

NEAR EASTERN STUDIES (NES)

NES 1110 - Beginning Biblical Hebrew (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with HEBRW 1110, JWST 1110, RELST 1110

This course is designed to introduce students to the language, grammar, and vocabulary of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. By the end of the semester students will be able to read and understand a number of biblical narrative passages, drawn from texts such as the stories of: creation in the Garden of Eden, Noah's Ark, Joseph and his brothers, the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, David and Goliath, and others stories students are interested in reading in the original language. Emphasis will be placed on learning vocabulary in context so that students begin to understand the language of the Bible as a window on ancient Israelite religion, culture, and experience.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 1312 - Introduction to Urdu Script (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with URDU 1125

This class is an introductory class for beginners. This course will teach students how to listen, speak, read and write Urdu through vocabulary, grammar, oral and written activities, with an emphasis on reading and writing basic Urdu. The course begins by introducing the alphabet and their combinations. In addition to learning the script we will also introduce the basic knowledge and background on Urdu culture. Some knowledge of spoken Hindi-Urdu is necessary to take this course. It may be taken concurrently with HINDI 1102.

Prerequisites: HINDI 1101 or permission of instructor.

Distribution Requirements: (FL-AG), (OCL-IL)

Exploratory Studies: (SALANG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 1561 - Introduction to the Ottoman Empire (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 1561

This course will introduce students to the study of the Ottoman Empire from its inception in the late 13th century until the early part of 19th century. The classes will follow the main timeline of the geographical expansion of the empire with a special emphasis on the historical significance of the conquest of Istanbul, the consolidation of the borders of the empire, the establishment of the state apparatus in the classical period, a period of turbulence leading to a substantial transformation of the state in the early 19th century. Special focus will be placed on the Ottoman Empire's diverse religious communities-using the history of the Jewish community as the main case study-the evolution of the imperial and provincial governments' relationships with the various socio-cultural groups, legal and economic practices in the urban centers, the culture of the court in the early modern period, and the evolution of the inter-communal relations in the empire's urban centers. This course is intended to provide the student with a solid foundation from which they can pursue further specialized study in the history of the Ottoman Empire, the Modern Middle East, and the Eastern Mediterranean.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 1602 - Great Discoveries in Greek and Roman Archaeology (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 1702, ARKEO 1702

This introductory course surveys the archaeology of the ancient Greek and Roman world. Each week, we will explore a different archaeological discovery that transformed scholars' understanding of the ancient world. From early excavations at sites such as Pompeii and Troy, to modern field projects across the Mediterranean, we will discover the rich cultures of ancient Greece and Rome while also exploring the history, methods, and major intellectual goals of archaeology.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 1660 - The Vikings and their World (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 1660, MEDVL 1660

Globalization may seem like a recent hot topic, but it was already very much in vogue 1000 years ago when Norse explorers burst out of Scandinavia to journey as far as North America, Azerbaijan, the Mediterranean and the White Sea. This course will introduce students to the Norsemen and women of the Viking Age and the centuries following it, weaving together literary, chronicle, archaeological and other sources to tell the remarkable stories of these medieval entrepreneurs and of the many people and places they encountered. Along the way, students will also pick up crucial historical thinking skills: assessing change and continuity over time, learning the basics of source criticism, and gaining an appreciation for interdisciplinary research.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Fall 2021, Fall 2019, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 1921 - FWS: Radical Love: The Mystical Traditions of Islam (3 Credits)

The eleventh century Muslim poet Rumi called love the water of life. While Islam today is often viewed through the lens of politics and violence, this class will provide an introduction to the mystical traditions of Islam with a particular focus on the importance of love. Other themes will include mystical understandings of the body, the self, the natural world, sexuality, the role of music and art in becoming close to the divine, and more. We will be writing about many of these themes, and will read works of poetry and philosophy, passages from the Quran, and histories of mystical movements past and present. In doing so, we will be able to understand how mystical love operates not just as a metaphor, but a way of life.

Distribution Requirements: (WRT-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 1930 - FWS: Powerful Words: Reading Ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian Literature (3 Credits)

When writing arouses admiration, awe, or pity, it can move people to act. Such texts surround us and include forms developed millennia ago in Egypt and Mesopotamia. Students will learn to recognize how ancient scribes communicated (with gods and men), educated, lamented, persuaded, and animated. Course readings (in translation) include the Epic of Gilgamesh, Tale of Sinuhe, teachings, law codes, propaganda, magic spells, correspondence, and philosophical musings in both prose and poetry. Influence on the Hebrew Bible and Koran will become apparent, as will the awareness that contemporary culture resonates with ancient meanings. Understanding these early, artful writing techniques will become meaningful as students develop their own to communicate their reactions and interpretations to other students and the instructor.

Distribution Requirements: (WRT-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2018, Spring 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 1931 - FWS: Jewish Book Cultures: Early Modern Form, Genre, and Gender (3 Credits)

This course invites you to judge books by their covers! Does a fancy cover indicate an important text or an owner who wanted the ultimate aesthetic bookshelf? Can we know what genre to expect from the form of a book? How about the country it was made in? We will examine how the expected audience of a piece of writing influences the text, the way it is presented, and ultimately how it is received. Using examples from early modern Jewish book cultures we will explore these ideas together, with a particular emphasis on the role of women. Your own effective writing style will be refined through in-class writing activities, essays, guided research, and trips to the Rare Books and Manuscripts library for practical experience.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2014 - Palestine and the Palestinians (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 2104

This course is an introduction to Palestine and the Palestinians. We will read ethnographic and historical studies written by scholars as well as by explorers, missionaries, revolutionaries, and spies. We will learn about Palestinian life-in Palestine, exile, and diaspora-and ask what these experiences can teach us about colonialism, indigeneity, capitalism, and resistance. We will also learn about how governments, courts, and activists use historical and ethnographic texts in political and legal struggles. Readings will include academic studies as well as primary sources, films, and pamphlets, and will foreground knowledge produced by Palestinian intellectuals and organizations.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, D-AG), (GLC-AS, SCD-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2201 - Intermediate Urdu Reading and Writing I (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with URDU 2225

This course is designed to develop competence in Urdu reading and writing for students with a first-year knowledge of Hindi and knowledge of Urdu script. The goal of this course is to improve listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities in Urdu. By the end of the course, students will have the ability to read articles, write short stories and translate Urdu writings. May be taken concurrently with Intermediate Hindi.

Prerequisites: URDU 1125.

Distribution Requirements: (FL-AG), (FLOPI-AS), (OCL-IL)

Exploratory Studies: (SALANG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2202 - Intermediate Urdu Reading and Writing II (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with URDU 2226

This course is designed to develop competence in Urdu reading and writing for students with a first-year knowledge of Hindi and knowledge of Urdu script. The goal of this course is to improve listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities in Urdu. By the end of the course, students will have the ability to read articles, write short stories and translate Urdu writings. This course may be taken concurrently with Intermediate Hindi.

Prerequisites: URDU 2225 or permission of instructor.

Distribution Requirements: (FL-AG), (FLOPI-AS), (OCL-IL)

Exploratory Studies: (SALANG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2204 - Introduction to Quranic Arabic (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARAB 2204, ASRC 2204, RELST 2204

This course is designed for students who are interested in reading the language of the Qur'an with accuracy and understanding. The first week (4 classes) will be devoted to an introduction of the history of the Qur'an: the revelation, collection, variant readings, and establishment of an authoritative edition. The last week will be devoted to a general overview of revisionist literature on the Qur'an. In the remaining 12 weeks, we will cover all of Part 30 (Juz' 'Amma, suuras 78-114) and three suuras of varying length (36, 19, and 12).

Prerequisites: knowledge of Arabic alphabet.

Distribution Requirements: (FL-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (AFAREA, AFLANG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2367 - Humanitarianism: A Counter-History (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 2367, HIST 2637

This course is a counter-history of modern humanitarianism, humanitarian law, and human rights, with perspectives from the Near East. Humanitarianism aspires to fulfill the promise of human rights. It envisions a world based on peace among nations, individual liberties, and the sanctity of life - and of markets. To that end, what means are justified? During this semester, we will critically analyze the ideology of human rights, examine the practices of humanitarian rescue, and question the necessity of humanitarian violence. We will scrutinise the ideological and material entanglements of humanitarianism with the forces of empire, nations, and markets, and how humanitarianism shaped the peoples and borders of the modern Near East. We will discuss how the demands for solidarity, equality, and justice challenge and subvert the work of humanitarianism. In doing so, we will consider how the atrocities of the past and the pursuit of justice haunt our turbulent present.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2433 - The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARKEO 2433, ARTH 2240

Why did the ancient Egyptians build pyramids, and why did they stop building them? Why did they depict things in ways that seem stiff and unnatural? Is ancient Egyptian art "art"? These are some of the questions explored in this course, which spans late prehistory (c. 3500 BCE) to the Roman period (early centuries CE). We will take a thematic approach, progressing chronologically and introducing key genres where appropriate. First, we will explore central issues of symbolism, landscape, and materials through the architecture and furnishings of temples and royal tombs. Next come the social worlds of art. Can we speak of artists? How were gender, class, and ethnicity represented? Finally, we will survey the legacies of Egyptian visual culture in antiquity and the modern West.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2461 - History of Minorities in Ottoman West Asia and North Africa (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 2461

This seminar utilizes recent research on the concept of minorities in West Asia and North Africa during the late Ottoman period, through the age of European colonialism, and the rise of nationalism. Relying on new research on the topic, we will focus on the social and political histories of the notion of a Millet, or nations in the Ottoman Empire, and the late development of the idea of minority vs. majority population in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Case studies will focus on ethnic and religious groups and how their relationship to an imperial state and emerging ideas of race and nationalism produced new challenges and concepts of identification in the case of the Armenian population of Anatolia, Jews in Turkey and Iraq, Maronites in Lebanon, Palestinians in Israel, and non-Sunni Muslims like the Alevis of Turkey and Alawites of Syria, and Sub-Saharan Africans in the Maghreb. Authors and subject matter specialists will be invited, whenever possible, to lead the seminar discussion via Zoom or in person (if health conditions allow).

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2462 - Personal Histories of Global Events: Microhistorical Approaches to the Writing of Global History (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 2462, JWST 2462, SHUM 2462

In this course we will read some of the most influential micro-history writers and explore examples of different subgenres of microhistory, such as individual biographies, family histories, social histories of towns, city, and village histories, histories of singular events and the impact they have on a family or a community, a history of an object, and fictional narratives of individual experiences of global events. The course aims to explore how seemingly a limited-scale of analysis can illuminate the experience of much larger events. The course will draw on examples that focus on a wide range of experiences from around the world, with special attention paid to the Middle East and Africa. The final research project will build on the student's own family's history, or the history of one individual, or an object (such as an inherited jewelry, a document, a painting, or a photograph etc) and research to situate that person/object/family's history in the context of an event of global importance (such as a war, colonialism, mass violence, environmental history, empire, etc).

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2488 - Modern Israel: History, Culture, Society (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 2488

This course is an introductory survey to various aspects of Israeli culture, society, and history. Through a close examination of various media (film, music, literature) as well as key events and social and political facts, students explore a range of phenomena related to Israeli social practices and its political system, alongside a chronological overview of changes in Israeli culture and society over time. Topics covered may include geography, immigration, demographics, inequality, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Hebrew language, gender, literature, film, among others.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2515 - Anthropology of Iran (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 2515, ANTHR 2415, SHUM 2515

This course explores the major debates that define the study of contemporary Iran. Drawing from ethnographic works, literary criticism, intellectual histories and more, we will examine historical events and cultural developments from a diverse set of theoretical approaches. Topics include the Iranian revolution in comparative perspective, the Iran-Iraq war and its continued legacy, media forms and practice, contemporary film and literature, women's movements, youth culture, religious diversity, legal systems, techniques of governance, and more. Of particular interest will be the intersections of religion and secularism in Iranian society. Ultimately, it is the objective of the course to explore the diverse cultural, political, and material worlds that shape collective life and individual subjectivity in Iran today.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, D-AG), (GLC-AS, SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Fall 2020, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2522 - Drinking through the Ages: Intoxicating Beverages in Near Eastern and World History (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 2630, ARKEO 2522, JWST 2522

This course examines the production and exchange of wine, beer, coffee and tea, and the social and ideological dynamics involved in their consumption. We start in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, and end with tea and coffee in the Arab and Ottoman worlds. Archaeological and textual evidence will be used throughout to show the centrality of drinking in daily, ritual and political life.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2540 - Zionism and Its Discontents (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 2540, GOVT 2545, RELST 2540

This course examines the history of Zionism as an idea and as a political movement in all its various forms, currents, and transformations from its origins in mid-nineteenth century Europe to the present. Despite its success in establishing the State of Israel in 1948, Zionism, which also sought to normalize Jewish collective life and provide a safe haven from persecution for the Jews, has encountered multiple challenges from within and without. Some continue to think of it as the national liberation movement of the Jewish people while others regard it as a Western inspired colonial project. Originating largely as a radical rejection of both traditional Jewish religious life and the Jews' diaspora in favor of modern nationalism, since 1967 Zionism has witnessed religious-nationalist fervor and a Jewish diaspora increasingly interested in or disinterested with the state of Israel. The course also considers the phenomenon of post-Zionism in Israeli historiography as well as Zionism's difficulty in coming to terms with the idea and reality that two peoples rather than one live in the land west of the Jordan. We'll also consider the Palestinian response framed as Zionism from the standpoint of its victims.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG), (GLC-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2546 - Magic and Witchcraft in the Greco-Roman World (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 2646, ARKEO 2846, ANTHR 2846

This introductory course explores the roles of amulets, love potions, curse tablets, and many other magical practices in ancient Greek and Roman societies. In this course, you will learn how to invoke the powers of Abrasax, become successful and famous, get people to fall desperately in love with you, and cast horrible curses on your enemies! We will also examine a range of ancient and modern approaches to magic as a concept: what exactly do we mean by magic, and how does it relate to other spheres of activity, like religion, science, and philosophy? When people (in ancient times or today) label the activities of others as magic, what are the social and political consequences of that act? As we investigate the practices that Greeks and Romans considered magical, we will also explore what those practices can teach us about many other aspects of life in the past, such as social class, gender, religion, and ethnic and cultural identity.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2022, Fall 2020, Spring 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2555 - Sex and Sexuality in Islam (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with FGSS 2555, MEDVL 2555, RELST 2555

This course will introduce students to the study of sex and sexuality in the medieval and early modern Islamic World, ending at the dawn of the twentieth century; we will begin with the study of desire in pre-Islamic and early-Islamic poetry and end with the study of the impact of colonialism on the family, the home and morality across the Islamic world. Students will read (in English) from the Qur'an, the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, obscene and chaste poetry, erotological works, medical treatises, moral condemnations of sex, legal case studies, erotic stories and travel literature. Students will also engage with modern scholarship on the history of sex and sexuality in the Islamic world. Major topics of study will include: the composition of the family across time and space, the intersection between slavery and sexuality, homosexuality and homoerotic desire in the premodern world, marriage and adultery, questions of consent and sexual violence in law and storytelling, and the discrepancies between law, morality and social practice.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, SCD-AS), (CA-AG, D-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2565 - Global Heritage (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 2465, ARKEO 2465

Heritage typically conjures images of a glorified human past, and evokes sentiments of care for lost or endangered cultures that symbolize humanity's diversity. But heritage is also the foundation for a multi-billion dollar tourist industry and a basis for claims to national sovereignty. A closer look at heritage reveals institutions, places, and things possessed of extraordinary power. Drawing on case studies from around the world, this course attends to the complexities of heritage today. Topics include heritage ethics, tourism and the marketing of the past, approaches to preservation and management, disputed heritage and violence, heritage ideologies from nationalism to universalism, participation and inequality from the grassroots to the global, counterheritage, and the practice of public archaeology. Students apply insights gained by designing projects as heritage practitioners, engaged with heritage-scapes at Cornell and beyond.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2020, Spring 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2599 - Medicine, Magic and Science in the Ancient Near East (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 2599, RELST 2599, BSOC 2599

This course explores the history of medicine and other sciences in the ancient Near East, broadly defined. In addition to medicine, the other scientific disciplines covered in this course include mathematics, astrology, astronomy, alchemy, zoology, among others. Geographically, the course traces the transmission of scientific knowledge in ancient Babylonia, Iran, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, and beyond. As such, the course offers students a tour of different ancient civilizations and corpora. Students read selections from cuneiform Akkadian tablets, Egyptian Christian Coptic spellbooks, rabbinic sources such as the Talmud, among many other works. At the same time, students will be required to critically engage recent scholarship in the history of science and medicine as a way to help frame their analyses of the ancient materials. The course interrogates how ancient civilizations transmitted and received scientific knowledge, as well as the relationship between what we today tend to call science, medicine, magic, and religion. This course is intended not only for students in the Humanities and Social Sciences, but also for those majoring in science or medicine.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2021
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2610 - Archaeology of Mesopotamia (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 2010, ARKEO 2010

Mesopotamia is often defined by firsts: the first villages, cities, states, and empires. Archaeology has long looked to the region for explanations of the origins of civilization. The modern countries of the region, including Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Turkey, have also long been places where archaeology and politics are inextricably intertwined, from Europe's 19th century appropriation of the region's heritage, to the looting and destruction of antiquities in recent wars. This introductory course moves between past and present. It offers a survey of more than 10,000 years of human history, from the appearance of farming villages to the dawn of imperialism, while also engaging current debates on the contemporary stakes of archaeology in the southwest Asia. Our focus is on past material worlds and the modern politics in which they are entangled.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS, SSC-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Fall 2017
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2620 - Jewish Modernity (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 2910, JWST 2920, RELST 2910

In the past two centuries, Jewish men and women have adapted remarkably well to the modern condition, embracing the opportunities associated with higher education, city life, industrial capitalism and democratic politics. Jewish artists, writers, scientists and philosophers can be found on every list of luminaries associated with the modern age; it is enough to mention Marx, Freud and Einstein to conjure up the celebrated image of Jewish participation in the modern project. No less remarkable than these names is the resurgence of Jewish tradition, despite the inroads of secularization and the dissolution of communal self-government. This course explores the tensions implicit in the Jewish experience of modernity, marked by intense longing for personal and collective emancipation from religious obligation and social discipline, on the one hand, and by a powerful countervailing impulse to strengthen ethnic loyalties, to invigorate Jewish practice and to keep Jewish values intact. Drawing on various forms of Jewish expression, from the eighteenth century to the twentieth, we will address the contradictions implicit in the strange hybrid of Jewish modernity.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021, Fall 2017, Spring 2014, Fall 2012
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2627 - Introduction to Islam (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with MEDVL 2627, RELST 2627, HIST 2627

This course is an introduction to the study of Islam and Islamic history. Organised historically, the lecture series will begin with the career of the Prophet Muhammad, before charting the course of the Islamic Conquests, the establishment, zenith and collapse of various Islamic Empires, ending with European colonialism. Along the way, this geopolitical and historical overview will provide a backdrop to our exploration of changes and developments in Islamic thought and practice. In particular, we will focus on the emergence of the Sunni-Shi'i conflict, the rise of Sufism and Salafism, as well as how scholars across time and space thought and wrote about questions of ideal Islamic governance, the religious authority of the caliph, women's role in society and public space, slavery, the ethics of living under non-Muslim rule and the place of non-Muslims in Islamic society.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2629 - New Testament-Early Christian Literatures (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 2613, JWST 2629, RELST 2629

This course provides a literary and historical introduction to the earliest Christian writings, especially those that eventually came to be included in the New Testament. Through the lens of the Gospel narratives and earliest Christian letters, especially those of Paul, we will explore the rich diversity of the early Christian movement from its Jewish roots in first-century Palestine through its development and spread to Asia Minor and beyond. We will give careful consideration to the political, economic, social, cultural, and religious circumstances that gave rise to the Jesus movement, as well as those that facilitated the emergence of various manifestations of Christian belief and practice. The course will address themes like identity and ethnicity, conversion and debate, race and slavery, gender and sexuality, and the connections between politics and religion.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2020, Spring 2018, Fall 2015, Spring 2010

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2644 - Introduction to Judaism (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 2644, RELST 2644

This course is an introduction to Jewish identities, values, and practices from the ancient to modern era. Organized thematically, it examines Judaism as a religious phenomenon, with a particular emphasis on its cultural and textual diversity across three millennia. Themes covered include creation, Sabbath, prayer, Jerusalem, pious customs, magic, reincarnation, revelation, among others. Throughout the semester students perform close readings of a wide selection of Jewish texts from the Bible, Talmud, kabbalah (mysticism), philosophy, liturgy, and modern Jewish thought. In what ways are these various traditions of Judaism interrelated and/or in tension with one another? In the face of the Jewish history's tremendous diversity, what is it that has unified Judaism and the Jewish people over the centuries? By exploring these types of questions, this course examines the appropriateness of defining Judaism as a religion, an ethnicity, a civilization, and/or a culture. Readings include introductory-level textbooks and essays, as well as a range of primary source materials in translation.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2661 - Ancient Ships and Seafaring: Introduction to Nautical Archaeology (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARKEO 2661

A survey of the history and development of ships and seafaring as revealed by shipwrecks, boat burials, texts, art, and other evidence. The role of nautical technology and seafaring among the maritime peoples of the ancient Mediterranean world-Canaanites, Minoans, Mycenaeans, Phoenicians, Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans-and the riverine cultures of Mesopotamia and Egypt is addressed. The survey stretches from the earliest evidence for Mediterranean seafaring around 10,000 bce to the first transatlantic voyages in the 15th century, including Arab, Viking, and European explorers, and the birth of modern capitalism in the Italian Maritime Republics. Along the way, economics, war, exploration, cult, life at sea, and colonization are discussed.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2666 - Apocalypse! (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARKEO 2666, JWST 2666, RELST 2666, MEDVL 2666

For thousands of years, people have believed that the world is ending imminently. In this course, we will examine the roots of apocalyptic thinking in the ancient world, especially among Jews and Christians. We will look at biblical apocalyptic texts as well as a wide array of other apocalyptic literatures, such as the books of Enoch, the Sibylline Oracles, 4 Ezra, the Apocalypse of Adam, the Apocalypse of Paul, and many others. These texts contain visions of end times, journeys to heaven and hell, and dramatic images of angels and demons, war and peace, and the natural and supernatural worlds. Our goal is to understand the circumstances that gave rise to apocalypticism and how disaster-thinking may have, paradoxically, provided comfort during crises. Throughout the course, we will pay close attention to the meaning of apocalypse as revelation, an unveiling, a discovery.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2668 - Ancient Egyptian Civilization (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARKEO 2668

The course surveys the history and culture of pharaonic Egypt from its prehistoric origins down to the early first millennium bce. Within a chronological framework, the following themes or topics will be considered: the development of the Egyptian state (monarchy, administration, ideology), social organization (class, gender and family, slavery), economic factors, and empire and international relations.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (AFAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2022, Fall 2020, Spring 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2670 - The History and Politics of Modern Egypt (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 2672, ASRC 2670, GOVT 2673

This lecture class will explore the socio-cultural history of modern Egypt from the late 18th century to the 21st century Arab Spring. We will explore Egyptian history under the Ottomans and the Mamluks, the unsuccessful French attempts to colonize Egypt, and the successful British occupation of the country. We will then examine the development of Egyptian nationalism from the end of the 19th century through Nasser's pan-Arabism to the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. We will accomplish this with the aid of a variety of texts and media, including novels and films.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (AFAREA, EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2019, Spring 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2674 - History of the Modern Middle East (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with GOVT 2747, HIST 2674, ASRC 2674

This course examines major trends in the evolution of the Middle East in the modern era. Focusing on the 19th and 20th centuries and ending with the Arab Spring, we will consider Middle East history with an emphasis on five themes: imperialism, nationalism, modernization, Islam, and revolution. Readings will be supplemented with translated primary sources, which will form the backbone of class discussions.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA, SAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2688 - Cleopatra's Egypt: Tradition and Transformation (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 2688, ARKEO 2688, ASRC 2688, HIST 2688

Following the conquests of Alexander, the ancient civilization of Egypt came under Greek rule. This period is best known for its famous queen Cleopatra, the last independent ruler of ancient Egypt. But even before Cleopatra's life and death, the Egypt that she governed was a fascinating place - and a rich case study in cultural interactions under ancient imperialism. This course explores life in Egypt under Greek rule, during the three centuries known as the Ptolemaic period (named after Cleopatra's family, the Ptolemaic dynasty). We will examine the history and culture of Ptolemaic Egypt, an empire at the crossroads of Africa, the Near East, and the Mediterranean. We will explore the experiences of Egyptians, Greeks, and others living in this multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-linguistic society. Finally, we will investigate the ways that Ptolemaic Egypt can shed light on modern experiences of imperialism, colonialism, and globalization.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2021, Spring 2017, Fall 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2697 - History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 2697, GOVT 2977

This course examines the history of the conflict between two peoples with claims to the same land (Palestine/Israel), from the rise of their national movements at the turn of the 20th century and their eventual clash down to the present crisis. We will investigate the various stable and shifting elements in the evolution of the conflict including conflicting Israeli and Palestinian narratives and mythologies about the nature of the conflict. Among many issues to be addressed are: the relationship of this conflict to the history of European colonialism in the Middle East, the emergence of Pan-Arabism and Islamism, the various currents in Zionism and its relationship to Judaism, the implication of great power rivalry in the Middle East, the different causes and political repercussions of the four Arab-Israeli wars, efforts at peacemaking including Oslo and Camp David, and the significance of the two Palestinian uprisings.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2020, Fall 2016, Fall 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2701 - The Aegean and East Mediterranean Bronze Age c. 3000-1000 BCE (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 2770, ARKEO 2271

An exploration of the archaeology and art of the Aegean region and of its neighbors during the Bronze Age, ca. 3000-1000 BCE: the origins and precursors of the Classical World. The course will investigate the emergence of the first complex societies in the Aegean region in the third millennium BCE, and then the development and story of the Minoan and Mycenaean worlds and their neighbors in the second millennium BCE. Topics will include: the Early Bronze Age and the first complex societies in the Aegean (Cyclades, Crete, Greece, Anatolia); the collapse and reorientation around 2200BCE and links with climate change; the first palace civilization of (Minoan) Crete; the Santorini (Thera) volcanic eruption and its historical impact in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean; the rise of the Mycenaean Greek palaces and the shift into proto-history; the development of an international east Mediterranean trade system; Ahhiyawa and the Hittites; the 'Trojan War'; and the collapse of the Late Bronze Age societies and links with climate change.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2722 - Of Saints, Poets, and Revolutionaries: Medieval and Modern Iran and Central Asia (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ASIAN 2294, MEDVL 2722, RELST 2722

From the poet-kings of medieval Persia to the trading networks of the famed "Silk Road" to the wandering mystics of Herat to the constitutional revolution of Iran to the colonial and post-colonial occupations of contemporary Afghanistan, this course offers a broad cultural and political history of Iranian and Turkic Central Asia. In addition, we will explore the highly complex intellectual, artistic, and architectural trends and "cross-cultural" exchanges that formed the backbone of many disparate Iranian-Turkic cultures.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2724 - Conflict and Coexistence in the Jewish Bible-Old Testament (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 2724, JWST 2724

The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is a repository of ancient Israelite religious, political, social, historical, and literary traditions. For the modern reader these ancient traditions are often obscured by a focus on the text as revelation. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the biblical world by reading the Hebrew Bible in translation, on its own terms, as a body of literature that evolved in an ancient Near Eastern context. The Bible itself will be the primary text for the course, but students will also be exposed to the rich and diverse textual traditions of the ancient Near East, including Mesopotamia, Egypt, Moab, and Ugarit. In addition, this course will explore the impact of early biblical interpretation on shaping the monotheistic traditions inherited in the West. As participants in a secular course on the Bible, students will be challenged to question certain cultural assumptions about the composition and authorship of the Bible, and will be expected to differentiate between a text's content and its presumed meaning.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2754 - Wondrous Literatures of the Near East (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with COML 2754, JWST 2754, SHUM 2754, ENGL 2754

This course examines Near East's rich and diverse literary heritage. We will read a selection of influential and wondrous texts from ancient to modern times, spanning geographically from the Iberian peninsula to Iran. We will explore a range of ancient myths of creation and destruction. We will also trace encounters with otherness in travel narratives. Together we will read and discuss such ancient works as the The Story of Sinuhe and The Epic of Gilgamesh, as well as selections from the Hebrew Bible, New Testament and Qur'an. We will explore medieval works such as the Travels of Ibn Battuta, the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi, and The Arabian Nights. We will also read Orhan Pamuk's My Name is Red, and Sonia Nimr's Wondrous Journeys in Strange Lands, as well as excerpts from Yochi Brandes's The Orchard. Students will also have the opportunity to research and analyze primary source materials in the collections of Cornell Rare Books and Manuscript Collection, and the Johnson Art Museum. All material is in English translation.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2767 - Storytelling in the Middle East: Introduction to Egyptian and Mesopotamian Literature (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with COML 2767

Literary forms were developed millennia ago in Egypt and Mesopotamia to teach, inspire admiration, produce consent, generate awe or pity, and move people to action. Students will read in English translation how such writing communicated with the living, the dead and the divine. Course readings include epics (such as those of Gilgamesh and Sinuhe), wisdom/proverbial literature, Hammurabi's law code, propaganda, magic spells, correspondence, philosophical musings, and love poetry. Reading and discussing these works will enrich students in terms of cultural and historical awareness, but also reveal common rhetorical devices that have remained useful, entertaining and inspiring to this day. The instructor assumes no familiarity with the history or languages of the ancient world. The only prerequisites are openness and curiosity.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2770 - Islam and Gender (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 2770, MEDVL 2770, FGSS 2770, ANTHR 2470, LGBT 2770

This course explores the role of gender and sexuality in shaping the lives of Muslims past and present. Through a close examination of ethnographies, intellectual histories, and religious treatises, we will analyze the key debates and discourses surrounding the intersection of gender and Islam. We begin by investigating Quranic revelations and hadith concerning gender and sexual ethics, female figures of emulation in early Islam, and feminist exegeses of the Quran. Continuing onward, we focus upon the everyday lives of Muslim women and non-binary individuals in medieval, colonial, and post-colonial contexts, highlighting the ways in which people negotiate and respond to the sexual politics of the times in which they live as we ask what, if anything, is specifically Islamic about the situations under discussion? Following this, we embark upon a history of sexuality within Islam, tracing the ways in which the categories of homosexuality and heterosexuality came to exist in the Muslim world, as well as the history and positionality of trans communities past and present. We then continue with an exploration of Islamic feminism as it exists today, looking to the ways in which Muslim feminists have critically engaged both religious texts as well as Western feminist theory. Finally, the course concludes by analyzing the relationship between the study of Islam, gender, and empire.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, D-AG), (GLC-AS, SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2772 - Body and Spirit in Ancient Egypt (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 2772, ARKEO 2772, RELST 2772

Did ancient Egyptians believe in the existence of souls? Why did they mummify the dead? Was the body of a pharaoh different from that of an ordinary person? This course sets the famous mortuary practices of ancient Egypt alongside treatments of living bodies and their immaterial components. We will read translated excerpts from ancient Egyptian texts—from magical spells recited for ancestors, to poetry on sex and death—while learning about items taken to the grave and monuments set up for posterity. In the process, we will reflect on contemporary representations of the past and evaluate the assumptions behind modern treatments of ancient artifacts and human remains.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2812 - Hieroglyphs to HTML: History of Writing (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 2812, STS 2812, ARKEO 2812, VISST 2812, SHUM 2812, LING 2212

An introduction to the history and theory of writing systems from cuneiform to the alphabet, historical and new writing media, and the complex relationship of writing technologies to human language and culture. Through hands-on activities and collaborative work, students will explore the shifting definitions of writing and the diverse ways in which cultures through time have developed and used writing systems. We will also investigate the traditional divisions of oral vs. written and consider how digital technologies have affected how we use and think about writing in encoding systems from Morse code to emoji.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2847 - Political History of Modern Afghanistan (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with GOVT 2847

Is Afghanistan part of Central Asia, South Asia, or the Middle East? Is it truly the 'graveyard of empires'? Why are great powers so interested in intervening in this country? Why did Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States fail to maintain their presence there? How does Afghan society and politics function? In this course, students will have the opportunity to explore answers to these and other questions.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2925 - The Anthropology of Israel-Palestine (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 2925, ANTHR 2925

This course is an introductory survey of the history, culture, and society of Ottoman and Mandate Palestine and Palestine/Israel. Students will learn about the history the region from the 19th Century to the present, through a close examination of various sources and texts. Sources may include ethnographies, literature, films, historical documents, and interdisciplinary scholarship.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 2985 - Egyptomania? Egypt and the Greco-Roman World (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 2685, ANTHR 2285, ARKEO 2285

This course explores the multifaceted interactions between ancient Egypt and the Classical world, from the Bronze Age to the Roman Empire. We will look at both archaeological and textual evidence (in English translation) to ask what this entangled history can tell us about life in the ancient Mediterranean. Among many other topics, we will consider Greek merchants and mercenaries in Egypt; Egyptian influences on Greek and Roman art; the famous queen Cleopatra, and her seductive but threatening reputation in Roman literature; the appearance of Egyptian underworld gods on Greek and Roman magical gems and curse tablets; and the ways that Greco-Roman representations of Egypt have shaped modern conceptions of Egyptian civilization, from 19th-century Romanticism to 21st-century pop culture.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, D-AG), (GLC-AS, SCD-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Fall 2017, Spring 2016, Fall 2012

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3175 - Nobody Expects the Spanish Inquisition: Inquisitors, Heretics, and Truth in the Early Modern World (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 3175, JWST 3175, SHUM 3175

This course uses the history of the Spanish Inquisition, and the richness of its archival records, to explore the variety of ways in which the pursuit of heresy was intertwined with transforming how knowledge was constructed, scrutinized, repressed, and deployed in the early modern world. Topics covered will include the struggle over religious authenticity in the age of Reformation, the formation of the bureaucratic state, the rise of empiricism and the scientific revolution, the birth of modern psychiatry, and the intellectual revolutions typically associated with the Enlightenment.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3200 - The Viking Age (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 3200, MEDVL 3200, JWST 3200

This course aims to familiarize students with the history of Scandinavia, ca. 800-1100 ad. Although well known as a dramatic chapter in medieval history, this period remains enigmatic and often misunderstood. Our goal will be to set Norse history within its European context, observing similarities with processes elsewhere in the medieval world, the better to perceive what makes the Norse unique. We will examine the social, economic and political activities of the Norsemen in continental Scandinavia, in Western and Eastern Europe, and in the North Atlantic.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2022, Spring 2020, Spring 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3204 - Heritage Forensics (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 3200, ARKEO 3200

This course provides students with an orientation to the new technologies reshaping the effort to preserve cultural heritage. The course introduces students to the tools that Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and remote sensing (especially aerial and satellite imaging) provide for advancing heritage preservation and detecting cultural erasure. Our focus will be on contexts where heritage has emerged as a site of conflict, from Bosnia to Syria to Ukraine. Students will develop proficiency in a range of spatial technologies and their application to the human past. The course will culminate in projects that use new technologies to save heritage at risk.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, SBA-AG), (GLC-AS, SSC-AS)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL, CU-UG); (AFAREA, EUAREA)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2024Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3212 - Philosophy in the Islamic World (800-1400) (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with PHIL 3212, MEDVL 3212

An introduction to some of the major thinkers and philosophical developments in the Islamic world from the 9th to the 14th centuries CE. Figures include Muslim thinkers such as Al-Kindi, Al-Razi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) as well as important representatives of the Jewish tradition such as Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides). Themes include philosophical theology (the existence and nature of God, God's relation to the created world, prophecy, the place of reason in religion), metaphysics (the nature of existence, fundamental ontology, causality), mind and knowledge (the nature and mechanisms of cognition, our knowledge of ourselves and the world), and ethics and political philosophy (how best to live and organize the state).

Prerequisites: at least one course in philosophy.**Distribution Requirements:** (ALC-AS, ETM-AS), (CA-AG, KCM-AG, LA-AG)**Exploratory Studies:** (AFAREA, AFLANG)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3255 - The Byzantine Empire: Culture and Society (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ARTH 3255, MEDVL 3255, CLASS 3655

An introduction to the art, history, and literature of the Byzantine Empire, its neighbors, and successors, ca. 500-1500.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2021Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3325 - Literary Reading and Writing in Advanced Urdu (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with URDU 3325

Designed for those students who have either taken Intermediate Urdu or are at the same level of competency in reading and writing skills. The goals of this class are to improve Urdu literary reading and writing abilities, primarily through reading various forms of Urdu prose. In addition, students learn about various genres of Urdu poetry and watch video clips and lectures that enhance listening and speaking abilities as well as the understanding and appreciation of Urdu culture.

Prerequisites: intermediate Urdu or same level of written and oral proficiency.**Distribution Requirements:** (FLOPI-AS)**Exploratory Studies:** (SAAREA)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3411 - Jewish Family and Marriage Law (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ANTHR 3411, JWST 3411

Through the centuries, Rabbinic Judaism developed an elaborate set of rules for governing marriage and family life, grounded in the Hebrew Bible and adapted to the realities of life in diaspora. This complex and sophisticated system helps to explain the continuity of Jewish collective identity in the sustained absence of a shared territorial homeland. We will study together part of the Talmudic tractate Yevamot (concerning the Levirate marriage) and relevant passages from the code known as Shulchan Aruch, along with scholarship in English. Some reading knowledge of Rabbinic Hebrew-Aramaic required.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, SCD-AS), (CA-AG, D-AG, LA-AG)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3448 - Islamic Mysticism (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with HIST 3448, MEDVL 3448, RELST 3448

Sufism, popularly understood as Islamic mysticism, is a loose name given to a broad and diverse collection of beliefs, practices and groups that range and vary across time and space. Going from a small and largely secretive group of mystical practitioners to a mainstream form of piety in the late medieval period, Sufism has a fascinating history, filled with intrigue, controversy, conflict and interesting characters. In this course, students will delve deep into the history of Sufism and read widely from across the Sufi and anti-Sufi traditions. Concentration will be given to practical questions of how Sufis saw themselves and their relationship to God and the world, how they built mystic community, spurned or embraced family life, interacted with mainstream society, and engaged in controversial erotic practices. Across the course, we will read Sufi histories and biographies, poetry, introductory treatises, as well as anti-Sufi polemics and stories.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3456 - Scribal Culture in Ancient Egypt (3 Credits)**

Rarely do we refer to contemporary writers, authors, scholars, and artists as "scribes." However, in studies of pre-modern cultures, this term delineates a broad category of literate people with diverse writing abilities and habits. In ancient Egypt, traces of their activities are found as graffiti, depictions of them are scattered in tomb paintings, and their reflections on the prestige of education and a mastery of specialist knowledge are detailed in poetry, monumental inscriptions, and school exercises. These records offer uncommon glimpses into the lives and values of educated colleagues, connoisseurs, and friends. We will trace the development of these communities of practice, consider their individual and group identities, and how they have shaped our understanding of ancient Egyptian society.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3519 - History of State and Society in Modern Iran: Through Literature and Film (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 3519

In the conditions of strict censorship and numerous limitations on various forms of political organization and activism, literature and cinema, especially Iran's internationally acclaimed art cinematography, have been the major outlets through which the social and political concerns of the Iranian society have been voiced throughout the modern period. The course explores major themes and periods in Iran's transition from the secular state of the Pahlavi dynasty to the religious state of the Islamic Republic in the 20th and 21st centuries. We will focus on social as well as political themes including the Anglo-Russo-American Occupation of Iran, the 1979 Islamic Revolution, U.S.-Iranian relations, Iraq-Iran War, the Green Movement and the crisis of Islamic government, Images of the West in Iran, Modern Youth Culture, Gender segregation, and the struggle between modernity and traditionalism in contemporary Iran. We will watch selected Iranian documentary and feature films and draw on modern Persian literature but will approach them not as art forms but as reflections of major socio-economic, political, and religious phenomena in Iran's modern history. We will read and watch what the Iranians wrote and produced, read and watched, in order to view and explain Iran and its relations with the West through the Iranian eyes. We will examine how the Iranians perceived themselves and the others, how they viewed their own governments and the West, what issues inspired and shaped their outlook outside the official censorship during the period in question. All readings are in English translation and the films are with English subtitles. The course includes lectures deconstructing political, religious, and social evolution of modern Iran as well as regular class discussions where we will address the issues in question from a variety of perspectives.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3530 - A Mediterranean Society and Its Culture (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with JWST 3530, MEDVL 3530, RELST 3530

This course examines the cultural and historical interaction of Muslims and Jews from the emergence of Islam in the seventh century through the classical age of Islam down to the turn of the thirteenth century. The intersection of the two cultures (scriptural, spiritual, intellectual, literary, communal, and interpersonal) and members of their respective religious communities will be studied through readings of primary texts (in translation). The course will conclude with some brief reflections on historical memory and the modern and contemporary significance of the two religious communities' interactions during the classical age of Islam.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2021Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3535 - Religions of Iran (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with RELST 3536

This course is an introduction to the religions of Iran from antiquity to the present. For over three millennia, Iran has been a hotbed and intercultural crossroads of religious activity as a result of its incredible ethnic and religious diversity, its many centuries of imperial rule, and its important geographical location between east and west. In this class, students survey the major religions of Iran, with an emphasis on those that originated there, including Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Mandaism, Yezidism, and Bahaism. We will pay particularly close attention to the history of Zoroastrianism, one of the world's oldest religions, whose adherents today, known as Parsis, reside mostly in India and Iran, and around the world. In addition to these native religions, students will also explore the impact that Iranian politics and culture have had on the presence of foreign religions in Iran, including on Judaism, Christianity, and Shi'ite Islam. Through a combination of lectures, secondary readings, and especially the close reading of primary sources in translation, students will not only gain a broad understanding of these religions, but also of Iranian history.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)**Exploratory Studies:** (SAAREA)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2022Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3542 - The Ottoman Empire 1800-1922 (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with HIST 3542

This course will take the students through the age of reforms in the Ottoman Empire, the rising of nationalism, and the encroachment of colonialism in the Middle East, North Africa and the Balkans, and the collapse of the empire. Emphasis will be placed on analyzing various historical narratives of ethno-religious nationalism using Turkey, Greece/Cyprus, and Lebanon, as case studies.

Prerequisites: Recommended prerequisite: HIST 1561.**Distribution Requirements:** (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2019Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3550 - Origins of Monotheism (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with JWST 3550, RELST 3550, ARKEO 3550

The Purpose of this course is to trace the development of Monotheism from its origins in Israelite/Canaanite polytheism. We will examine worship of the God, Yahweh and other deities in ancient Israel, and will trace the long and complicated process by which Yahweh became the sole deity to be formally accepted within Judaism. Using biblical evidence as well as inscriptional and archaeological evidence from Israel and elsewhere in the ancient Near East, we will address the question of why the Israelites eventually rejected deities such as Baal, Asherah, El and others, and how imagery associated with these deities informs biblical descriptions of Yahweh. We will explore the ways in which a small group of Jerusalem elites helped shape the monotheistic tradition that has been inherited in the West, and will consider the political, social and theological implications of this transformation.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2014Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3588 - Archaeology and the Bible (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 3588, RELST 3588, ARKEO 3588

The purpose of the course is to place the Bible within the context of a larger ancient world that can be explored by systematic excavation of physical remains. Students will become familiar with archaeological excavations and finds from ancient Syria-Palestine from 10,000 bce to 586 bce. We will explore this archaeological evidence on its own terms, taking into consideration factors such as archaeological method and the interpretive frameworks in which the excavators themselves work, as well as the implications of this body of evidence for understanding the complexity and diversity of biblical Israel.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (D-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2019, Spring 2012

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3612 - Histories of Afghanistan (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 3612

This course will investigate the social and political histories of Afghanistan from the late 19th century through the present day. Drawing from religious treatises, intellectual histories, ethnographies, literature, and film we will examine historical events and cultural developments from a diverse set of theoretical approaches. Topics will include colonialism and its legacies, the experiences of minoritized groups, alternative forms of nationalism, Afghan religious discourses, the role of Marxism and Islamic socialism, gender and politics, the war on terror, and more. Ultimately, it is the objective of the course to explore the diverse cultural, political, and material worlds that have shaped collective life in Afghanistan in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3655 - Minorities of the Middle East (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 3655, COML 3743, SHUM 3655

This course examines the historic diversity of the modern Middle East, exploring histories of inter-communal contact and conflict. We begin by investigating the legacy of the Ottoman Empire and the impact of its dissolution. We will focus our attention on commercial centers that fostered inter-communal relations, as well as investigating sites of strife and cases of minority repression. We will read histories, memoirs, and fiction, and view films that help us better understand inter-communal relations, tensions, and conflict. We will also interrogate the terms for exploring a range of distinctions among majority and minority populations including: religious difference (Muslims, Christians, and Jews); divisions of religious rite (Sunni and Shi'a); ethno-linguistic minorities (Armenians and Kurds); national identities (Israelis and Palestinians); cultures of origin (Mizrahi, Sephardi, and Ashkenazi Jews). We will explore how these divisions inform urgent current conflicts: the civil war in Syria and the refugee crisis; the civil war in Iraq and the campaign by ISIS against minorities; as well as tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG), (GLC-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2019, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3658 - History of Ancient and Medieval Iran (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with MEDVL 3658, HIST 3658

The course examines the most significant and defining stages of Iran's historic development concentrating on events and individuals that shaped its past and present. Drawing from various sources we will view the events from variety of perspectives and, among other questions, will also touch on much debated issues such as the meaning of "real Iranian" identity, relation of pre-Islamic Iranian practices and Islamic traditions in shaping of Iranian nation-state. The course will explore major developments in Iran's history from the time of the first empires to modern republic.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3687 - The US and the Middle East (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with GOVT 3687, JWST 3687, AMST 3687, HIST 3687

This seminar examines the history of the United States' involvement with Middle East beginning with evangelical efforts in the 19th century and President Wilson's engagement with the colonial powers in the early 20th century during and after WWI. The discovery of vast Middle Eastern oil reserves and the retreat of the colonial powers from the region following WWII drew successive US administrations ever deeper into Middle Eastern politics. In due course the US became entrenched in the post-colonial political imagination as heir to the British and the French especially as it challenged the Soviet Union for influence in the region during the Cold War. And that only takes the story to the mid-1950s and the Eisenhower administration. Our discussions will be based on secondary readings and primary sources as we interrogate the tension between realist and idealist policies toward the Middle East and trace how these tensions play out in subsequent developments including the origins and trajectory of the US strategic alliances with Israel, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey and conflict with Iran after the 1979 Islamic Revolution and the two Gulf Wars.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Summer 2025, Spring 2024, Fall 2020, Fall 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3691 - Race, Slavery, and Cinema (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with COML 3006, FGSS 3693, ILRGL 3691

What does it mean to live in the aftermath of slavery? How has the human history of slavery contributed to the production of natural values that we take for granted-such as community, property, citizenship, gender, individuality, and freedom? This course explores the history of enslavement throughout the human past, from the ancient world to the modern era. We will pay particular attention to the relationship between slavery and the construction of racial blackness. We will explore various institutionalized forms of servitude throughout time and space, from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic worlds, from eunuchism to concubinage, from slavery in the Roman Empire to modern slavery and sex trafficking. Readings will be in English and will engage a variety of dynamic sources: theoretical, historiographical, anthropological, religious, legal, literary and multimedia.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG), (ICE-IL, LH-IL)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3717 - Modern Sephardi and Mizrahi Identities (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 3717, COML 3744, SHUM 3717

This class examines modern articulations of identity by and about two distinct Jewish diasporas: Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews. Sephardic Jews trace their origins to the Iberian Peninsula prior to the end of the 15th century. Mizrahim are Jews who lived in the Middle East and North Africa until the mid-20th century, and their descendants. We will explore Sephardic and Mizrahi identities in works of fiction, memoirs, essays, poetry and films produced from the mid-twentieth century to the present. We will trace routes of migration across generations, paying particular attention to how texts construct identity in relation to language and place. Works will be drawn from wide geographic distribution including the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and the Americas, and produced in Arabic, English, French, Hebrew, Ladino, and Spanish.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3720 - Women and Gender in Biblical Israel (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 3720, RELST 3720, FGSS 3721

This course focuses on how Biblical texts represent women in ancient Israel, and how the Bible's representations constitute both a fabrication and a manifestation of social life on the ground. We will use biblical, archaeological, and ancient Near Eastern textual evidence to consider the complicated relationship between ancient society and the textual and material records from which we reconstruct it. In addition, this course will examine how women's roles in the Hebrew Bible have been understood and integrated in later Jewish and Christian thought, and how these discourses shape contemporary American attitudes towards women, sexuality, and gender.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, SCD-AS), (CA-AG, D-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2022, Fall 2015, Spring 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3722 - Jewish Nationalism: History and Formative Ideas (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 3722

Students will practice critical, close reading and examination of historical primary sources that are essential for the study of modern Jewish nationalism and statehood. In our discussions, we will identify influential historical ideas within different genres of texts (personal, journalistic, commercials, political, literary, etc.) and critically combine social history and theory, literary understanding and theory, and intellectual history. Throughout the course, special attention will be given to ideas of class and status and their implications on the formation and change of Jewish and Israeli nationalism over the years. Students will consider key concepts of class theory and engage in comparatively examining their usefulness as tools for their historical understanding of the texts analyzed.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3724 - Death and the Afterlife in Islam (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 3724, MEDVL 3724

What happens after death? If there is an Afterlife, how is it connected to earthly life? What would the Afterlife actually look like? What role does God or Satan play in the Afterlife? Since the earliest Qur'anic Revelations, Muslims have questioned, imagined and written about the Afterlife. In this course, we will read widely from across the Islamic religious and literary traditions, reading primary texts in translation. We will begin with a survey of the imagination of the Afterlife in scriptural, religious and literary texts, before examining the role and importance of the Afterlife in Islamic legal thinking and morality. Thereafter, we will focus on theological and ethical problems that arise from the imagination of the Afterlife, focusing in particular on the gendered experience of the Afterlife, as well as the question of whether the individual has free will and moral agency or whether eschatological fate is predetermined.

Distribution Requirements: (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3735 - Human Conflict: From Existential Clash to Coexistence in Israel-Palestine (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with GOVT 3737, JWST 3735

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3750 - Humanities Scholars Research Methods (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 3750, ASIAN 3375, ANTHR 3950, ARTH 3755

This course explores the practice, theory, and methodology of humanities research, critical analysis, and communication through writing and oral presentation. We will study the work and impact of humanists (scholars of literature, history, theory, art, visual studies, film, anthropology, gender and sexuality studies), who pose big questions about the human condition. By reading and analyzing their scholarship-critiquing them and engaging their ideas-we will craft our own methods and voices. Students will refine their research methods (library research, note taking, organizing material, bibliographies, citation methods, proposals, outlines, etc.) and design their own independent research project.

Enrollment Information: Priority given to: students in the Humanities Scholars Program (HSP).

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3759 - Romanesque and Early Gothic Art and Architecture: Europe and the Mediterranean, 1000-1150 A.D. (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 3300, MEDVL 3300

This course will address both Romanesque and the earliest manifestations of Gothic art and architecture as Western Mediterranean phenomena, rather than northern European ones. We will adopt a comparative approach which includes Islamic and, to a lesser extent, Byzantine cultures and material. In addition to the more usual art historical skills, such as visual and stylistic analysis and compare-and-contrast, we will use selected primary sources and historical analysis to attempt to understand the objects and monuments we address.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2010, Spring 2009

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3778 - Pharaohs and Fables (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 3778

The figure of the ancient Egyptian pharaoh looms large in the modern imagination, whether as awesome demigod or awful despot. But how did these fabled kings portray themselves, and how were they seen by their subjects? To probe the ideology of Egyptian kingship and examine how it was celebrated and questioned, we will read a selection of ancient Egyptian texts in translation: royal dream visions and birth legends; records of tomb robberies and an assassination conspiracy; and tales of cantankerous monarchs and squabbling gods. Skepticism, humor, and historical memory abound in these writings, which will introduce nonspecialists to one of the world's earliest literary traditions.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL)Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3787 - The Qur'an (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with MEDVL 3787, RELST 3787

The Qur'an is a cornucopia of stories, laws, apocalyptic visions, Paradisical landscapes and stark warnings. This course presents students with the opportunity not only to read the Qur'an in translation in its entirety, but also to explore different ways in which the Qur'anic text has been and can be interpreted, and the different religious, social and ethical questions that derive from different methods of interpretation. Across the course, students will be asked to explore questions, such as: how does dating the Qur'an impact interpretation? How does the debate concerning Qur'anic (un)createdness impact its interpretation? Is it possible to use extra-Qur'anic material to interpret the Qur'an? How can the Qur'an be read as a literary text? Or as a source of law? Or as a source for history? What is the Qur'an's own view of the past, present and future? How do feminist and queer Muslims read and interpret the Qur'an? This course is secular and academic in nature. We will study a wide range of religious and secular/academic approaches to interpreting the Qur'an, some of which may challenge widely-held assumptions about the Qur'an's authorship, dating, composition and interpretation.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3802 - Race and Ethnicity in the Ancient World (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with CLASS 3802, HIST 3802

We will consider two basic questions: did the ancient Greeks and Romans have a concept of race or racial identity? If not, what were the dominant collective identities they used to classify themselves and others? We will explore the causes and conditions that gave rise to collective identities that can be described as ethnic and (in some cases) possibly as 'racial' and how these identities worked in their given cultural and political contexts. We will start with Greek identity in the 6th and 5th centuries BCE, then moving to Macedonian identity and the conquests of Alexander the Great, and finally, to the Roman world, where we will explore the question of race and ethnicity within the context of inclusive citizenship. In each of these cultural contexts, we will briefly focus on slavery, examining whether slave identity was at all racialized.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2019Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3805 - Israeli Politics (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 3805, JWST 3805

We are all the living dead - alive but bound to die, and know it. In this course we will learn how existential fears and anxieties shape our politics, partly through moral meaning-making. While the politics of fear is on the rise worldwide, Israel has seen it long ago. Throughout its existence, Israel has grown strong, but its existential fears have not subsided. Israel, moreover, can teach us about the role of freedom and morality in politics. Israel's existential fears, alongside the realization of choice, has prompted Zionists to seek existential legitimation. In recent years, however, a growing frustration at attaining such legitimacy has fostered bad faith politics, substituting freedom with a sense of no choice.

Distribution Requirements: (SBA-AG), (SSC-AS)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2021, Fall 2020, Fall 2019Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3850 - Comparative Politics of the Middle East (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 3313, JWST 3850

What explains authoritarian resilience in the Middle East? What are the causes and consequences of Islamist political attitudes and behavior? What is the historical legacy of colonialism and empire in the Middle East? This course will offer students the opportunity to discuss these and other questions related to the political, social, and economic development of the Middle East and North Africa.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, SBA-AG), (SCD-AS, SSC-AS)**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Summer 2025, Summer 2024, Fall 2023, Winter 2022Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 3880 - Islam and the Ethnographic Imagination (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ASIAN 3386, ANTHR 3680

How does one study Islam from an anthropological perspective? Through close readings of recent ethnographies, canonical texts, theoretical works, and critiques of the genre, we will understand the major debates and intellectual trends that have defined the anthropology of Islam from its earliest inception through the present day. Geographic areas covered include South Asia, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, America, North Africa, and West Africa.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG), (SCD-AS)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2020Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 3888 - Jews, Christians, and Others in Late Antiquity (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 3888, JWST 3888, MEDVL 3888

This course explores the interactions between Jews, Christians, and other religious groups in late antiquity, especially in Sasanian Persia circa the first through seventh century C.E. Students pay particular attention to the portrayals of Christians in Jewish rabbinic literature, including Midrash and Talmud, but also draw from early Christian, Zoroastrian, Manichaean, and other sources. There will be an emphasis on the reading of primary texts in translation in their appropriate historical contexts, and in comparison with one another. Students engage such questions as: How did Jews define themselves in relation to Christians, and vice versa? In what ways did Jews and Christians part ways with one another, as scholars often maintain, and what were the factors at play in their separation? And, lastly, what role did other religious and political groups, such as Gnostics, Zoroastrians, Romans, Mandaeans, Manichaeans, and early Muslims play in these developments?

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Fall 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4196 - From the Bible to the Museum: Jewish Memory and Public History (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 4196, RELST 4196, JWST 4196

How has the remembrance of the past shaped the evolution of Jewish religion, identity, and culture from Biblical times to the present? How have the creation, dissemination, and preservation of Jewish memory changed over time? How is Jewish history used in political discourse in contemporary society in the U.S. and around the Globe? How can the historical tools be utilized to generate a sophisticated and discerning public engagement with the complexities of the Jewish past? In this course, students will explore these questions through seminar discussions, attending, evaluating, and critiquing exhibits and cultural events and watching films that put Jewish history on display, and by deploying their own research, writing, and creative skills to produce public facing final projects or a traditional research paper.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4317 - Ottoman Modernity, 1798-1925 (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 4317

This course is an introduction to the history of modern Ottoman Empire, from 1798-1925. It will cover a survey of the fundamental debates about Ottoman Modernity, focusing on key actors, events, and concepts that define the advent of modernity in the Middle East and North Africa. We will first discuss the importance of being modern in order to survive in the age of Empires. We will then see what modernity promised to the peoples of the Ottoman Empire and what made modernity such a contentious, and (un)desirable event. We will finally address the violent legacies of empires and markets in how they shaped race, religion, and nationalism in the region.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4320 - Tales of the Alhambra and Lalla Rookh: Case Studies in Orientalism (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 4320

An introduction both to the History of Art and to an interdisciplinary approach to research and analysis through close study of these two works. Beginning with a sampling of Said's Orientalism and its critics, we will follow with a group read and analysis of each illustrated work, including text-image consideration and analysis. There will be heavy focus on multi-media primary source material in Kroch library, the Johnson Museum, and my own personal collection; consideration of both works in their 19th-c context, as well as medieval and earlier roots. We will devote half the semester to each, with 'hinge point' marked by a study day at Olana. Final product could include small exhibition, in tandem with individual papers/projects.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4334 - Media and Experience (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with COML 4354

Continental philosophy fuels contemporary media theory. The connection runs so deep, critics have accused media theorists of producing nothing intellectually new. From Edmund Husserl's phenomenological experiments to Heidegger's reflections on technology and time, to Derrida's suspicions of immediacy, a clear philosophical lineage shapes the way media theory thinks about history, subjectivity, and experience. Through engagements with media theory and the inheritance that informs it, we explore the genealogy of thought on media and experience, reflecting on the technological shifts that could not have been anticipated by early 20th century philosophers: social media, and the digital's current saturation of all levels of human communication. We also explore those areas of thought that the Eurocentricism and presumed universality of Western philosophy rendered invisible or unthinkable: the relationship between media and race, media and gender and sexuality, geopolitical and cultural differences.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4337 - Labor and Employment in the Middle East and North Africa (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ILRGL 4337

This course introduces students to the history, evolution and trajectory of state-labor relations, labor activism, and the politics of unemployment in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). As the region with the highest concentration of non-democratic regimes in the world, the MENA provides a rich context for examining state efforts to control interest representation, and workers' struggles for freedom of association. In addition, the region features diverse political economic systems, making it ideal for examining the interaction between resource endowments and labor market dynamics. Finally, the region is ripe for the study of youth activism and the mobilization of the unemployed given that youth unemployment rates are higher in the MENA than any other world region.

Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: juniors and seniors.

Distribution Requirements: (AWI-IL, ICE-IL, ICL-IL), (HA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4351 - Problems in Byzantine Art (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 4351, CLASS 4752, MEDVL 4351, RELST 4351, VISST 4351, ARKEO 4351

Topic Spring 23: Portraiture. Byzantine artists produced a wide variety of images that modern interpreters have recognized as portraits. These images illuminate individual identity and visual representation in Byzantium. On the one hand, the constituent elements of a portrait (such as physiognomy, gesture, dress, and attributes) illuminate cultural understandings of personhood. On the other hand, those elements are assembled and displayed through means (composition, medium, and context) that illuminate cultural understandings of images and their ability to extend personal energy. We will focus on the primary sources, including preserved monuments (manuscripts, mosaics, sculptures, etc.) and literary witnesses (epigrams, historians' accounts, etc.), supplemented by selections from the secondary literature on identity, individuality, and subject formation in Byzantium. Seminar topics rotate each semester. Previous topics include: Ravenna, Hagia Sophia, Byzantine Iconoclasm, Spiral Relief Columns.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2016, Spring 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4354 - Byzantine Archaeology (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 4354, ARKEO 4354

A seminar on the archaeology of the Byzantine Empire, from the late Roman through to the early modern periods. Topics to be covered include: long-term changes in settlement patterns and urban development; the material traces of state and monastic control over productive landscapes; the idea of the border and the nature of its defense; and the fraught relationship between Byzantine and classical archaeologies.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4407 - Hasidism: History, Community, Thought (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 4407, JWST 4407, RELST 4407

The modern Jewish religious movement known as Hasidism began in Eastern Europe in the eighteenth century and thrives today. We will approach Hasidism primarily through three avenues: recent critical social history; selections from Hasidic literature; and ethnographic accounts of Hasidic life today. By the end of the semester, students will be able to articulate some ways that Hasidism reflects both broader trends in European religious and moral thought of its time, and some ways that it represents distinctively Jewish developments. You will also gain a deeper appreciation of the various kinds of evidence and disciplinary approaches that need to be brought to bear on the attempt to articulate as broad, deep and varied a phenomenon as modern Hasidic Judaism.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, ETM-AS), (CA-AG, KCM-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4426 - Science and the Making of Modern Palestine (3 Credits)

This course explores how the physical sciences have played a central role in the making of territory, citizenship, and rights in Palestine and for Palestinians for the past hundred years. From chemistry and climatology to archaeology and astronomy, these sciences have not only conditioned how humanity grasps the universe, but they have been key projects, strategies, and blueprints for communities in both historical and contemporary Palestine to claim legitimacy, authority, and power over land and the humans that populate it. It is through these physical sciences that political regimes have turned Israel/Palestine into the explosive terrain that we know today, and by tracking the co-evolution of science and society therein we will reapproach classic debates about equity, repair, and human rights that are central to the question of Palestine.

Distribution Requirements: (SCD-AS, SSC-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4513 - Textual Ethnography (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 4013

This course explores the implications and significance of using textual materials as anthropological evidence. While participant observation remains the cornerstone of ethnography, literary, archival, and other written works are increasingly being utilized as primary sources within the anthropological project. This course will hence offer an overview of anthropological works that trace the intersections between cultural production and the literary imagination. Rather than consider the literary elements of ethnography itself, we will strive to understand the disparate forms of social phenomena—both knowledge and practices—that arise from texts and textual practices specifically. Examples include analyses of literary cultures, media forms and non-traditional textual sources, bureaucratic structures, the use of archives, and more. Particular attention will be paid to works based in the Middle East and the Islamic world. By examining the different theoretical, political, and ethical considerations of using the written word as ethnographic evidence, we will be able to shed light on the anthropological project as a whole.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG), (SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2022, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4520 - Jewish Cities (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 4520, ANTHR 4620, HIST 4520, SHUM 4020

From Jerusalem to Rome, from Shanghai to Marrakesh, Jews and cities have been shaping each other for thousands of years. This course ranges through time and space to examine how Jewish and other minority experiences offer a window onto questions of modernity and post-colonialism in intersections of the built environment with migration, urban space, and memory. Readings and film/video encompass historical, ethnographic, visual, architectural and literary materials to offer a broad look at materials on ghettos, empires, cosmopolitanism, tolerance, immigrant enclaves, race and ethnicity.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, D-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4530 - The Caucasus: Captives, Cultures, Conflicts (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 4030

The Caucasus occupies a distinctive place in the historical and cultural imagination, a region long anchored to tropes of disobedience, punishment, and redemption. It is also a place in which liminality, betwixt and between Europe and Asia, endures as both a perceived geographic imaginary and an experienced condition in the detritus of Persian, Ottoman, Russian, and Soviet imperialisms. This course explores the Caucasus through its anthropology, history, and cultural production, with a particular focus on the Russian conquest, Soviet socialism, and the conflicts and capitalist formations of the post-Soviet decades. We will examine the entanglements of the region's history, political economy, and geopolitics in order to get a sense of the array of forces shaping the Caucasus today.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2018, Spring 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4537 - Shi'ism: Poetics and Politics (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 4537, ANTHR 4637, SHUM 4537

This course offers a broad survey of contemporary Shi'i beliefs, practices, and politics with a focus on Twelver or Imami Shi'ism. Through a close examination of ethnographies, intellectual and political histories, theological writings, and more we will investigate the themes which define the politics and cultural practices of contemporary Shi'ism. In particular, we will highlight the ways in which Shi'is utilize their theological beliefs to negotiate and respond to the socio-political context of the times in which they live. The course begins by examining the early days of what would later be called Shi'ism. We then examine the key theological concepts which distinguish Shi'ism from Sunnism, including themes of *adalat* (divine justice), *shahadat* (martyrdom), the Karbala paradigm, and the role of the imamate and clerical class. The rest of course is devoted to investigating the ways that Shi'ism informs and interacts with the social realm and vice versa, ranging from negotiations of the everyday to responding to moments of great civil and society unrest and to that which is called sectarianism. Travelling from South Asia to the Middle East, from Africa to America, we will ultimately examine how Shi'i beliefs and identity act as a dynamic force for shaping the worlds in which they live today.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2020, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4540 - Moses Maimonides (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 4540, RELST 4540, SPAN 4540, MEDVL 4540

Moses Maimonides who was born in Cordoba (1138), moved to Fez as a youth and died in Cairo (1204) is regarded by Jewish, Islamic, and Christian tradition alike as the most important Jewish religious intellectual of the classical age of Islam/the High Middle Ages. This seminar will examine Maimonides as the product of his time and place including his complex relationship with Arabo-Islamic culture and, because of his stature as a communal figure, rabbinic scholar, court physician and philosopher, his role as a catalyst for cultural developments. For comparative purposes we also consider Maimonides' Andalusian contemporary, Ibn Rushd, the philosopher, Muslim jurist, physician and scholar of Islamic law.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA, LAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2020, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4543 - State and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 4543

This course will examine the relationship between the imperial, provincial, and local state apparatuses and the various sections of society as the Ottoman Empire underwent a steady transition from the so-called Ancient Regime through the constructs of the so-called modern state. This course will look at specific case studies from across the empire, examining the similarities and difference, across provinces, and wherever possible, across imperial domains. From a theoretical point of view, the discussion will not simply focus on how the relationship between state and society changed, but will also investigate the construct of the separation of state and society conceptually, over the period of 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2020, Spring 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4548 - The Bible in America (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 4548, JWST 4548, AMST 4548

This course will focus on the array of perspectives offered in the Hebrew Bible and New Testament on such contemporary social issues as: immigration; abortion rights, surrogate childbirth, gay marriage, gender identity, etc. We will consider the range of voices the Bible preserves on these and other topics, and how biblical texts and biblically based arguments shape and inform American political discourse. Students will be expected to read biblical texts on their own terms in their ancient Israelite and early Christian contexts, as well as to consider how those texts have been received with Jewish and Christian interpretive traditions and absorbed into American political thought. Students will read political theory, Jewish and Christian ethics, recent newspaper and magazine articles and will also consider other forms of media.

Distribution Requirements: (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4557 - Desert Monasticism (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 4557, CLASS 4677, MEDVL 4557

How and why do landscapes come to inspire the religious imagination? And why do religious practices, rituals, traditions, and beliefs take place in particular landscapes? This seminar treats these questions by focusing on the desert, both imagined and real, as it has shaped religious ascetic practice, especially the development of Christian monasticism in the Middle East. We will read widely from monastic literatures, mostly from late ancient Egypt, to explore both the historical development of monasticism in Christianity and examine why the monastic impulse seems so closely tied to the desert. In addition to reading saints lives and the stories of hermits, we will read early monastic rules, the desert fathers, and we will draw from archaeological sources to examine the varieties of ascetic practices in the deserts of late ancient Egypt, Gaza, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria. Throughout the course we will explore ancient and modern ideas about wilderness and we will explore parallels between ancient Near Eastern literatures and their nineteenth- and twentieth-century parallels in the American frontier and environmental literatures.

Distribution Requirements: (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2019, Fall 2017, Fall 2014
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4560 - Theory and Method in Near Eastern Studies (3 Credits)

Seminar offering advanced Near Eastern Studies students the opportunity to read and discuss the range of theories and methods that have been employed by scholars in the interdisciplinary area of Near Eastern Studies. After giving attention to the historical development of area studies programs—and their current status and relevance—students read a wide range of highly influential works in Near Eastern Studies. Literary theory, historiography, post-colonialism, queer and gender theory, and comparative religions are a few of the approaches, methods, and theories explored. Authors include Aziz al-Azmeh, Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, James George Frazer, J.Z. Smith, Talal Asad, Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG), (GLC-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4605 - Contesting Identities in Modern Egypt (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 4091, ASRC 4650

This seminar examines the dynamics of modern collective identities which dominated the Egyptian public sphere in the long twentieth century. We will explore the underpinnings and formation of territorial Egyptian nationalism, pan-Arabism and Islamism through close readings and class discussions of important theoretical, historiographical and primary texts.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, D-AG), (GLC-AS, SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (AFAREA, EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Fall 2020, Fall 2018, Fall 2015
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4628 - Gnosticism and Early Christianity (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 4628, RELST 4628, CLASS 4636

What is Gnosticism and why has it come to be so hotly debated among scholars and in our contemporary media? What is the Gospel of Judas and are its ideas heretical? Who wrote the Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of Mary and why were these Gospels not included in the New Testament canon? To what extent did Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* draw from ancient Christian gnostic sources? This seminar will explore answers to these questions and many others by focusing on the complex array of literary sources from late antiquity—primarily from a cache of manuscripts found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945—that have long been associated with a so-called Christian Gnosticism. Church Fathers condemned the movement on a variety of grounds, but in this course we will not simply read the condemnations written by the opponents of gnostic thought; rather, we will focus our attention on reading (in English translation) substantial portions of the gnostic texts written by the adherents themselves. We will give special attention to the ways in which conflicts about Gnosticism connected with conflicts about gender, heresy, power, and authority. To set these texts within a socio-historical context, we will discuss the possible Jewish and hellenistic roots of early Christian Gnosticism and ties to Stoic and other ancient philosophical movements.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2021, Spring 2015
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4644 - Globalism and Collapse in the Late Bronze Age World (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 4644, ARKEO 4644, CLASS 4744

Several major and minor kingdoms situated around the Eastern Mediterranean basin flourished during the 14th-12th centuries BCE before a widespread violent collapse occurred around 1175. Thousands of cuneiform and other documents speak to two major socioeconomic processes of the age: the creation of the first international system in world history, and the collapse of that system after about two hundred years. Our course uses archaeological evidence, paleoclimate studies, and textual analysis (in translation) to address several related issues. We look at how networks of information, wealth accumulation, and political power were created and what role they played in globalization and destabilization. We consider whether the key players were aware of the coming collapse, what if any counter-measures were deployed, and how some polities were more resilient than others and created even greater networks post-collapse. We analyze a variety of related sources, with close attention paid to the Amarna Letters and other Egyptian texts from the Ramesside era. Several Bronze Age and Iron Age shipwrecks are examined for their evidence of maritime connectivity. And throughout the course students will become familiar with the history, economy, cult, laws and daily life of Ugarit (Tell Ras Shamra, Syria), a cosmopolitan coastal kingdom whose unparalleled archaeological and textual record affords a particularly close view of the transformative moments of the Late Bronze Age.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2018, Spring 2009
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4654 - Themes in Mediterranean Archaeology (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 4754, ARTH 4754, ARKEO 4254, ANTHR 4254, MEDVL 4754

This seminar provides a higher-level general introduction to, and survey of, contemporary theories, methods, and approaches in the archaeology of the Mediterranean world. Rather than focusing on a specific geographical sub-region or chronological period, this course examines and critically assesses the practice and distinctive character of Mediterranean archaeology more broadly.

Prerequisites: some previous background in archaeology, material culture studies, ancient history, or related fields.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2016
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4659 - The Idea of Biblical Israel (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 4659, RELST 4659, ANTHR 4659, ARKEO 4659, SHUM 4659

This course examines the fixity of Bible's representations of Israel as it relates to the fluidity of Israel's social, political, and religious experience as revealed in archaeology and texts from outside the Bible. We will use the tools of biblical criticism (philological, archaeological, literary historical) and methods drawn from such disciplines as History, Political Science, Anthropology, and Literary Criticism, to examine four biblical narrative traditions: The Joseph story; the exodus from Egypt; the Israelite conquest of Canaan; and the Song of Deborah, a text widely regarded as the oldest in the Hebrew Bible. Each of these played an essential role in the process of fabricating biblical Israel. As works of biblical historiography, each functioned to create a shared sense of a Jewish past in light of the urgencies of the present. Each is also witness to a creative process that unfolded when the past was still malleable, the terms not yet rigid. We will focus on the modes and materials of textual production and on how modern historians engage biblical narrative in fabricating their own narrative histories of ancient Israel. We will also consider how ancient and modern historical writing on ancient Israel has been put into the service of contemporary political discourse on boundaries and borders in Israel-Palestine.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2021
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4663 - Utopia Lost? Failure and its Aftermaths (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 4663, ANTHR 4493, COML 4261

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4666 - Mass Media and Identities in the Modern Middle East (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 4666

This reading seminar will explore the expansion and influence of mass media in the Middle East from the late nineteenth to the turn of the twenty-first century. We will examine how the intersection of popular music, theater, poetry, film, and satellite television shaped culture, ideology, and identities in the modern Middle East. Topics we will consider include contested media representations of modernity, gender, and evolving cultural, religious, national, and transnational identities. Although this seminar focuses upon the Middle East, it aims to locate the region within a larger global context.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, GLC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2021, Fall 2019, Fall 2009
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4670 - Wealth and Power: Political Economy in Ancient Near Eastern States (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARKEO 4670

Early states emerged when select groups gained control over wealth and power and institutionalized that control. How this was accomplished is a question of political economy that we can approach from archaeological, anthropological, and sociological perspectives. The course introduces students to the intellectual development of historical materialism in Smith, Marx, and Weber, among others, and traces their influence on later socioeconomic historians such as Polanyi and Finley. More recent approaches deriving from world-systems, gender studies, post-colonial studies, game theory, and network theory are then applied to case studies that include the emergence of a Mesopotamian state ca. 3400 BC, the Akkadian and Ur III empires, Old Babylonian and Old Assyrian trade, pharaonic Egypt, the international Late Bronze Age world, Aegean palatial civilization, and the Phoenicians. Students are welcome to present and write on other topics also. Monroe will provide context and clarification to assist with the specialist literature, but prior coursework in ancient studies will be advantageous in critically evaluating and writing about all the course readings.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2020, Spring 2019, Fall 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4672 - Nationalism(s) in the Arab World (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ASRC 4672, GOVT 4339, HIST 4667

This seminar examines the emergence of national identities, nationalist movements, and nation-states in the modern Arab world. First, we will examine various approaches to the question of nationalism, using Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* as our basic reference. We will then test the applicability of these general theories to the Arab World through our examination of specific case studies.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, D-AG), (GLC-AS, SCD-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2020, Fall 2016, Spring 2013
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4695 - Crossing the Apocalypse (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 4691, JWST 4695, MEDVL 4691, RELST 4691, CLASS 4691

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4696 - Trance and Media (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 4692, COML 4692, PMA 4692

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4700 - Methods in Medieval (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 4310, JWST 4310, MEDVL 4310, RELST 4310, SPAN 4570

Topic: Writing Through the Forest in Search of Trees. Hello, Humanities Student! Are you a plotter or a pantsner? Not sure? Come and join us to find out, and to gain valuable insight into what kind of a writer you are, and how to manage that writer most effectively and productively. This theme-centered methods seminar, through a communal focus on trees, woods, glens, and copses in the pre-modern world, will hone in on the most indispensable tool in the humanist's belt: writing. From the generation of ideas, to their organization into an outline (or a blueprint, or whatever euphemism we, as a group or as individuals, decide to apply to the initial, tangled pile of yarn) to the first draft. Followed by frank and constructive criticism of the initial draft as a group and in pairs, and then on to the part that all students—really, all humanists?okay, all writers—find to be the greatest struggle: Your paper has some good ideas, but it really needs a rewrite. Now what do you do? As we write, and rewrite, we will also read widely. In addition to primary sources, scholarly articles and essays, we will include criticism, personal essay, theory, excerpts from fiction, and more, in an effort to open students' writing up to a myriad of possibilities for persuasive and compelling written communication.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2015, Spring 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4721 - Peace Building in Conflict Regions: Case Studies Sub-Saharan Africa Israel Palestinian Territories (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with STS 4721, ASRC 4721, GOVT 4723, JWST 4721, GDEV 4721

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2020, Spring 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4757 - The Archaeology of Houses and Households (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 4757, ANTHR 4257, ARKEO 4257

This advanced seminar focuses on the archaeological study of houses, households, families, and communities. How is the study of domestic life transforming our understanding of ancient societies? How can we most effectively use material evidence to investigate the practices, experiences, identities, and social dynamics that made up the everyday lives of real people in antiquity, non-elite as well as elite? To address these questions, we will survey and critically examine historical and current theories, methods, and approaches within the field of household archaeology.

Prerequisites: some previous coursework in archaeology, material culture studies, or related fields.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG, SBA-AG), (HST-AS, SSC-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4795 - Looking for Love: Visual and Literary Cultures of Love in the Medieval Mediterranean, 1100-1400 AD (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 4305, MEDVL 4305

A comparative and interdisciplinary seminar whose focus is the visual world created by the pan-Mediterranean (Iberian Peninsula, Maghreb, France, Italy, Turkey, Egypt, and Persia) culture of Courtly Love beginning during the 11th century ad, and continuing as a principle factor in medieval cultural production for the remainder of the period. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which the visual dimensions of this culture nuance, compliment, contradict, or at times even exist independently of, its oral and written spheres. Reading knowledge of any Romance or Semitic language and/or Persian, in addition to English, is highly advantageous.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2020, Spring 2010

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4913 - Walter Benjamin (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 4413, JWST 4913, COML 4429, GERST 4413

This extraordinary figure died in 1941, and his death is emblematic of the intellectual depredations of Nazism. Yet since World War II, his influence, his reputation, and his fascination for scholars in a wide range of cultural and political disciplines has steadily grown. He is seen as a bridging figure between German and Jewish studies, between materialist critique of culture and the submerged yet powerful voice of theology, between literary history and philosophy. We will review Benjamin's life and some of the key disputes over his heritage; read some of the best-known of his essays; and devote significant time to his enigmatic and enormously rich masterwork, the *Arcades Project*, concluding with consideration of the relevance of Benjamin's insights for cultural and political dilemmas today.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2020, Spring 2018, Spring 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4922 - Archaeological Ethics (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARKEO 4222, ANTHR 4222

What is the role of ethics in archaeology today? What principles shape the discipline's response to serious dilemmas? What is the relationship between ethics and politics in archaeology? This seminar provides an in-depth exploration of these questions across a range of subfields, from indigenous, public, and postcolonial archaeologies, to critical heritage studies, conflict archaeology and the archaeology of the contemporary past. We will learn the normative ethics of Western archaeology, with its concern for best practices, multiculturalism, and the politics of identity, as well as radical alternatives centered on hard politics, oppression, and justice. We will also explore the ethics of the profession, as it pertains to equity and inclusion. This course traverses the terrain of moral right and wrong in archaeology.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG), (GLC-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4991 - Independent Study, Undergraduate Level (1-6 Credits)

For undergraduates who wish to obtain research experience or do extensive reading on a special topic. Students select a topic in consultation with the faculty member who has agreed to supervise the course. For undergraduates who wish to obtain research experience or do extensive reading on a special topic. Students select a topic in consultation with the faculty member who has agreed to supervise the course.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-UG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4992 - Independent Study, Undergraduate Level (1-6 Credits)

For undergraduates who wish to obtain research experience or do extensive reading on a special topic. Students select a topic in consultation with the faculty member who has agreed to supervise the course.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-UG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4998 - Senior Honors Essay (4 Credits)

Each fall, a small number of highly qualified seniors enter the Near Eastern Studies Honors Program. The Honors Program is open to NES majors who have done superior work and who wish to devote a substantial part of their senior year to advanced, specialized, independent research and writing of a thesis. Successfully completing an honors thesis will require sustained interest, exceptional ability, diligence, and enthusiasm. Students must also take two honors courses NES 4998 in fall and NES 4999 in spring, in addition to the regular major requirements. While admission to the Honors Program and completion of a thesis do not guarantee that students will be awarded honors in Near Eastern Studies, most students find the experience as intellectually rewarding as it is rigorous.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-UG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 4999 - Senior Honors Essay (4 Credits)

Each fall, a small number of highly qualified seniors enter the Near Eastern Studies Honors Program. The Honors Program is open to NES majors who have done superior work and who wish to devote a substantial part of their senior year to advanced, specialized, independent research and writing of a thesis. Successfully completing an honors thesis will require sustained interest, exceptional ability, diligence, and enthusiasm. Students must also take two honors courses NES 4998 in fall and NES 4999 in spring, in addition to the regular major requirements. While admission to the Honors Program and completion of a thesis do not guarantee that students will be awarded honors in Near Eastern Studies, most students find the experience as intellectually rewarding as it is rigorous.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-UG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6112 - Medieval Hebrew Poetry (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 6112

Critical readings in medieval Hebrew lyrical and liturgical poetry and imaginative rhymed prose from tenth-century Islamic Spain to Renaissance and Baroque Italy.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2020, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6317 - Ottoman Modernity, 1798-1925 (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 6317

This course is an introduction to the history of modern Ottoman Empire, from 1798-1925. It will cover a survey of the fundamental debates about Ottoman Modernity, focusing on key actors, events, and concepts that define the advent of modernity in the Middle East and North Africa. We will first discuss the importance of being modern in order to survive in the age of Empires. We will then see what modernity promised to the peoples of the Ottoman Empire and what made modernity such a contentious, and (un)desirable event. We will finally address the violent legacies of empires and markets in how they shaped race, religion, and nationalism in the region.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6320 - Tales of the Alhambra and Lalla Rookh: Case Studies in Orientalism (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 6320

An introduction both to the History of Art and to an interdisciplinary approach to research and analysis through close study of these two works. Beginning with a sampling of Said's Orientalism and its critics, we will follow with a group read and analysis of each illustrated work, including text-image consideration and analysis. There will be heavy focus on multi-media primary source material in Kroch library, the Johnson Museum, and my own personal collection; consideration of both works in their 19th-c context, as well as medieval and earlier roots. We will devote half the semester to each, with 'hinge point' marked by a study day at Olana. Final product could include small exhibition, in tandem with individual papers/projects.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6330 - A Mediterranean Society and Its Culture (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 6330, MEDVL 6330, RELST 6330

This course examines the cultural and historical interaction of Muslims and Jews from the emergence of Islam in the seventh century through the classical age of Islam down to the turn of the thirteenth century. The intersection of the two cultures (scriptural, spiritual, intellectual, literary, communal, and interpersonal) and members of their respective religious communities will be studied through readings of primary texts (in translation). The course will conclude with some brief reflections on historical memory and the modern and contemporary significance of the two religious communities' interactions during the classical age of Islam.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6334 - Media and Experience (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with COML 6354

Continental philosophy fuels contemporary media theory. The connection runs so deep, critics have accused media theorists of producing nothing intellectually new. From Edmund Husserl's phenomenological experiments to Heidegger's reflections on technology and time, to Derrida's suspicions of immediacy, a clear philosophical lineage shapes the way media theory thinks about history, subjectivity, and experience. Through engagements with media theory and the inheritance that informs it, we explore the genealogy of thought on media and experience, reflecting on the technological shifts that could not have been anticipated by early 20th century philosophers: social media, and the digital's current saturation of all levels of human communication. We also explore those areas of thought that the Eurocentricism and presumed universality of Western philosophy rendered invisible or unthinkable: the relationship between media and race, media and gender and sexuality, geopolitical and cultural differences.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 6337 - Labor and Employment in the Middle East and North Africa (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ILRGL 6337

This course introduces students to the history, evolution and trajectory of state-labor relations, labor activism, and the politics of unemployment in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). As the region with the highest concentration of non-democratic regimes in the world, the MENA provides a rich context for examining state efforts to control interest representation, and workers' struggles for freedom of association. In addition, the region features diverse political economic systems, making it ideal for examining the interaction between resource endowments and labor market dynamics. Finally, the region is ripe for the study of youth activism and the mobilization of the unemployed given that youth unemployment rates are higher in the MENA than any other world region.

Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: graduate students.**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2021Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 6351 - Problems in Byzantine Art (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ARTH 6351, CLASS 7752, MEDVL 6351, RELST 6351, VISST 6351, ARKEO 6351

Seminar topics rotate each semester. Topic for Spring 2023:

Portraiture. Byzantine artists produced a wide variety of images that modern interpreters have recognized as portraits. These images illuminate individual identity and visual representation in Byzantium. On the one hand, the constituent elements of a portrait (such as physiognomy, gesture, dress, and attributes) illuminate cultural understandings of personhood. On the other hand, those elements are assembled and displayed through means (composition, medium, and context) that illuminate cultural understandings of images and their ability to extend personal energy. We will focus on the primary sources, including preserved monuments (manuscripts, mosaics, sculptures, etc.) and literary witnesses (epigrams, historians' accounts, etc.), supplemented by selections from the secondary literature on identity, individuality, and subject formation in Byzantium. Previous topics include: Ravenna, Hagia Sophia, Byzantine Iconoclasm, Spiral Relief Columns.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2016, Spring 2014Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 6354 - Byzantine Archaeology (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ARTH 6354, CLASS 6754, ARKEO 6354

A seminar on the archaeology of the Byzantine Empire, from the late Roman through to the early modern periods. Topics to be covered include: long-term changes in settlement patterns and urban development; the material traces of state and monastic control over productive landscapes; the idea of the border and the nature of its defense; and the fraught relationship between Byzantine and classical archaeologies.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2019Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 6411 - Jewish Family and Marriage Law (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ANTHR 6411, JWST 6411

Through the centuries, Rabbinic Judaism developed an elaborate set of rules for governing marriage and family life, grounded in the Hebrew Bible and adapted to the realities of life in diaspora. This complex and sophisticated system helps to explain the continuity of Jewish collective identity in the sustained absence of a shared territorial homeland. We will study together part of the Talmudic tractate Yevamot (concerning the Levirate marriage) and relevant passages from the code known as Shulchan Aruch, along with scholarship in English. Some reading knowledge of Rabbinic Hebrew-Aramaic required.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 6426 - Science and the Making of Modern Palestine (3 Credits)**

This course explores how the physical sciences have played a central role in the making of territory, citizenship, and rights in Palestine and for Palestinians for the past hundred years. From chemistry and climatology to archaeology and astronomy, these sciences have not only conditioned how humanity grasps the universe, but they have been key projects, strategies, and blueprints for communities in both historical and contemporary Palestine to claim legitimacy, authority, and power over land and the humans that populate it. It is through these physical sciences that political regimes have turned Israel/Palestine into the explosive terrain that we know today, and by tracking the co-evolution of science and society therein we will reapproach classic debates about equity, repair, and human rights that are central to the question of Palestine.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**NES 6448 - Islamic Mysticism (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with MEDVL 6448, HIST 6448, RELST 6448

Sufism, popularly understood as Islamic mysticism, is a loose name given to a broad and diverse collection of beliefs, practices and groups that range and vary across time and space. Going from a small and largely secretive group of mystical practitioners to a mainstream form of piety in the late medieval period, Sufism has a fascinating history, filled with intrigue, controversy, conflict and interesting characters. In this course, students will delve deep into the history of Sufism and read widely from across the Sufi and anti-Sufi traditions. Concentration will be given to practical questions of how Sufis saw themselves and their relationship to God and the world, how they built mystic community, spurned or embraced family life, interacted with mainstream society, and engaged in controversial erotic practices. Across the course, we will read Sufi histories and biographies, poetry, introductory treatises, as well as anti-Sufi polemics and stories.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6513 - Textual Ethnography (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 7013

This course explores the implications and significance of using textual materials as anthropological evidence. While participant observation remains the cornerstone of ethnography, literary, archival, and other written works are increasingly being utilized as primary sources within the anthropological project. This course will hence offer an overview of anthropological works that trace the intersections between cultural production and the literary imagination. Rather than consider the literary elements of ethnography itself, we will strive to understand the disparate forms of social phenomena—both knowledge and practices—that arise from texts and textual practices specifically. Examples include analyses of literary cultures, media forms and non-traditional textual sources, bureaucratic structures, the use of archives, and more. Particular attention will be paid to works based in the Middle East and the Islamic world. By examining the different theoretical, political, and ethical considerations of using the written word as ethnographic evidence, we will be able to shed light on the anthropological project as a whole.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2022, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6530 - The Caucasus: Captives, Cultures, Conflicts (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 7030

The Caucasus occupies a distinctive place in the historical and cultural imagination, a region long anchored to tropes of disobedience, punishment, and redemption. It is also a place in which liminality, betwixt and between Europe and Asia, endures as both a perceived geographic imaginary and an experienced condition in the detritus of Persian, Ottoman, Russian, and Soviet imperialisms. This course explores the Caucasus through its anthropology, history, and cultural production, with a particular focus on the Russian conquest, Soviet socialism, and the conflicts and capitalist formations of the post-Soviet decades. We will examine the entanglements of the region's history, political economy, and geopolitics in order to get a sense of the array of forces shaping the Caucasus today.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6537 - Shi'ism: Poetics and Politics (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 6537, ANTHR 7637

This course offers a broad survey of contemporary Shi'i beliefs, practices, and politics with a focus on Twelver or Imami Shi'ism. Through a close examination of ethnographies, intellectual and political histories, theological writings, and more we will investigate the themes which define the politics and cultural practices of contemporary Shi'ism. In particular, we will highlight the ways in which Shi'is utilize their theological beliefs to negotiate and respond to the socio-political context of the times in which they live. The course begins by examining the early days of what would later be called Shi'ism. We then examine the key theological concepts which distinguish Shi'ism from Sunnism, including themes of *adalat* (divine justice), *shahadat* (martyrdom), the Karbala paradigm, and the role of the *imamate* and clerical class. The rest of course is devoted to investigating the ways that Shi'ism informs and interacts with the social realm and vice versa, ranging from negotiations of the everyday to responding to moments of great civil and society unrest and to that which is called sectarianism. Travelling from South Asia to the Middle East, from Africa to America, we will ultimately examine how Shi'i beliefs and identity act as a dynamic force for shaping the worlds in which they live today.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2020, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6540 - Moses Maimonides (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with MEDVL 6540

Moses Maimonides who was born in Cordoba (1138), moved to Fez as a youth and died in Cairo (1204) is regarded by Jewish, Islamic, and Christian tradition alike as the most important Jewish religious intellectual of the classical age of Islam/the High Middle Ages. This seminar will examine Maimonides as the product of his time and place including his complex relationship with Arabo-Islamic culture and, because of his stature as a communal figure, rabbinic scholar, court physician and philosopher, his role as a catalyst for cultural developments. For comparative purposes we also consider Maimonides' Andalusian contemporary, Ibn Rushd, the philosopher, Muslim jurist, physician and scholar of Islamic law.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2020, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6547 - Ottoman Africa, African Ottomans (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 6547, ASRC 6547

In this seminar we will explore the Ottoman Empire's presence in the continent, and the continent's influence on the rest of the Ottoman Empire. In addition to the focus on the history of Ottoman North Africa, we will explore the role Istanbul played in the history of the Red Sea Basin (today's Somalia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, and Ethiopia) and vice versa. A special focus will be placed on the role sub-Saharan African slave trade played in Ottoman society, from the ruling elite households of Istanbul to the day-to-day formulation of ideas of difference making across the Turkish and Arabic speaking parts of the Ottoman Empire. Emphasis will be placed on reading new literature on race and slavery in the Ottoman world, borrowing theoretical and analytical formulations around this topic from better-developed historiographies of other parts of the world. This seminar targets a senior and graduate students interested in the history of empire, the Middle East and Africa trans-imperial histories, and south-south relations.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Fall 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6553 - Origins of Monotheism (3 Credits)

The purpose of this course is to trace the development of Monotheism from its origins in Israelite/Canaanite polytheism. We will examine worship of the God, Yahweh and other deities in ancient Israel, and will trace the long and complicated process by which Yahweh became the sole deity to be formally accepted within Judaism. Using biblical evidence as well as inscriptional and archaeological evidence from Israel and elsewhere in the ancient Near East, we will address the question of why the Israelites eventually rejected deities such as Baal, Asherah, El and others, and how imagery associated with these deities informs biblical descriptions of Yahweh. We will explore the ways in which a small group of Jerusalem elites helped shape the monotheistic tradition that has been inherited in the West, and will consider the political, social and theological implications of this transformation.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6557 - Desert Monasticism (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 6557

How and why do landscapes come to inspire the religious imagination? And why do religious practices, rituals, traditions, and beliefs take place in particular landscapes? This seminar treats these questions by focusing on the desert, both imagined and real, as it has shaped religious ascetic practice, especially the development of Christian monasticism in the Middle East. We will read widely from monastic literatures, mostly from late ancient Egypt, to explore both the historical development of monasticism in Christianity and examine why the monastic impulse seems so closely tied to the desert. In addition to reading saints lives and the stories of hermits, we will read early monastic rules, the desert fathers, and we will draw from archaeological sources to examine the varieties of ascetic practices in the deserts of late ancient Egypt, Gaza, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria. Throughout the course we will explore ancient and modern ideas about wilderness and we will explore parallels between ancient Near Eastern literatures and their nineteenth- and twentieth-century parallels in the American frontier and environmental literatures.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2019, Fall 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6560 - Theory and Method in Near Eastern Studies (3 Credits)

Seminar offering advanced Near Eastern Studies students the opportunity to read and discuss the range of theories and methods that have been employed by scholars in the interdisciplinary area of Near Eastern Studies. After giving attention to the historical development of area studies programs—and their current status and relevance—students read a wide range of highly influential works in Near Eastern Studies. Literary theory, historiography, post-colonialism, queer and gender theory, and comparative religions are a few of the approaches, methods, and theories explored. Authors include Aziz al-Azmeh, Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, James George Frazer, J.Z. Smith, Talal Asad, Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6588 - Archaeology and the Bible (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 6588

The purpose of the course is to place the Bible within the context of a larger ancient world that can be explored by systematic excavation of physical remains. Students will become familiar with archaeological excavations and finds from ancient Syria-Palestine from 10,000 bce to 586 bce. We will explore this archaeological evidence on its own terms, taking into consideration factors such as archaeological method and the interpretive frameworks in which the excavators themselves work, as well as the implications of this body of evidence for understanding the complexity and diversity of biblical Israel.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6605 - Contesting Identities in Modern Egypt (3 Credits)

This seminar examines the dynamics of modern collective identities which dominated the Egyptian public sphere in the long twentieth century. We will explore the underpinnings and formation of territorial Egyptian nationalism, pan-Arabism and Islamism through close readings and class discussions of important theoretical, historiographical and primary texts.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Fall 2020, Fall 2018, Fall 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6612 - Histories of Afghanistan (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 6612

This course will investigate the social and political histories of Afghanistan from the late 19th century through the present day. Drawing from religious treatises, intellectual histories, ethnographies, literature, and film we will examine historical events and cultural developments from a diverse set of theoretical approaches. Topics will include colonialism and its legacies, the experiences of minoritized groups, alternative forms of nationalism, Afghan religious discourses, the role of Marxism and Islamic socialism, gender and politics, the war on terror, and more. Ultimately, it is the objective of the course to explore the diverse cultural, political, and material worlds that have shaped collective life in Afghanistan in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6628 - Gnosticism and Early Christianity (3 Credits)

What is Gnosticism and why has it come to be so hotly debated among scholars and in our contemporary media? What is the Gospel of Judas and are its ideas heretical? Who wrote the Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of Mary and why were these Gospels not included in the New Testament canon? To what extent did Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* draw from ancient Christian gnostic sources? This seminar will explore answers to these questions and many others by focusing on the complex array of literary sources from late antiquity—primarily from a cache of manuscripts found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945—that have long been associated with a so-called Christian Gnosticism. Church Fathers condemned the movement on a variety of grounds, but in this course we will not simply read the condemnations written by the opponents of gnostic thought; rather, we will focus our attention on reading (in English translation) substantial portions of the gnostic texts written by the adherents themselves. We will give special attention to the ways in which conflicts about Gnosticism connected with conflicts about gender, heresy, power, and authority. To set these texts within a socio-historical context, we will discuss the possible Jewish and hellenistic roots of early Christian Gnosticism and ties to Stoic and other ancient philosophical movements.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6642 - Topics in Ancient History (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 7682, HIST 6300

Topics for this course vary.

Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: graduate students.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2019, Fall 2016, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6644 - Globalism and Collapse in the Late Bronze Age World (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 6644, ARKEO 6644, CLASS 7744

Several major and minor kingdoms situated around the Eastern Mediterranean basin flourished during the 14th -12th centuries BCE before a widespread violent collapse occurred around 1175. Thousands of cuneiform and other documents speak to two major socioeconomic processes of the age: the creation of the first international system in world history, and the collapse of that system after about two hundred years. Our seminar uses archaeological evidence, paleoclimate studies, and textual analysis (in translation) to address several related issues.

We look at how networks of information, wealth accumulation, and political power were created and what role they played in globalization and destabilization. We consider whether the key players were aware of the coming collapse, what if any counter-measures were deployed, and how some polities were more resilient than others and created even greater networks post-collapse. We analyze a variety of related sources, with close attention paid to the Amarna Letters and other Egyptian texts from the Ramesside era. Several Bronze Age and Iron Age shipwrecks are examined for their evidence of maritime connectivity. And throughout the course students will become familiar with the history, economy, cult, laws and daily life of Ugarit (Tell Ras Shamra, Syria), a cosmopolitan coastal kingdom whose unparalleled archaeological and textual record affords a particularly close view of the transformative moments of the Late Bronze Age.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2018, Spring 2009

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6655 - Minorities of the Middle East (3 Credits)

This examines the historic diversity of the modern Middle East, exploring histories of inter-communal contact and conflict. We begin by investigating the legacy of the Ottoman Empire and the impact of its dissolution. We will focus our attention on commercial centers that fostered inter-communal relations, as well as investigating sites of strife and cases of minority repression. We will read histories, memoirs, and fiction, and view films that help us better understand inter-communal relations, tensions, and conflict. We will also interrogate the terms for exploring a range of distinctions among majority and minority populations including: religious difference (Muslims, Christians, and Jews); divisions of religious rite (Sunni and Shī'a); ethno-linguistic minorities (Armenians and Kurds); national identities (Israelis and Palestinians); cultures of origin (Mizrahi, Sephardi, and Ashkenazi Jews). We will explore how these divisions inform urgent current conflicts: the civil war in Syria and the refugee crisis; the civil war in Iraq and the campaign by ISIS against minorities; as well as tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2019, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6659 - The Idea of Biblical Israel (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 6659, RELST 6659, ANTHR 7659, ARKEO 7659

This course examines the fixity of Bible's representations of Israel as it relates to the fluidity of Israel's social, political, and religious experience as revealed in archaeology and texts from outside the Bible. We will use the tools of biblical criticism (philological, archaeological, literary historical) and methods drawn from such disciplines as History, Political Science, Anthropology, and Literary Criticism, to examine four biblical narrative traditions: The Joseph story; the exodus from Egypt; the Israelite conquest of Canaan; and the Song of Deborah, a text widely regarded as the oldest in the Hebrew Bible. Each of these played an essential role in the process of fabricating biblical Israel. As works of biblical historiography, each functioned to create a shared sense of a Jewish past in light of the urgencies of the present. Each is also witness to a creative process that unfolded when the past was still malleable, the terms not yet rigid. We will focus on the modes and materials of textual production and on how modern historians engage biblical narrative in fabricating their own narrative histories of ancient Israel. We will also consider how ancient and modern historical writing on ancient Israel has been put into the service of contemporary political discourse on boundaries and borders in Israel-Palestine.

Enrollment Information: Not open to: undergraduates.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6663 - Utopia Lost? Failure and its Aftermaths (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 6663, ANTHR 7493, COML 6261

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6666 - Mass Media and Identities in the Modern Middle East (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 6666

This reading seminar will explore the expansion and influence of mass media in the Middle East from the late nineteenth to the turn of the twenty-first century. We will examine how the intersection of popular music, theater, poetry, film, and satellite television shaped culture, ideology, and identities in the modern Middle East. Topics we will consider include contested media representations of modernity, gender, and evolving cultural, religious, national, and transnational identities. Although this seminar focuses upon the Middle East, it aims to locate the region within a larger global context.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2021, Fall 2019
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6670 - Wealth and Power: Political Economy in Ancient Near Eastern States (3 Credits)

Early states emerged when select groups gained control over wealth and power and institutionalized that control. How this was accomplished is a question of political economy that we can approach from archaeological, anthropological, and sociological perspectives. The course introduces students to the intellectual development of historical materialism in Smith, Marx, and Weber, among others, and traces their influence on later socioeconomic historians such as Polanyi and Finley. More recent approaches deriving from world-systems, gender studies, post-colonial studies, game theory, and network theory are then applied to case studies that include the emergence of a Mesopotamian state ca. 3400 BC, the Akkadian and Ur III empires, Old Babylonian and Old Assyrian trade, pharaonic Egypt, the international Late Bronze Age world, Aegean palatial civilization, and the Phoenicians. Students are welcome to present and write on other topics also. Monroe will provide context and clarification to assist with the specialist literature, but prior coursework in ancient studies will be advantageous in critically evaluating and writing about all the course readings.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2020, Spring 2019, Fall 2016
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6672 - Nationalism(s) in the Arab World (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 6667

This seminar examines the emergence of national identities, nationalist movements, and nation-states in the modern Arab world. First, we will examine various approaches to the question of nationalism, using Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* as our basic reference. We will then test the applicability of these general theories to the Arab World through our examination of specific case studies.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2020, Fall 2016
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6695 - Crossing the Apocalypse (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 6691, JWST 6695, MEDVL 6691, RELST 6691, CLASS 6691

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6696 - Trance and Media (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 6692, COML 6692, PMA 6692

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6700 - Methods in Medieval (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 6310, JWST 6310, MEDVL 6310, RELST 6310, SPAN 6590

Topic: Writing Through the Forest in Search of Trees. Hello, Humanities Student! Are you a plotter or a pantser? Not sure? Come and join us to find out, and to gain valuable insight into what kind of a writer you are, and how to manage that writer most effectively and productively. This theme-centered methods seminar, through a communal focus on trees, woods, glens, and copses in the pre-modern world, will hone in on the most indispensable tool in the humanist's belt: writing. From the generation of ideas, to their organization into an outline (or a blueprint, or whatever euphemism we, as a group or as individuals, decide to apply to the initial, tangled pile of yarn) to the first draft. Followed by frank and constructive criticism of the initial draft as a group and in pairs, and then on to the part that all students-really, all humanists?okay, all writers-find to be the greatest struggle: Your paper has some good ideas, but it really needs a rewrite. Now what do you do? As we write, and rewrite, we will also read widely. In addition to primary sources, scholarly articles and essays, we will include criticism, personal essay, theory, excerpts from fiction, and more, in an effort to open students' writing up to a myriad of possibilities for persuasive and compelling written communication.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2015
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6720 - Women and Gender in Biblical Israel (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 6720, RELST 6720, FGSS 6721

This course focuses on how Biblical texts represent women in ancient Israel, and how the Bible's representations constitute both a fabrication and a manifestation of social life on the ground. We will use biblical, archaeological, and ancient Near Eastern textual evidence to consider the complicated relationship between ancient society and the textual and material records from which we reconstruct it. In addition, this course will examine how women's roles in the Hebrew Bible have been understood and integrated in later Jewish and Christian thought, and how these discourses shape contemporary American attitudes towards women, sexuality, and gender.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2022, Fall 2015
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6722 - Graduate Colloquium (1 Credit)

A series of lectures on a range of themes in the discipline sponsored by the Department of Near Eastern Studies. Presentations include lectures by invited speakers and works in progress presented by faculty and graduate students.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6724 - Death and the Afterlife in Islam (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with RELST 6724, MEDVL 6724

What happens after death? If there is an Afterlife, how is it connected to earthly life? What would the Afterlife actually look like? What role does God or Satan play in the Afterlife? Since the earliest Qur'anic Revelations, Muslims have questioned, imagined and written about the Afterlife. In this course, we will read widely from across the Islamic religious and literary traditions, reading primary texts in translation. We will begin with a survey of the imagination of the Afterlife in scriptural, religious and literary texts, before examining the role and importance of the Afterlife in Islamic legal thinking and morality. Thereafter, we will focus on theological and ethical problems that arise from the imagination of the Afterlife, focusing in particular on the gendered experience of the Afterlife, as well as the question of whether the individual has free will and moral agency or whether eschatological fate is predetermined.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6759 - Romanesque and Early Gothic Art and Architecture: Europe and the Mediterranean, 1000-1150 A.D. (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 6300, MEDVL 6300

This course will address both Romanesque and the earliest manifestations of Gothic art and architecture as Western Mediterranean phenomena, rather than northern European ones. We will adopt a comparative approach which includes Islamic and, to a lesser extent, Byzantine cultures and material. In addition to the more usual art historical skills, such as visual and stylistic analysis and compare-and-contrast, we will use selected primary sources and historical analysis to attempt to understand the objects and monuments we address.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6777 - Modern Sephardi and Mizrahi Identities (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 6777

This class examines modern articulations of identity by and about two distinct Jewish diasporas: Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews. Sephardic Jews trace their origins to the Iberian Peninsula prior to the end of the 15th century. Mizrahim are Jews who lived in the Middle East and North Africa until the mid-20th century, and their descendants. We will explore Sephardic and Mizrahi identities in works of fiction, memoirs, essays, poetry and films produced from the mid-twentieth century to the present. We will trace routes of migration across generations, paying particular attention to how texts construct identity in relation to language and place. Works will be drawn from wide geographic distribution including the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and the Americas, and produced in Arabic, English, French, Hebrew, Ladino, and Spanish.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6787 - The Qur'an (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with MEDVL 6787, RELST 6787

The Qur'an is a cornucopia of stories, laws, apocalyptic visions, Paradisical landscapes and stark warnings. This course presents students with the opportunity not only to read the Qur'an in translation in its entirety, but also to explore different ways in which the Qur'anic text has been and can be interpreted, and the different religious, social and ethical questions that derive from different methods of interpretation. Across the course, students will be asked to explore questions, such as: how does dating the Qur'an impact interpretation? How does the debate concerning Qur'anic (un)createdness impact its interpretation? Is it possible to use extra-Qur'anic material to interpret the Qur'an? How can the Qur'an be read as a literary text? Or as a source of law? Or as a source for history? What is the Qur'an's own view of the past, present and future? How do feminist and queer Muslims read and interpret the Qur'an? This course is secular and academic in nature. We will study a wide range of religious and secular/academic approaches to interpreting the Qur'an, some of which may challenge widely-held assumptions about the Qur'an's authorship, dating, composition and interpretation.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6800 - Practicum in Near Eastern Studies (3 Credits)

This course provides students with an opportunity to gain expertise as practitioners within the field. The course will meet once a week and will focus on a different topic each week. Topics are to be determined. All Near Eastern Studies graduate students are strongly encouraged to participate.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6880 - Islam and the Ethnographic Imagination (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ASIAN 6686, ANTHR 6680

How does one study Islam from an anthropological perspective? Through close readings of recent ethnographies, canonical texts, theoretical works, and critiques of the genre, we will understand the major debates and intellectual trends that have defined the anthropology of Islam from its earliest inception through the present day. Geographic areas covered include South Asia, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, America, North Africa, and West Africa.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6888 - Jews, Christians, and Others in Late Antiquity (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 6888, RELST 6888, MEDVL 6888

This course explores the interactions between Jews, Christians, and other religious groups in late antiquity, especially in Sasanian Persia circa the first through seventh century C.E. Students pay particular attention to the portrayals of Christians in Jewish rabbinic literature, including Midrash and Talmud, but also draw from early Christian, Zoroastrian, Manichaean, and other sources. There will be an emphasis on the reading of primary texts in translation in their appropriate historical contexts, and in comparison with one another. Students engage such questions as: How did Jews define themselves in relation to Christians, and vice versa? In what ways did Jews and Christians part ways with one another, as scholars often maintain, and what were the factors at play in their separation? And, lastly, what role did other religious and political groups, such as Gnostics, Zoroastrians, Romans, Mandaeans, Manichaeans, and early Muslims play in these developments?

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Fall 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6922 - Archaeological Ethics (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 7222, ARKEO 7222

What is the role of ethics in archaeology today? What principles shape the discipline's response to serious dilemmas? What is the relationship between ethics and politics in archaeology? This seminar provides an in-depth exploration of these questions across a range of subfields, from indigenous, public, and postcolonial archaeologies, to critical heritage studies, conflict archaeology and the archaeology of the contemporary past. We will learn the normative ethics of Western archaeology, with its concern for best practices, multiculturalism, and the politics of identity, as well as radical alternatives centered on hard politics, oppression, and justice. We will also explore the ethics of the profession, as it pertains to equity and inclusion. This course traverses the terrain of moral right and wrong in archaeology.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6991 - Independent Study: Graduate Level (1-4 Credits)

For graduate students who wish to do intensive reading on a focused topic. Students select a topic in consultation with the faculty member that has agreed to supervise the course.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 6992 - Independent Study: Graduate Level (1-4 Credits)

For graduate students who wish to do intensive reading on a focused topic. Students select a topic in consultation with the faculty member that has agreed to supervise the course.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 7404 - Hasidism: History, Community, Thought (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 7407, RELST 7404, JWST 7404

The modern Jewish religious movement known as Hasidism began in Eastern Europe in the eighteenth century and thrives today. We will approach Hasidism primarily through three avenues: recent critical social history; selections from Hasidic literature; and ethnographic accounts of Hasidic life today. By the end of the semester, students will be able to articulate some ways that Hasidism reflects both broader trends in European religious and moral thought of its time, and some ways that it represents distinctively Jewish developments. You will also gain a deeper appreciation of the various kinds of evidence and disciplinary approaches that need to be brought to bear on the attempt to articulate as broad, deep and varied a phenomenon as modern Hasidic Judaism.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 7520 - Jewish Cities (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with JWST 7520, ANTHR 7620, HIST 6520

From Jerusalem to Rome, from Shanghai to Marrakesh, Jews and cities have been shaping each other for thousands of years. This course ranges through time and space to examine how Jewish and other minority experiences offer a window onto questions of modernity and post-colonialism in intersections of the built environment with migration, urban space, and memory. Readings and film/video encompass historical, ethnographic, visual, architectural and literary materials to offer a broad look at materials on ghettos, empires, cosmopolitanism, tolerance, immigrant enclaves, race and ethnicity.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 7654 - Themes in Mediterranean Archaeology (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 7754, ARTH 6754, ARKEO 7254, ANTHR 7254, MEDVL 6754

This seminar provides a higher-level general introduction to, and survey of, contemporary theories, methods, and approaches in the archaeology of the Mediterranean world. Rather than focusing on a specific geographical sub-region or chronological period, this course examines and critically assesses the practice and distinctive character of Mediterranean archaeology more broadly.

Prerequisites: some previous background in archaeology, material culture studies, ancient history, or related fields.

Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: graduate students.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 7701 - The Aegean and East Mediterranean Bronze Age c. 3000-1000 BCE (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 7770, ARKEO 7271

An exploration of the archaeology and art of the Aegean region and of its neighbors during the Bronze Age, ca. 3000-1000 BCE: the origins and precursors of the Classical World. The course will investigate the emergence of the first complex societies in the Aegean region in the third millennium BCE, and then the development and story of the Minoan and Mycenaean worlds and their neighbors in the second millennium BCE. Topics will include: the Early Bronze Age and the first complex societies in the Aegean (Cyclades, Crete, Greece, Anatolia); the collapse and reorientation around 2200BCE and links with climate change; the first palace civilization of (Minoan) Crete; the Santorini (Thera) volcanic eruption and its historical impact in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean; the rise of the Mycenaean Greek palaces and the shift into proto-history; the development of an international east Mediterranean trade system; Ahhiyawa and the Hittites; the 'Trojan War'; and the collapse of the Late Bronze Age societies and links with climate change.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 7757 - The Archaeology of Houses and Households (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 7757, ANTHR 7257, ARKEO 7257

This advanced seminar focuses on the archaeological study of houses, households, families, and communities. How is the study of domestic life transforming our understanding of ancient societies? How can we most effectively use material evidence to investigate the practices, experiences, identities, and social dynamics that made up the everyday lives of real people in antiquity, non-elite as well as elite? To address these questions, we will survey and critically examine historical and current theories, methods, and approaches within the field of household archaeology. This course is intended for graduate students and advanced undergraduates with some previous background in archaeology, material culture studies, or related fields.

Prerequisites: some previous coursework in archaeology, material culture studies, or related fields.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 7758 - Archaeology of Greek Religion: Theory, Methods, and Practice (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 7758, ANTHR 7758, ARKEO 7758, RELST 7758

What is religion, and how can we use material culture to investigate ancient beliefs and rituals? This course (1) explores major themes and problems in the archaeology of ancient Greek religion, and (2) compares and critiques selected theoretical and methodological approaches to the archaeology of cult more generally. Students will consider and analyze ritual artifacts, cult sites, and other aspects of religious material culture, as well as primary textual sources (in translation).

Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: graduate students.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2020, Fall 2013, Spring 2012

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

NES 7913 - Walter Benjamin (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ANTHR 7413, JWST 7913, GERST 6413

This extraordinary figure died in 1941, and his death is emblematic of the intellectual depredations of Nazism. Yet since World War II, his influence, his reputation, and his fascination for scholars in a wide range of cultural and political disciplines has steadily grown. He is seen as a bridging figure between German and Jewish studies, between materialist critique of culture and the submerged yet powerful voice of theology, between literary history and philosophy. We will review Benjamin's life and some of the key disputes over his heritage; read some of the best-known of his essays; and devote significant time to his enigmatic and enormously rich masterwork, the *Arcades Project*, concluding with consideration of the relevance of Benjamin's insights for cultural and political dilemmas today.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2020, Spring 2018, Spring 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)