Course Description: Akkadian is an ancient, long dead, 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 grand royal inscriptions, literary compositions, and religious texts. Cuneiform, the writing system with which the language was recorded, utilized various groups of wedge-shaped impressions made in clay and stone (as well as a few other materials) to record both sounds and whole words. 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.

Books:


Contact Information and Office Hours:

Bronson Brown-devost
bronson@brandeis.edu
Office: Lown 110.
Office Hours: TBD, or by appointment.

Course Requirements: Course readings and assignments are to be completed before class and will be necessary to get the most out of each class session. Every class session will begin with a short 5-10 minute quiz on vocabulary, grammar, or cuneiform signs. It will be necessary to be in class on time to take part in these quizzes; accommodations for tardy attendance may rarely be granted on a per case basis (those with difficulty getting to the class room on time should discuss this with me prior to the second class session). You may make arrangements to retake as many as two of these quizzes in the case of an unexpected absence, 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 can not necessarily be provided retroactively.

Classroom Restrictions: No computers or electronic devices shall be used in class and traditional note taking is strongly discouraged. Most of what we discuss in class will be readily available on the Latte website or in your course books; class notes would largely be superfluous. It is perfectly admissible to bring food and
drink provided that no appreciable distraction is caused. Please wait until after class to consume larger meal items.

**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 of as much as 5% per absence. In the event of an absence, the student is responsible for arranging a make-up tests before the next class session. Excused absences may be granted at the discretion of the instructor, all doctor ordered absences will be respected, though special arrangements will need to be made in the event of any extended absence.

**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 (this includes the quiz at the beginning of the class).

**Grade Breakdown:**

Class Quizzes, Participation, and Homework: 15%.
Short Weekly Tests: 25% (2% per test).
Midterm Examination (20 minutes): 20%.
Final Examination (3 hours): 40%.