

The History of the Ancient Near East

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Course Description

This course surveys the history of the Near East from the dawn of civilization around 3000 BCE to the fall of the Sassanid empire to the Arabs in 650 CE. In the interest of avoiding confusion, it is organized into a roughly chronological sequence of cultural area studies, so that the Bronze Age civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt, for example, are treated separately and in the first half of the course, while the Iron Age civilizations of the Assyrians and Persians will be examined in the second. The course adopts a broad focus, treating politics as simply another area of culture and including religion, social structure, and everyday life as a part of its content.

Classroom Requirements

1. Students are required to attend **ALL** meetings of the class and to do **ALL** of the assigned readings. Excessive absences will lower your course grade. Read “Attendance Policy” below for further information.
2. **NO TEXTING DURING CLASS !!!**
3. **NO LAPTOPS !!!**
4. No reading newspapers, magazines, or books during lectures.
5. Save your conversations for after class,
6. Honesty is fundamental to learning. Cheating on any test will be punished with an automatic grade of “F” for the entire course.
7. Any efforts to disrupt the class will be reported both to the Dean of Students and to the UNI Campus Police.

Attendance Policy

Under “Class Attendance”, the 2012-2014 UNI catalog states:

“Students are expected to attend class, and the responsibility for attending class rests with the student.

“Students are expected to learn and observe the attendance rules established by each instructor for each course.”

My attendance rules for this class are as follows:

Personal Absences:

- After the add deadline, you are allowed **FOUR** personal, or unexcused, absences. You may use them for anything you like, but they are intended for doctor’s appointments, outpatient illnesses, and family emergencies such as funerals.
- Beginning with your seventh absence, each successive absence will reduce your **end-of-the-semester** average by **SEVEN** points.
- If you skip class on the last class day before Spring Break, you will be penalized **TWO** absences.

Excused Absences:

- Under the terms of the UNI Catalog, absences due to official activities of University athletic and academic organizations may not be counted against a student. This rule does **NOT** apply to social and religious groups affiliated with the University. If you are on a University athletic team or participate in a University academic organization and must be absent, bring me a formal letter stating the reason for your absence, signed by the University official in charge of the activity.
- I will also excuse absences due to the following non-University causes:
 - actual, physical, hospitalization (i.e., inpatient overnight admission)
 - call-up for military duty, including National Guard drill
 - court duty, including
 - jury duty
 - appearance as a witness
 - appearance as a plaintiff
 - appearance as a defendant
 - As with excused University activities, you must give me documentary proof of the reason for your absence.
- No other absences, including those for personal or family emergencies, will count as excused absences, so you should save up your absences in case of such emergencies.
- I will post your **TOTAL** number of absences along with the scores on each test. Consult the posting to see what the tally of your absences is.

Tests and Make-Up Tests

Tests and Study Guides:

- There will be three tests. Consult the Weekly Assignment Schedule for the test dates. Each test will consist of twenty-five multiple-choice questions, drawn from the lectures and the textbook. Each question will be worth two points. There will also be an essay question on each test, which will be worth fifty points.
- Each test will receive a numerical score; at the end of the course I will average those scores together to determine your course average, from which I will deduct any penalty for excess absences. The grading scale I use can be found separately on this website.
- Study guides for each test can be found on this website. There will be no questions on any test that are not derived from material included on the study guides.
- I do not give pop quizzes.

Make-Up Tests:

- If you must miss a test for an excused absence, you may take it afterwards at your earliest convenience.
- If for any other reason you do not take a test on the day indicated on the Weekly Schedule, you may take a make-up. I will give all make-up tests at the end of the semester, on the day and at the time scheduled for the Final Examination Period. No non-excused make-up tests will be given at any other time.

Incompletes:

- I do not grant incompletes except in cases of call-up for active military duty or when a student is admitted to a hospital, or disabled, as a result of injury or illness, and consequently is unable to finish the course. In both cases, I must require documentary proof before granting the incomplete.

Extra-Credit Work:

- I do not give extra-credit work.

Textbook

Dunstan, William E., *The Ancient Near East* (Wadsworth/Cengage: 1998).

Weekly Schedule

Spring 2013

(All dates except that of the Final Examination Period are subject to change.)

Week of:	SUBJECTS	READING ASSIGNMENTS
January 15	The Syllabus The Neolithic Revolution	Dunstan: chapters 1 & 2
January 22	Early Bronze Age Mesopotamia: 3000-1500 BCE	Dunstan: chapters 3 & 5
January 29	Mesopotamian Culture and Religion	Dunstan: chapter 4
February 5	Predynastic and Old Kingdom Egypt	Dunstan: chapter 6
February 12	Middle and New Kingdom Egypt	Dunstan: chapter 7
February 19	FIRST TEST (The Neolithic Revolution, Mesopotamia, and Egypt)	
February 21	The Hittites Philistines and Phoenicians	Dunstan: chapters 8 and 9
February 26	The Hebrews: Sources and Early Legends to the Exodus	Dunstan: chapter 10
March 5	Hebrew Monotheism	Dunstan: chapter 10 (cont.)
March 12	The Israelites in the Promised Land: Judges, Kings, Priests, and The Law	Dunstan: chapter 11
March 16-24	SPRING BREAK	
March 26	The Age of Assyria	Dunstan: chapter 12
April 2	SECOND TEST (From The Hittites to the Assyrians)	
April 4	The Origins and Rise of the Persians	Dunstan: chapter 13, pp. 267-274
April 9	Persian Culture and Religion	Dunstan: chapter 14
April 16	Persia and the Greeks	Dunstan: chapter 13, pp. 274-282
April 23	The Parthians (ca. 275 BCE- 228 CE)	Dunstan, chapter 11 pp. 228-238
April 30	The Sassanids (228-650 CE)	
May 2	THIRD TEST (Persia, etc.)	
Thursday, May 9 10 am	FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD	