

Near Eastern Languages and Literatures

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

The Near Eastern Languages and Literatures major offers study in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and the ancient Egyptian language. The major introduces students to the peoples, cultures, and histories of the Middle East. Language courses are designed to enhance the student's command of reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension as well as provide students with specialized language skills and expertise that are vital for the global economy. They are often essential preparation for graduate programs too. Students in this major may choose one of the following emphases:

- An emphasis in a modern language: **Arabic, Hebrew, or Persian**
- An emphasis in an ancient language: **Egyptology**

The department offers modern language instruction at elementary to advanced levels in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish (minor only). Instructors are trained in contemporary teaching methods, using the latest classroom technologies and a range of multi-media tools to provide engaging and exciting classroom instruction. The major is intended to help students prepare for travel abroad or for a career that requires language fluency. A major in the Near Eastern languages allow students to be part of a close-knit group of language enthusiasts and ensures that each student will receive the best training for their future goals. The major prepares students for professions in foreign service, political and international affairs, comparative studies, translation services, 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. Please note the Egyptology major is currently under review for updates and revisions. For more information about Egyptology major requirements, please contact the undergraduate major advisor.

Declaring the Major

Students are recommended to declare the major early in their academic careers. Near Eastern Studies 10 is a required lower division course, which may be taken after declaring the major. Students should consult with the undergraduate student advisor 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 Languages and Literatures consist of majors in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and Egyptology. The department highly recommends students to begin the study of these languages in their first year and to declare the major as soon as they begin their study. In addition to the lower division language requirements, NE STUD 10 is a required course for the major and must be taken for a letter grade.

Please note the Egyptology major is currently under review for updates and revisions. For more information about the Egyptology major requirements, please contact the undergraduate major advisor.

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 lower and upper 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 the culture and history course requirements.

Arabic Emphasis

Lower Division Requirements		
NE STUD 10	Course Not Available [4]	
ARABIC 1A	Elementary Arabic [5]	
ARABIC 1B	Elementary Arabic [5]	
ARABIC 20A	Intermediate Arabic [5]	
ARABIC 20B	Intermediate Arabic [5]	
Students may be able to satisfy the lower division requirements by completing the Arabic 10 course (Elementary Intensive Arabic) and the Arabic 30 course (Intermediate Intensive Arabic) offered during the summer term.		
Upper Division Requirements		
Arabic Literature Courses		
ARABIC 100A	Advanced Arabic	3
ARABIC 100B	Advanced Arabic	3
Select three of the following:		9
ARABIC 104A	Modern Arabic Prose [3]	
ARABIC 104B	Classical Arabic Prose [3]	
ARABIC 105A	Modern Arabic Poetry [3]	
ARABIC 105B	Classical Arabic Poetry [3]	
ARABIC 107	Arabic Historical and Geographical Texts [3]	
ARABIC 108	Islamic Religious and Philosophical Texts in Arabic [3]	
ARABIC 111A	Survey of Arabic Literature (in Arabic) [3]	
ARABIC 111B	Survey of Arabic Literature (in Arabic) [3]	
**Only one colloquial course can be used to satisfy this requirement		
ARABIC 115A	Colloquial Arabic [4]	
ARABIC 115B	Colloquial Arabic [4]	
Arabic Culture and History Courses		
Select four courses from the following. Students may also select relevant courses from other departments. All courses for the major must be approved by the faculty major adviser.		12
NE STUD 109	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 126	Course Not Available	
NE STUD C121	Course Not Available	
NE STUD C121B	Topics in Islamic Art [4]	
NE STUD 140	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 142	Course Not Available [3]	
NE STUD 144	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 146	Course Not Available [4]	
NE STUD 147	Course Not Available [4]	
NE STUD 148	Course Not Available [4]	
NE STUD 150A	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 150B	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 151	Course Not Available [4]	
NE STUD 152	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 153	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 155	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 156	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 170	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 175	Course Not Available [3]	
NE STUD 180	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 190E	Course Not Available (when relevant)	

Total Upper Division Units	
Total Units	27

Hebrew Emphasis

Lower Division Requirements		
NE STUD 10	Course Not Available [4]	
HEBREW 1A	Elementary Hebrew [5]	
HEBREW 1B	Elementary Hebrew [5]	
HEBREW 20A	Intermediate Hebrew [5]	
HEBREW 20B	Intermediate Hebrew [5]	
Upper Division Requirements		
HEBREW 100A	Advanced Hebrew	3
HEBREW 100B	Advanced Hebrew	3
Hebrew Literature Courses		
Select two of the following:		6
HEBREW 104A	Modern Hebrew Literature and Culture [3]	
HEBREW 104B	Modern Hebrew Literature and Culture [3]	
HEBREW 105A	The Structure of Modern Hebrew [3]	
HEBREW 105B	The Structure of Modern Hebrew [3]	
HEBREW 106A	Elementary Biblical Hebrew [3]	
HEBREW 106B	Elementary Biblical Hebrew [3]	
HEBREW 107A	Biblical Hebrew Texts [3]	
HEBREW 107B	Biblical Hebrew Texts [3]	
Hebrew Culture and History Courses		
Select four courses from the following. Students may also select relevant courses from other departments. All courses for the major must be approved by the faculty major adviser.		12-16
NE STUD 135	Course Not Available [4]	
NE STUD 136	Course Not Available	
NE STUD 190C	Course Not Available [4]	
JEWISH 100	Introduction to Jewish Religion, Culture, and People [4]	
JEWISH 120	Special Topics in Jewish Studies: Jewish Folklore [3]	
JEWISH 121	Topics in Jewish Arts and Culture [4]	
JEWISH 122	Topics in Judaism [3-4]	
JEWISH 123	Israeli Society: Social Structure, Inequality, and Political Cleavages [3]	
Total Upper Division Units		
Total Units		24-28

Persian Emphasis

Lower Division Requirements		
NE STUD 10	Course Not Available [4]	¹
Select either the Elementary or Heritage Speaking Series		
PERSIAN 1A	Elementary Modern Persian	
& PERSIAN 1B		
Band Elementary Modern Persian		
PERSIAN 11A	Reading and Composition for Persian Speaking	
& PERSIAN 11B		
Students and Reading and Composition for Persian-Speaking Students		
PERSIAN 20A	Intermediate Modern Persian [5]	
PERSIAN 20B	Intermediate Modern Persian [5]	

Upper Division Requirements

PERSIAN 100A	Advanced Persian	3
PERSIAN 100B	Advanced Persian	3

Persian Literature Courses

Select three courses from the following.	9
PERSIAN 102A	Readings in Classical Persian Prose [3]
PERSIAN 102E	Readings in Classical Persian Prose [3]
PERSIAN 103A	Classical Persian Poetry [3]
PERSIAN 103E	Classical Persian Poetry [3]
PERSIAN 104A	Contemporary Persian Literature [3]
PERSIAN 104E	Contemporary Persian Literature [3]
PERSIAN 105	Modern Analytical Prose in Persian [3]

Persian Culture and History Courses

Select three from the following. Student may select relevant courses 9-12 from other departments. All courses for the major must be approved by the faculty major adviser.

NE STUD 126	Course Not Available [3]
NE STUD 129	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 142	Course Not Available [3]
NE STUD 144	Course Not Available [3]
NE STUD 146	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 147	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 153	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 156	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 160	Course Not Available [3]
NE STUD 161	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 162A	Course Not Available
NE STUD 162B	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 165	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 175	Course Not Available [3]
NE STUD 180	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 190I	Course Not Available [4]

Total Upper Division Units

Total Units 24-27

Egyptology Emphasis**Lower Division Requirements**

Please note the Egyptology major is currently under review for updates and revisions. For more information about the Egyptology major requirements, please contact the undergraduate major adviser.

NE STUD 10	Course Not Available
NE STUD 18	Course Not Available [4]

Upper Division Requirements

The major requires 8 upper division courses.

EGYPT 100A	Introduction to Egyptian Hieroglyphs [5]
EGYPT 100B	Introduction to Egyptian Hieroglyphs [5]
NE STUD 101	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 102	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 103	Course Not Available [3]
NE STUD 110	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 112	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 115	Course Not Available [4]
NE STUD 116	Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD C18 Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 190A Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 190E Course Not Available [4]

NE STUD 192B Course Not Available [2,4]

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.

Learning Goals for the Major

1. Proficiency in speaking, listening, and writing in the designated language.
2. Knowledge of the major literary genres and corpora relevant to the designated language.
3. Knowledge of the main historical and cultural periods and geographies relevant to the designated language.
4. Familiarity with the entire area of the Near/Middle East from ancient to modern times.
5. Awareness of the importance of the Near/Middle East in today's global society.
6. The ability to formulate a well-organized argument supported by evidence.
7. The ability to critically read and analyze scholarship in the field.
8. The ability to write and to communicate orally.

Near Eastern Languages and Literatures

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 [-]