

Near Eastern Civilizations

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

The Near Eastern Civilizations major explores the civilizations of the Near and Middle East through critical analysis of its cultural, literary, artistic, historic, and archaeological evidence. This major offers an interdisciplinary approach across various academic disciplines to provide both a theoretical and a research-based study of societies from prehistoric to modern times. The major offers one of two emphases:

- **Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations**
- **Islamic Civilization**

The Ancient Near East (Middle East) is considered to be the cradle of civilization, where cities and empires first emerged, agriculture developed, the invention of the wheel made, the first writing systems formed, foundations established in astronomy and mathematics, and discoveries made of ancient literary masterpieces considered to be the roots of Western Civilization. Students will explore the principal civilizations of the Near East studying the human experience as it unfolds in documents, monuments, and architectural marvels and to further investigate these ancient artifacts in modern times through the use of cutting edge technology. The major prepares students in the fields of archaeology, digital humanities, teaching and research, museum studies, and for further study in graduate programs.

The Islamic Civilization major provides a broad knowledge of the histories, literature, philosophy, religious thought, and legal institutions of Muslim societies. Expanding from the Middle East, the Islamic civilization has had a profound historical impact on practically every part of the world and continues to be an important area of academic inquiry on account of its political, economic, and cultural effects on the international arena. This major emphasizes an interdisciplinary course study allowing for a historical, cultural, and literary analysis from medieval to modern times. The major prepares students in the fields of comparative and international studies, foreign service, law, teaching and research, and for further study in graduate programs.

For specific information regarding degree requirements for each emphasis, please see the Major Requirements tab on this page.

Declaring the Major

Students are recommended to declare the major early in their academic career. Near Eastern Studies 10 is a required lower division course but may be taken after declaring the major. Students should consult with the undergraduate student adviser regarding major requirements, transfer credits, study abroad plans, and the opportunity to combine two disciplines through a double major study.

Honors Program

Students in any of the Near Eastern Studies majors, with an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.3 or higher and a GPA of 3.51 or higher in courses completed in the major, may apply for admission to the honors program in their senior year. Students must maintain the required GPA in the major in order to remain eligible for the honors program.

In addition to the GPA requirement, students must submit an honors thesis of at least 20 double-spaced, typewritten pages in their senior

year. Students are required to enroll in an Independent Study course (NES 199) in the fall semester and the honors course (NE STUD H195 (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/search/?P=NE%20STUD%20H195>)) in the spring semester of their senior year in order to receive credit for the thesis. The honors thesis must be read and evaluated by a two-member committee consisting of a department faculty thesis supervisor and another member of the faculty. The thesis must be deemed to be of at least B+ quality in order to qualify the candidate for graduation with a degree of honors. Students may also receive distinctions of "high honors" or "highest honors" for outstanding thesis papers.

Minor Program

The Near Eastern Studies Department also offers programs leading to a minor in modern Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, or Ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern Civilizations.

Other Majors and Minors Offered by the Department of Near Eastern Studies

Ancient Egyptian Near Eastern Art and Archaeology (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/degree-programs/ancient-egyptian-near-eastern-art-archaeology/>) (Major)

Ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern Civilizations (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/degree-programs/near-eastern-civilizations/>) (Major)

Near Eastern Languages and Literatures (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/degree-programs/near-eastern-languages-literatures/>) (Major)

Ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern Civilizations (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/degree-programs/ancient-egyptian-near-eastern-civilizations/>) (Minor)

Arabic (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/degree-programs/arabic/>) (Minor)

Hebrew (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/degree-programs/hebrew/>) (Minor)

Persian (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/degree-programs/persian/>) (Minor)

Turkish (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/degree-programs/turkish/>) (Minor)

The Near Eastern Civilizations major requires students to emphasize in one of two tracks. In addition to the University, campus, and college requirements, listed on the College Requirements tab, students must satisfy the below requirements. NE STUD 10 is a required course for the major and must be taken for a letter grade.

General Guidelines

1. All courses taken to satisfy major requirements must be taken for a letter grade and be at least 3 units.
2. Students pursuing a double major may overlap two courses to meet both major requirements. Students can also overlap one course to satisfy a major and minor requirement.
3. A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 is required to declare the major and must be maintained in both upper and lower division courses used to satisfy major requirements.
4. With the prior consent of the faculty major advisor, students may take courses across various disciplines to satisfy major requirements.

Emphasis I: Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations

Lower Division Requirements

NE STUD 10 Course Not Available [4]

One of the following lower division courses is required:

NE STUD 15 Introduction to Near Eastern Art and Archaeology [4]

NE STUD 18 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 25 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 34 Course Not Available [3]

Upper Division Requirements

Select eight courses from the following. Select four of the following. 24-30
Students may also select relevant courses from other departments.

All courses for the major must be approved by the faculty major adviser.

NE STUD 101 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 102B Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 103 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 104 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 105A Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 108 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 109 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 110 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 112 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 113 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 114 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 115 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 116 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD C119 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD C12 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD C120B Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 123 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 124 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 126 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 129 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 135 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 156 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 160 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 162A Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 162E Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD C188 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 190A Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 190B Course Not Available

NE STUD 190C Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 192A Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 192E Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 192O Course Not Available [4]

CUNEIF 100A Elementary Akkadian [4]

CUNEIF 100B Elementary Akkadian [4]

CUNEIF 101A Selected Readings in Akkadian [4]

CUNEIF 101B Selected Readings in Akkadian [4]

CUNEIF 102A Elementary Sumerian [4]

CUNEIF 102B Elementary Sumerian [4]

CUNEIF 103A Selected Readings in Sumerian [3]

CUNEIF 103B Selected Readings in Sumerian [3]

CUNEIF 106A Elementary Hittite [4]

CUNEIF 106B Elementary Hittite [4]

EGYPT 100A Introduction to Egyptian Hieroglyphs [5]

EGYPT 100B Introduction to Egyptian Hieroglyphs [5]

HEBREW 103A Later Rabbinic and Medieval Hebrew Texts [3]

HEBREW 103B Later Rabbinic and Medieval Hebrew Texts [3]

HEBREW 104A Modern Hebrew Literature and Culture [3]

HEBREW 105A The Structure of Modern Hebrew [3]

HEBREW 105E The Structure of Modern Hebrew [3]

HEBREW 106A Elementary Biblical Hebrew [3]

HEBREW 106E Elementary Biblical Hebrew [3]

HEBREW 107A Biblical Hebrew Texts [3]

HEBREW 107E Biblical Hebrew Texts [3]

Total Upper Division Units

Total Units 24-30

Emphasis II: Islamic Civilizations

Lower Division Requirements

NE STUD 10 Course Not Available [4]

Lower Division Recommended Courses

NE STUD C26 Course Not Available

Upper Division Requirements

A total of nine courses from these categories below. Students may 27-36
select relevant courses from other departments. All courses for the
major must be approved by the faculty major adviser.

Religion

NE STUD 146 Course Not Available [4]

NES 146 is required for all students in this emphasis. Students must
select one additional course from the following:

NE STUD 140 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 144 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 180 Course Not Available

NE STUD 190E Course Not Available [4]

History and Culture

NE STUD 142 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 147 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 148 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 151 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 153 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 156 Course Not Available

NE STUD 161 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 175 Course Not Available [3]

ANTHRO 181 Themes in the Anthropology of the Middle East
and Islam [4]

ASAMST 128A Muslims in America [4]

ASAMST 132A Islamophobia and Constructing Otherness [4]

GWS 142 Women in the Muslim and Arab Worlds [4]

HISTORY 109A The Rise of Islamic Civilization, 600-1200 [4]

HISTORY 109E The Middle East, 1000-1750 [4]

HISTORY 109C The Middle East From the 18th Century to the
Present [4]

M E STU 102 Scope and Methods of Research in Middle Eastern Studies [4]

M E STU 120 Selected Topics--Middle Eastern Studies [3]

M E STU 150 Advanced Study in the Middle East [4]

POL SCI 142A Middle East Politics [4]

POL SCI 124B War in the Middle East [4]

Arts and Literature

NE STUD C121 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD C121B Topics in Islamic Art [4]

NE STUD 126 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 129 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 150A Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 150B Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 152 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 155 Course Not Available [3]

NE STUD 162A Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 162B Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 165 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 190D Course Not Available [4]

Near Eastern Languages

Arabic: Any upper division language course from the major list

Persian: Any upper division language course from the major list

Turkish: Any upper division language course from the major list

Total Units 27-36

Undergraduate students must fulfill the following requirements in addition to those required by their major program.

For detailed lists of courses that fulfill college requirements, please review the College of Letters & Sciences (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/>) page in this Guide. For College advising appointments, please visit the L&S Advising (<https://ls.berkeley.edu/advising/about-undergraduate-advising-services/>) Pages.

University of California Requirements

Entry Level Writing (<http://writing.berkeley.edu/node/78/>)

All students who will enter the University of California as freshmen must demonstrate their command of the English language by fulfilling the Entry Level Writing requirement. Fulfillment of this requirement is also a prerequisite to enrollment in all reading and composition courses at UC Berkeley.

American History and American Institutions (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/american-history-institutions-requirement/>)

The American History and Institutions requirements are based on the principle that a US resident graduated from an American university, should have an understanding of the history and governmental institutions of the United States.

Berkeley Campus Requirement

American Cultures (<http://americancultures.berkeley.edu/students/courses/>)

All undergraduate students at Cal need to take and pass this course in order to graduate. The requirement offers an exciting intellectual

environment centered on the study of race, ethnicity and culture of the United States. AC courses offer students opportunities to be part of research-led, highly accomplished teaching environments, grappling with the complexity of American Culture.

College of Letters & Science Essential Skills Requirements

Quantitative Reasoning (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/quantitative-reasoning-requirement/>)

The Quantitative Reasoning requirement is designed to ensure that students graduate with basic understanding and competency in math, statistics, or computer science. The requirement may be satisfied by exam or by taking an approved course.

Foreign Language (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/foreign-language-requirement/>)

The Foreign Language requirement may be satisfied by demonstrating proficiency in reading comprehension, writing, and conversation in a foreign language equivalent to the second semester college level, either by passing an exam or by completing approved course work.

Reading and Composition (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/reading-composition-requirement/>)

In order to provide a solid foundation in reading, writing, and critical thinking the College requires two semesters of lower division work in composition in sequence. Students must complete parts A & B reading and composition courses by the end of their second semester and a second-level course by the end of their fourth semester.

College of Letters & Science 7 Course Breadth Requirements

Breadth Requirements (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/#breadthrequirements>)

The undergraduate breadth requirements provide Berkeley students with a rich and varied educational experience outside of their major program. As the foundation of a liberal arts education, breadth courses give students a view into the intellectual life of the University while introducing them to a multitude of perspectives and approaches to research and scholarship. Engaging students in new disciplines and with peers from other majors, the breadth experience strengthens interdisciplinary connections and context that prepares Berkeley graduates to understand and solve the complex issues of their day.

Unit Requirements

- 120 total units
- Of the 120 units, 36 must be upper division units
- Of the 36 upper division units, 6 must be taken in courses offered outside your major department

Residence Requirements

For units to be considered in "residence," you must be registered in courses on the Berkeley campus as a student in the College of Letters & Science. Most students automatically fulfill the residence requirement by attending classes here for four years. In general, there is no need

to be concerned about this requirement, unless you go abroad for a semester or year or want to take courses at another institution or through UC Extension during your senior year. In these cases, you should make an appointment to meet an adviser to determine how you can meet the Senior Residence Requirement.

Note: Courses taken through UC Extension do not count toward residence.

Senior Residence Requirement

After you become a senior (with 90 semester units earned toward your BA degree), you must complete at least 24 of the remaining 30 units in residence in at least two semesters. To count as residence, a semester must consist of at least 6 passed units. Intercampus Visitor, EAP, and UC Berkeley-Washington Program (UCDC) units are excluded.

You may use a Berkeley Summer Session to satisfy one semester of the Senior Residence requirement, provided that you successfully complete 6 units of course work in the Summer Session and that you have been enrolled previously in the college.

Modified Senior Residence Requirement

Participants in the UC Education Abroad Program (EAP), Berkeley Summer Abroad, or the UC Berkeley Washington Program (UCDC) may meet a Modified Senior Residence requirement by completing 24 (excluding EAP) of their final 60 semester units in residence. At least 12 of these 24 units must be completed after you have completed 90 units.

Upper Division Residence Requirement

You must complete in residence a minimum of 18 units of upper division courses (excluding UCEAP units), 12 of which must satisfy the requirements for your major.

Summary of Modifications

1. L&S College Requirements: Reading & Composition, Quantitative Reasoning, and Foreign Language, which typically must be satisfied with a letter grade, can be satisfied with a Passed (P) grade during Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 if a student elects to take the course for P/ NP. Note: This does not include Entry Level Writing (College Writing R1A).
2. Requirements within L&S majors and minors can be satisfied with Passed (P) grades during the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters. This includes prerequisites for majors. Contact your intended or declared major/minor adviser (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2020-21/undergraduate/degree-programs/>) for more details.
3. Departments may create alternative methods for admitting students into their majors.
4. L&S students will not be placed on academic probation automatically for taking all of their courses P/NP during Fall 2020 or Spring 2021.

Mission

The Near Eastern Studies Department offers three majors, each with several emphases, that concentrate in the languages, literatures, and civilizations of the ancient, medieval, and modern Near East. Because of the breadth of fields and disciplines, goals for undergraduate learning are likewise diverse. The majors include the following:

- Near Eastern Languages and Literatures (with emphases in: Arabic, Hebrew, Egyptology, and Persian)

- Ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern Art and Archaeology (with emphases in: Ancient Near Eastern Art and Archaeology and Egyptian Art and Archaeology)
- Near Eastern Civilizations (with emphases in: Ancient Civilizations and Islamic Civilizations)

Learning Goals for the Major

- The ability to analyze architecture, art, and archaeological sites.
- Knowledge of the main historical and cultural periods, sites, monuments, and geographies relevant to the chosen field.
- Familiarity with the entire area of the Near/Middle East from ancient to modern times.
- Awareness of the importance of the Near/Middle East in today's global society.
- The ability to formulate a well-organized argument supported by evidence.
- The ability to critically read and analyze scholarship in the field.
- The ability to write and to communicate orally.

Near Eastern Civilizations

Expand all course descriptions [+] Collapse all course descriptions [-]

NE STUD 15 Introduction to Near Eastern Art and Archaeology 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2020, Spring 2018, Spring 2017

The ancient Near East (present-day Iran, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Israel, and Turkey) is considered the cradle of civilization. Here in Mesopotamia and its neighboring regions, the first cities arose, writing was invented, armies forged the earliest empires, and complex religious beliefs were expressed in art and architecture. This course surveys the major archaeological sites and monuments from the earliest settlements to the conquest of the Near East by Alexander the Great in 330 BCE.

Introduction to Near Eastern Art and Archaeology: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 8 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Near Eastern Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Feldman

Introduction to Near Eastern Art and Archaeology: Read Less [-]

NE STUD C121B Topics in Islamic Art 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2007, Fall 2005, Spring 2003

The course will treat in depth topics in Islamic architecture and topics in Islamic art. Subjects addressed may include painting, calligraphy, and book production.

Topics in Islamic Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Near Eastern Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: HISTART C121B

Topics in Islamic Art: Read Less [-]

NE STUD 130A History of Ancient Israel 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 1998

The patriarchal age through the Hellenistic period.

History of Ancient Israel: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Near Eastern Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

History of Ancient Israel: Read Less [-]

NE STUD 143B Islam in Iran 3 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2009, Spring 2005, Spring 2001

A general survey of the religious history of Iran in the Islamic period, covering the rise and development of religious institutions, the elaboration of the religious sciences, Sufism, and sectarian movements.

Islam in Iran: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Near Eastern Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Islam in Iran: Read Less [-]

NE STUD 173B Topics in the History of Central Asia and the Turks 3 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2004

A survey of the main themes in the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic history of Central Asia and adjacent regions, principally from the rise of Islam down to the present. The first half of the course will deal with the Iranian element in Central Asia, and particularly with the Tajiks. The second half will be devoted to the Turks, including their history and expansion, not only in Central Asia but also in Anatolia and South East Europe.

Topics in the History of Central Asia and the Turks: Read More [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Near Eastern Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Topics in the History of Central Asia and the Turks: Read Less [-]