

Ancient Near Eastern Society and Religion (A005364)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2025-2026

A (semester 1) Dutch Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

Goddeeris, Anne LW21 lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Arts and Humanities (main subject Archaeology)	5	A
Master of Arts in Archaeology	5	A
Micro-credential The Ancient Near East Unriddled	5	A
Exchange Programme Cultures and Languages in Context	5	A
Exchange Programme History	5	A
Elective Set Culture and Society	5	A
Elective Set Religion Studies	5	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

society, economy, religion, mythology, Ancient Near East

Position of the course

This advanced course offers the students insight in the structures of Mesopotamian society on a social, institutional and economic level, as well as in the nature and evolution of the Mesopotamian religion and its expression in the mythological texts.

Exchange students may take up this course unit, for which no prior knowledge of Dutch is required, as exchange students will be set an alternative exam.

Contents

The lectures provide students with an insight in the social and religious structures of Mesopotamia through thematic classes (money and market, private and institutional, bureaucracy and law, social classes and gender, science and philosophy, cosmogonic and anthropogonic mythological traditions, temple and sacrifice, rituals, magic and medicine) in which case studies are explored in depth on the basis of visual material and excerpts of historical, literary and administrative sources.

Within the framework of a project (the topic of which changes annually, e.g. "the role and function of women in the society and religion of Mesopotamia"), the student will be taught in seminars how to consult and critically process secondary sources and primary sources (in translation) in order to be able to write a paper and give a presentation on a chosen subject within the topic of the project.

Initial competences

To have passive knowledge of English, French and German (to be able to consult specialist literature).

Final competences

- 1 To be able to show an overall insight in the structures of Mesopotamian society on a social, institutional and economical, as well as in the nature and evolution of the Mesopotamian religion and its expression in the mythological texts.
- 2 To have insight in various aspects of the Mesopotamian social and religious structures

discussed in the thematic classes and case-studies.

- 3 To be able to interpret the archaeological and epigraphic sources discussed in class and to be able to evaluate their significance for Mesopotamian society and religion.
- 4 To be able to consult and critically process secondary sources and primary sources (in translation).
- 5 To be able to write a paper on a subject chosen within the framework of the topic of the project.
- 6 To be able to give a presentation on a subject chosen within the framework of the topic of the project.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture, Independent work, Peer teaching

Extra information on the teaching methods

- Lecture 20h: theoretical underpinning and elaboration of case studies in thematic classes
- Seminar 5h: supervising the writing and presenting of a paper.
- Self-reliant study activities 10h: the student writes a paper and prepares an oral presentation.
- Microteaching 5h: the students give an oral presentation of their paper by means of a powerpoint presentation in class, after which their paper is open for discussion in the group.

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: syllabi case-studies
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : Dutch
Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Slides

Name: slides
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : Dutch
Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Reader

Name: readings about case studies
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : English
Available on Ufora : Yes

References

Course content-related study coaching

The lectures are interactive: the content of the thematic classes and case-studies are discussed in an interactive and demand-driven way during the lectures.

Within the framework of the seminars, the students are taught to consult and critically process secondary sources and primary sources (in translation) in order to write a paper and give a presentation on a subject chosen within the framework of the theme of the project. These seminars are highly interactive by using the flipped classroom method. The course is concluded by microteaching sessions in which the students present orally their papers and take part in a final group discussion.

After the examinations there is individual feedback regarding the written examination and the paper.

Because of Covid 19, forms of education and evaluation may be subject to deviations. Such deviations will be communicated via Ufora.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

periodic evaluation: written examination with open questions.

permanent evaluation: written paper and oral presentation paper.

Because of Covid 19, forms of education and evaluation may be subject to deviations. Such deviations will be communicated via Ufora.

Calculation of the examination mark

written examination with open questions: 60%

written paper and oral presentation paper: 40%

In order to pass this course, the student has to pass both the written examination and the paper.

Students who do not take part in the assessment of one or more parts of the course evaluation or obtain a mark of less than 10/20 for one of its parts cannot pass the course evaluation.

Should the average mark nevertheless be higher than 10/20, the final mark will be reduced to the highest non-pass mark (= 9).

Facilities for Working Students

Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance in lectures.

Possible rescheduling of the written examination to a different time in the same academic year.

Participation in microteaching is compulsory.

Feedback can be given by email or during an appointment.