

**ANCIENT EGYPT AND MESOPOTAMIA:
A SURVEY OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST**

Dr. Peter A. Piccione
Office: Maybank 313
Office Hours: T, W, Th, 2:30-4:30 p.m. (or by appointment)
Telephone: 843-953-4861

Fax: 843-953-6349

History 230.001
Fall 2008

E-mail: piccionep@cofc.edu
MYBK 302 T, Th 12:15 - 1:30 p.m.

Course Web Page: URL <http://www.cofc.edu/~piccione/hist230/>

Username: ++++ Password: ++++ (necessary for accessing reading assignments and images)

Course Description: This course is an historical survey of the major civilizations of ancient Western Asia and North Africa, including: Egypt, Sumer, Akkad, Babylonia, Assyria, the Hittites, Syria, and Canaan, from the origins of agriculture, c. 7000 BC, to the conquest of Alexander the Great, c. 330 B.C. The class explores the historical development of the different civilizations and their cultural and political interrelationships, as revealed specifically in their archaeology and texts. An added special focus will concentrate on legal structures and law codes across cultures.

Course Requirements

Term Paper: Due: Nov. 25. Students are required to complete a separate term paper (**7-8 pages**) on the subject of law, law codes, and comparative legal structures in the Near East. The specific requirements are located below under "Paper Requirements." *Completion of the essay is required to pass this course.*

Map Quizzes: Students will take two map quizzes on Western Asia and Egypt, respectively, in the first half of the course. The dates are indicated below in the "Lectures and Assignments Schedule."

Examinations: This course includes a midterm and a final examination, each containing objective questions and essays drawn from the lectures, readings, and videos.

Attendance Policy: Discussion figures prominently in the class-program, and class participation and attendance will constitute a percentage of the course grade. Attendance and participation improve the functioning of the class as well as students' grades. According to College policy, attendance will be taken daily; any and all unexcused absences will result in automatic grade reductions.

Absences are excused by presenting written documentation to the Office of Associate Dean of Students. Undocumented and self-documented excuses are not acceptable. Running errands is not a valid excuse. Students are responsible for all the material in the readings, videos, lectures, etc., whether they are present or not in class. **Students should never telephone the instructor on the same day to say they will be absent, nor should they ever(!) call the History Department office to report their absence.**

If the instructor does not call the daily roll, an attendance sign-in sheet will be circulated. Students are also marked as absent for the following reasons: they do not sign the attendance sheet; they sign the sheet then leave class; they leave class for an *inordinate* period of time without valid excuse. *Any student who leaves class without permission and does not return after taking a quiz or exam will be recounted as absent, and the quiz/exam will receive an automatic failing grade (0 = F).*

VERY IMPORTANT: Any students who have missed 30% of class meetings or more, i.e., eight (8) or more individual classes, regardless of whether they have excused absences or not, will be subject to **automatic withdrawal** from the course by the professor with a grade of "WA". Why? Because the professor's lectures contain more materials than are found in the textbook and course readers, and discussion and question-and-answer constitute important parts of the curriculum. If students have missed

30% of lectures, it is clear they are not getting all the materials, and they are not participating in classroom discussions in any significant manner. Therefore, if it is because of a medical reason that any student has missed eight (8) or more classes, he/she should discuss the matter with the professor and consider seeking a medical withdrawal from the course in the Registrar's Office.

Make-Up Quizzes and Exams: This course does not regularly provide make-up quizzes or exams. However, if students present a valid medical excuse documented in writing and processed through the Office of Associate Dean of Students, they will be permitted to complete a comparable written assignment to make up the lost work. This assignment will not be easy or convenient, and it will be graded with considered caution. Except by special arrangement with the instructor, students have only one (1) week to complete and submit any makeup assignment for a quiz, before the grade reverts to zero (unless there is continuing documented illness). It is the responsibility of the student to assume the initiative in pursuing any make-up assignment within that time deadline. If a student misses a midterm exam (worth 22% of the grade), comparable make-up work will consist of a second term paper, and the submission date must be negotiated with the instructor.

Athletes and Special Needs: Participation in athletic events or practices is NOT(!) a valid excuse to miss quizzes, term-paper due dates, or midterm and final examinations; make-up work will not be granted. When athletes check their schedules of away-games against the course assignment schedule, they must also check the travel schedule for each game. Athletes are responsible for the academic consequences of missing quizzes, exams, and due dates. *Any athletes who expect to miss quizzes, or exams should see the professor, and should seriously reconsider taking this class.*

SNAP-Program students who are enrolled in this class specifically to replace a foreign language requirement should be aware that much of the course's content pertains to ancient foreign languages and words, as well as Egyptian and Mesopotamian terms, expressions, personal names, etc.. Students will be evaluated on how well they master these as part of their studies, including correct spelling and pronunciation. If they feel these issues might hinder a successful outcome in this course, then they should see the professor and reconsider the appropriateness of this course for themselves.

Course Textbooks and Readings

Required Textbooks:

Pritchard, J. B., editor. *The Ancient Near East*, volume 1: *An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958.

Roth, Martha. *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Second edition. Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Ancient World 6. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998.

Stiebing, William H. *Ancient Near Eastern History and Culture*. Second edition. New York: Pearson Education, 2009.

Web Sources and Library Reserve Readings: A variety of monographic extracts and journal articles are also required reading for this course. Some of these readings are located in the Addlestone Library (Reserve, Reference, or Periodicals). Others are available for downloading and printing from the course Web pages. The location of each reading is noted in the "Syllabus" or "Reading Assignments"-schedule below which will be updated regularly in the course's Web Pages. *Please consult the Web pages on a regular basis.*

Grading Policy

Final course-grades will be constituted according to the following formula: map quizzes 10%, video assignment 5%, mid-term exam 22%, term paper 23%, final exam 22%, class participation 18%.

Grades in this course are issued according to the following numerical scale: A = 92-100 [superior]; A- = 91; B+ = 87-90 [very good]; B = 82-86 [good]; B- = 81; C+ = 77-80 [fair]; C = 72-76 [average]; C- = 71; D+ = 67-70 [unsatisfactory]; D = 61-66 [poor, passing]; D- = 60 [barely acceptable, passing]; F = 0-59 [failure]; XF = failure due to academic dishonesty.

Paper Requirements

Term Paper. Due date: November 25. Topic: Law codes and legal structures across the ancient Near East. Write a paper comparing and contrasting the character and/or execution of the law in ancient Western Asia, Asia Minor, and Egypt. Here you compare and contrast the laws and legal systems of countries of your choice, the forms they took, how they were formulated and implemented, etc. Choose your own approach to the topic. For example, you might consider what ancient law codes reveal about the attitudes and perspectives of their particular societies, the extent to which they might suggest a common "Mesopotamian" consciousness vs. Egyptian, etc.; the connections between Hebrew Mosaic law and Mesopotamian laws; what laws and legal instruments reveal about social relationships, gender issues, class structures, etc., within their societies or the relationship of the individual to the state, or, perhaps, the extent to which certain Mesopotamian laws actually did or did not represent true functioning "law codes." Be specific in your arguments, and support your conclusions with quotations from original texts and the records of court cases or legal edicts, as well as a fair number of outside secondary sources and interpretive studies. **Paper length: 7-8 pages.** *Completion of the essay (even if it entails a failing grade!) is required to pass this course.*

Late Policy. Late papers will be penalized 5 points for each day late (including Saturdays), up to three days, after which they will be graded no higher than a 59% (F). All papers must be submitted *in person* to the instructor; failing that, they may be submitted to the History Department (Maybank 315), where the departmental administrators must certify and date-stamp their arrival. The instructor is not responsible for any papers simply dropped off at his office or shoved under his door. Regrettably, such papers cannot be deemed to have been submitted on time. Note that day 2 and day 3 after the submission date is Thanksgiving holiday, and no one will be in the History Department to accept and certify any paper.

Submission of Early Drafts. Students are encouraged to submit a preliminary draft of their paper to the instructor for comment. The instructor will review it to ensure clarity, direction, and adherence to format. *The draft will not be graded.* Students should submit a draft not later than two (2) weeks before the paper's deadline.

Form and Format. All papers should be submitted in paper format. Papers submitted electronically via e-mail or on disk are unacceptable, since formatting changes do occur when transferring files between computers. See course Web page, "Paper Requirements"-link, for detailed information, advice, and suggestions on form, format, and grading criteria for the theme essay and term paper.

IMPORTANT!! Papers should contain 1-inch margins on all sides, top and bottom. They should be typed or printed double space in a 12-point type. The term paper must include: (1) cover page; (2) type-written page numbers; (3) citations (footnotes or endnotes); (4) separate Bibliography-page. *The cover page and the bibliography do not count toward the required number of pages.* Pagination begins on the first page of text.

In the preparation and execution of all papers for the class, students are required to follow the format presented by **Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996)**, especially in regard to the style of block quotations, footnotes or endnotes, and bibliographies. Look over Chapters 8-11 on how to cite references. Choose the type of reference you want: footnotes or endnotes (+ "Bibliography"). Read Chapter 11 (pp. 185-213) to compare their forms and styles. Use footnotes or endnotes only; do not use parenthetical references (that means you cannot put references in parentheses at the ends of sentences).

The Turabian style is a standard for writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences. If you are not familiar with this format, open the manual and learn it. Don't try to "wing" it or fudge the format. ***Any papers that do not conform to Turabian will be graded accordingly.*** Four copies of Turabian are located in the College Library, two in the Reference Section, two on Permanent Reserve. Copies are also available for purchase in the College Bookstore on the general trade shelves.

**WHATEVER YOU DO, DO NOT EMPLOY THE MLA STYLE OF
PARENTHETICAL REFERENCES IN YOUR HISTORY PAPERS!!**

Execution. As a rule of thumb, *do not quote class-lecture notes in your paper.* If you wish to quote material mentioned in class, *you must find it in published sources* among the course readings and quote from there. The first place to look is in the bibliography at the end of the appropriate chapter in the course textbook. If you cannot find the source among the readings, see the instructor for advice. Please feel free to consult the instructor at any time for advice and suggestions on preparing the paper.

Form and spelling are factors in grading both papers. If you are uncertain of your spelling, use a dictionary or a spell-check program. **You must proofread your paper before submitting it, and make any final corrections cleanly in ink, if necessary!!** *Why the emphasis on form?* A research paper is a means of communication. The purpose of any paper is to convey an argument as logically as possible according to standards of form that facilitate its communicative function. Form is not merely format and correct spelling; it also includes the logical arrangement of an argument and the rational ordering of historical and textual data to support a particular historical interpretation. Poor form can impede the communication of a valid point of view. When a paper cannot communicate due to a lapse of form, it has failed in its purpose.

Using the World Wide Web for Research

Students should confine the bulk of their research to printed publications. They may use the World Wide Web selectively to help research the paper topic. However, there is a great deal of trash on the Web that does not conform to modern academic standards. The World Wide Web contains four types of materials pertaining to ancient Egypt and the Near East:

1. primary sources, i.e. editions of original ancient inscriptions translated and presented by reputable scholars, often used as classroom resources on the Web;
2. original archaeological reports and field data by archaeologists and bona fide researchers;
3. syncretical studies, essays, and old books prepared by Egyptologists and Assyriologists (often as Web versions of reputable printed publications and books);

4. materials, idiosyncratic essays, and polemical tracts of uneven and inconsistent quality, prepared by non-professionals, dilettantes, radical Afro-centrists, and self-proclaimed prophets of the New Age revelation.

Sadly, this latter Assyro-Egypto-crypto-trash [no. 4] constitutes the bulk of Egyptological and Assyriological materials on the Web.

As of now, there very few peer-reviewed professional—specifically Near Eastern—journals published on the Web. Publicly available primary sources on the Web [no. 1] are usually out of copyright, obsolete translations superceded by modern translations in print. For the purposes of this course, students are permitted to quote from these, *but only with the prior approval of the instructor and only if the texts are not available in print!* Because Near Eastern secondary sources on the Web are rarely peer-reviewed, students may quote from [nos. 2 & 3] *but only after consulting with the course instructor on each source!* Web pages for [nos. 1 - 3] are usually identifiable by the domain-markers ".edu" or ".ac" in their Web addresses, and sometimes also by ".org" (denoting educational or charitable organizations).

Also, some professional peer-reviewed academic journals are also published on the Web. They are usually, but not always, Web-versions of paper journals, and, and they are collected together into archives for easy searching and consultation. The College of Charleston Library subscribes to these archives and databases and many more (e.g., *JStor*, etc.), and they are located in the College's library catalogue under the headings, "databases" and "e-journals" (<http://www.cofc.edu/~library/databases.html>). Students do not need the instructor's approval to consult and quote from these journals.

Students may freely consult these Web pages in their research to identify issues and research directions or printed sources of data. **However, under no circumstances may students quote from the unprofessional Assyro-Egypto-crypto-bilge [no. 4]** (usually identifiable by the domain-marker ".com" or ".net" in their Web addresses). If in doubt about the appropriateness of any research source—either on the Web or in print—please feel free to consult the instructor. He will be happy to examine or discuss individual Web sites with you. Students may never quote from any encyclopedias, whether from the Web or in paper format.

Policy on Plagiarism, Cheating, and Disruptive Behavior

As you prepare your papers for this course, be careful not plagiarize any of your sources. Any plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, whether blatant or merely inappropriate paraphrasing, will not be tolerated. If you have any questions as you prepare your assignments, please feel free to ask the advice of the instructor. **If in doubt about anything, quote it—even indirect quotations!** The Honor Code of the College of Charleston strictly prohibits plagiarism, cheating, and attempted cheating. Students found by the instructor to commit these offenses will automatically fail the course with an "F", or else they will be reported to the College Honor Board and receive an "XF"-grade. Additional penalties may include suspension or expulsion from the college at the discretion of the Honor Board. For definitions of these offenses and explanations of sanctions, see the *College of Charleston Student Handbook*, pp. 11-12 (<http://www.cofc.edu/about/handbook.pdf>). For examples of proper and improper quoting and paraphrasing, see "A Guide to Freshman English" on the English Department web pages (http://www.cofc.edu/~english/freshman_writing_guide.html).

Computers in Class. Students are not permitted to employ laptop, hand-held computers, digital notebooks, *I-Pod*'s, smart telephones or the like during class without prior permission of the

instructor. Any authorized student who abuses this privilege by engaging in activity unrelated to the class (checking e-mail, surfing the Web, etc.) will forfeit permission to use the computer in class for the rest of the term and will receive a reduction in the class-participation grade.

Cell Phones in Class and Exams. Students may not make or receive cellular telephone calls, podcasts, text messages of any kind, or accept any electronic pages during the class period. Turn off all cell phones, pagers, iPods, etc. at the start of class. **Anytime a cell phone or pager goes off or is activated in class, it will result in a 3-point reduction in course-grade for the student. Any cell phone or pager going off or activated during a quiz or exam will also result in a significant grade reduction for that quiz or exam, even including a failing grade.** Any student found even handling a cell phone or electronic device during an exam will receive a reduction in exam grade and will also be scrutinized closely for cheating (see above).

Bibliography

The official bibliography of this course, classified according to discrete subject categories and sub-categories, is located on the History 230 Web pages under the link "Bibliography."

Lectures and Reading Assignments

This course will adhere to the schedule of lectures and reading assignments found on the course web pages under the link entitled, "Reading Assignments." Students should consult those pages on a regular basis for changes and updates. Any changes to the schedule of lectures and readings will be announced in class by the instructor and reflected in the course pages. Even if we do not complete a particular unit in class on the date specified, we may move on to the next unit, and students will be responsible for the full material through the readings. However, the instructor still reserves the right to alter the schedule of lectures, discussions, and reading assignments at any time.