Elementary Akkadian
NEJS 200A Fall 2017
Tuesday/Friday 11:00–12:20

Contact Information and Office Hours
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Office Hours: TF 9:30–11:00 or by appointment

Course Description: Akkadian is an ancient language from the same family as Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic. It was at home in and around the area of modern-day Iraq, but was also the international language of diplomacy throughout the ancient world in the second and early first millennium BCE. Its corpus contains everything from receipts and legal documents, to royal inscriptions, literary compositions and religious texts. Akkadian was written in cuneiform, a script that consists of wedge-shaped impressions made in clay and stone (as well as a few other materials). This course in elementary Akkadian is an introduction to the fundamentals of Old Babylonian grammar and a large number of the commonest Neo-Assyrian cuneiform signs. No prior knowledge of other Semitic languages is required.

Learning Goals:
• Learn the basics of Old Babylonian grammar.
• Memorize the most common Neo-Assyrian cuneiform signs.
• Be able to translate increasingly complex Akkadian, including the Laws of Hammurabi.
• Be prepared for continued learning of additional Akkadian dialects and genres in future courses.

Required Books:
Course Requirements: In general, this course will follow the structure of the class textbook, John Huehnergard's *A Grammar of Akkadian*. Readings and homework assignments for each class period will be handed out (or emailed) no later than the preceding class period. Course readings and assignments must be completed before class and will be necessary to get the most out of each class session. Class sessions will consist of brief lectures, group and individual exercises, and review of the homework.

Once per week (usually the Tuesday class) we will begin with a short 5–10 minute quiz covering vocabulary, grammar, and/or cuneiform signs. For this reason, it will be necessary to arrive to class on time; accommodations for tardiness may be granted on a per case basis (those with difficulty getting to class on time should discuss this with me prior to the second class session). In the case of an unexpected absence, you may make arrangements with me to retake up to two of these quizzes. Any missed exam must be completed before the next class session.

Academic Integrity: All of your work for this class is expected to be your own. If you have any questions concerning academic honesty, please see me to discuss the situation.

Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability at Brandeis University, and if you wish to request a reasonable accommodation for this class, please see me immediately. Please keep in mind that reasonable accommodations are not provided retroactively.

Absences: Regular attendance will be necessary for successful progress through this course. Thus, students will be afforded only two unexcused absences; any further absences could result in a lower grade for the course. Excused absences may be granted at the discretion of the instructor and all doctor-ordered absences will be respected, though special arrangements will need to be made in the event of any extended absence.

Homework time: Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation you will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, homework, preparation for exams, etc.).
**Passes:** Students will be allowed two passes from class session evaluation. This means that a student may, on two occasions, attend a class session but will not be responsible to answer any questions during the session. Each student may also take a pass for one weekly quiz (I will automatically drop your lowest quiz score).

**Grade Breakdown:**

*Class Participation and Homework: 25%*

Class Participation consists of the following:
-- Attendance!
-- Read through the assigned chapter before we cover it in class.
-- Have homework completed and be prepared to translate and discuss any of the exercises.
-- Bring questions about material that was difficult or confusing.
-- Participate in all in-class exercises.

*Weekly Quizzes: 25%*

*Midterm Exam: 25%*

*Final Exam: 25%*

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Week 1 (9/1)**
- Before Class: Read the Introduction to Huehnergard’s *A Grammar of Akkadian* and the essay by Andrew George, “Babylonian and Assyrian: A History of Akkadian” (available on LATTE)
- Review Syllabus
- Start Huehnergard Lesson 1 in class

**Week 2 (9/5, 9/8)**
- Lessons 1–3
- Read Lesson 9.2 The Writing System, start memorizing cuneiform sign list

**Week 3 (9/12, 9/15)**
- Lessons 4–6

**Week 4 (9/19, NO CLASS on 9/22)**
- Lessons 7–8
Week 5 (9/26, 9/29)
• Lessons 9–10

Week 6 (NO CLASS on 10/3 [Brandeis Thursday], 10/6)
• Lesson 11

Week 7 (10/10, 10/13)
• Lessons 12–13

Week 8 (10/17, 10/20)
• Review for Midterm on 10/17
• MIDTERM in class on 10/20

Week 9 (10/24, 10/27)
• Lessons 14–15

Week 10 (10/31, 11/3)
• Lessons 16–17

Week 11 (11/7, 11/10)
• Lessons 18–19

Week 12 (11/14, 11/17)
• Lessons 20–21

Week 13 (NO CLASS on 11/21 or 11/24 [SBL and Thanksgiving])

Week 14 (11/28, 12/1)
• Lessons 22–23

Week 15 (12/5, 12/8)
• Introduction to the derived stems (basics of Lessons 24–38)
• Introduction to Assyriological resources

Final Exam: TBD