

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.