of academic dishonesty (whether involving in-class exercises or plagiarizing of research papers) will be considered as the most serious offense; ANY cases WILL result in a zero grade for the assignment and MAY (at instructor's discretion) result in immediate failure of the course and further actions according to College policy.



Thus (says) Warassuni to Tashmatum: Errebum and Bialum are fugitives. If they come here, seize them both!
(Old Akkadian letter from Eshnunna [MAD 1 185]).

It is far preferable to teach and learn in an atmosphere in which students are eager to learn and display mutual respect for instructors and other students alike. Unfortunately, recent trends in student behavior, specific actions by certain students, and results of those acts make this section necessary.

General Classroom Policies

- ? The instructor is the final authority in matters of class decorum; if any student is deemed to be disruptive to the learning environment, the instructor—at his sole discretion—may dismiss that student and assign an absence for the period
- ? Class begins at the specified time; any quizzes or quiz questions missed as a result of tardiness may not be made up
- ? Getting up to leave temporarily during class is not acceptable, except in cases of severe distress; students must regulate their bodily functions like adults (go to the potty before class!)
- ? Cell phones or pagers are not allowed in class, for voice or text communication; if a cell phone rings, the student in possession will be dismissed from the class and assessed an absence
- ? Recording of class sessions is not allowed except by special permission

Attendance

- ? The William Carey catalog states, “students must attend 75% of the class meetings in order to receive credit for the course;” this policy will be enforced with the following additions
- ? NO distinction is made between “excused” and “unexcused” absences for attendance reporting; if you are not in class—for any reason—you are considered absent, plain and simple; this means that: 1) absences for school activities count as regular absences and the student is responsible for keeping their total absences within the limits specified by the catalog (above), and 2) doctor’s excuses are not needed and will have no bearing on attendance reporting
- ? If a student adds the course late and misses classes, those absences *will be* recorded as absences
- ? If a student is not present when attendance is determined (either by roll call or by work performed in class), the student will be considered absent (there will be no “tardy” category)
- ? If a student leaves class early, they will be assessed an absence and will not receive credit for work completed in the class; for example, students will not be given credit for a quiz if they leave class during the period in which the quiz was administered

Examination Policy

- ? Students must be present for all sectional exams (each designated “Exam” on the course schedule); absence from an exam will result in a grade of zero, unless **prior** arrangements have been made with and approved by the instructor
- ? Makeup exams will be given only under extreme circumstances or in cases of absence for school sponsored programs, and only by *prior* approval from the instructor; it is the student’s responsibility to request such arrangements

🕒 *COURSE SCHEDULE // Fall 2008* ✍️

Let not thy heart be puffed up because of thy knowledge; be not confident because thou art a wise man
 (“The Instruction of Ptah-hotep;” ANET, 412).

Tell Ur-tur that Lugal-mea must not open his mouth to any one about the missing sheep until the shearing. (Tell) him to receive his tablet. (Sumerian letter from Ur [UDT 32]).

All readings should be completed by the beginning of class for the day on which they are listed.

Day	Date	Topic	Stiebing	ANE
1	Aug 26	Pre-test!; Introduction; Geography of the ANE		
2	Aug 28	Archaeology; prehistory of the ANE	Syllabus; Chap 1	
3	Sept 2	Early Bronze Age: Mesopotamia	Chapters 2-3	28-30; 40-75
4	Sept 4	Early Bronze Age: Egypt	Chapter 5	234-37; 252-57
5	Sept 9	Middle Bronze Age: Old Babylonian Period	Chapter 4	133-67; 31-39
6	Sept 11	Middle Bronze Age: Egypt/Palestine	Chapter 6	5-16; 24-27; 225-26
7	Sept 16	In search of the Biblical Patriarchs		167-70
8	Sept 18	The Late Bronze Age/New Kingdom Egypt	Chapter 7	173-82; 262-77
9	Sept 23	In search of the Exodus and early Israel	Chapter 8	182-84
10	Sept 25	The emergence of Israel		
11	Sept 30	Mid Term Exam		
12	Oct 2	In search of the United Monarchy; Israel & Judah	Chapter 9	16-24
13	Oct 7	The Rise of Assyria: 9th cent. BC		188-91
14	Oct 9	Assyrian Empire: 8th cent. BC	pp. 275-81	192-94
15	Oct 14	Israel, Judah, the Assyrians, and the prophets		195-202
16	Oct 16	Assyrian Empire: 7 th cent. BC	pp. 281-92	
17	Oct 21	Neo Babylonian Empire: 7th cent. BC	pp. 292-311	202-203
18	Oct 23	Fall of Judah; Exile of the Jews	Chapter 11	203
19	Oct 28	Persian Empire; Legacy of the Near East	Chapter 12	
20	Oct 30	FINAL EXAM		