UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Language and Culture in Ancient Egypt

Code: 104219
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Ancient Studies	OT	4

Contact

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Teachers

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the end of this document.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The general objectives of the subject are that the student:

1) Know the different writing systems that were used in Egypt over time.

2) Deepen his/her knowledge of Egyptian hieroglyphic writing: decipherment and functioning.

3) Learn the grammar of Middle Egyptian and be able to read fragments of basic literary and epigraphic texts.

4) Know the written production of ancient Egypt, especially literary and religious, in its historical and cultural context.

Competences

- Be able to express oneself orally and in writing in the specific language of history, archaeology and philology, both in one's own languages and a third language.

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- Extract and interpret data from texts written in an ancient language in different formats applying knowledge of the auxiliary sciences of history (epigraphy, numismatics, codicology, palaeography, etc.).
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Understand and interpret the evolution of ancient societies in the Mediterranean from Egyptian civilisation to the disbanding of Western imperial Rome through analysis of the political, historical, social, economic and linguistic factors.

Learning Outcomes

1. Describe the main historical and social features of the Egyptian, Sumerian, Acadian, Persian and Mycenaean cultures.
2. Draw historical-social conclusions based on a reading of simple documents written in the ancient non-Indo-European languages.
3. Preparing an oral and written discourse in the corresponding language in a proper and organized way.
4. Submitting works in accordance with both individual and small group demands and personal styles.

Content

1. The Egyptian language: origins and history.

2. Egyptian scripts: hieroglyphic, hieratic, demotic and coptic.

3. Champollion and the decipherment of the Egyptian hieroglyphic script.

4. Ancient Egyptian religious texts in their historical and cultural context: from the Pyramid Texts to the Book of the Dead.

5. Egyptian literature in its historical and cultural context: narrative, poetry, and sapiential texts.

6. Introduction to Egyptian hieroglyphic writing: signs and reading.

7. Introduction to Middle Egyptian grammar: elements of morphosyntax.

8. Translation and commentary of fragments of basic literary and epigraphic texts.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Exams	4	0.16	2, 1, 3, 4
Practical classes on reading, translation, and analysis of texts	20	0.8	2, 1, 3, 4
Theoretical classes with the support of ICT	20	0.8	2, 1, 3, 4
Type: Supervised			
Works	21	0.84	2, 1, 3, 4
Type: Autonomous			

Personal study and work by the student	60	2.4	2, 1, 3, 4

The subject involves three types of formative activities:

1) Directed activities: theoretical and practical classes and exams.

2) Supervised activities: activities of translation, grammatical analysis, and commentary of texts and possible presentations and thematic seminars in class.

3) Autonomous activities: study, readings, completion of exercises and courseworks, preparation of speeches and presentations in class, preparation for exams.

Important: The teaching methodology and the evaluation proposed in the guide may undergo some modification subject to the onsite teaching restrictions imposed by health authorities.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
A work on a literary text.	30%	21	0.84	2, 1, 3, 4
First exam	35%	2	0.08	2, 1, 3, 4
Second exam	35%	2	0.08	2, 1, 3, 4

The evaluation will consist of three types of activities:

1) Two exams, one at the end of November and one in december or January.

2) A work on a literary text.

In the event that some of these activities cannot be taken onsite for sanitary reasons, they will be adapted to an online format made available through the UAB's virtual tools (original weighting will be maintained). Homework, activities and class participation will be carried out through forums, wikis and/or discussion on Teams, etc. Lecturers will ensure that students are able to access these virtual tools, or will offer them feasible alternatives.

As regards the procedure for the review of qualifications, on carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

As far as the make-up process is concerned, only the exams can be made up, on the date set by the Faculty. There will be three options: to make up only the first exam; to make up only the second exam; to make up both exams together in a single exam.

The maximum grade that can be obtained in the re-sit exam is a 7 out of 10 (if more than 9 is obtained), a 6 (if between 7 and 9 is obtained), and a 5 (if between 5 and 7 is obtained).

Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than 30% of the assessment items.

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

This subject does not incorporate single assessment.

Useof AI

This subject entirely prohibits the use of AI technologies in all of its activities. Any submitted work that contains content generated using AI will be considered academic dishonesty; the corresponding grade will be awarded a zero, without the possibility of reassessment. In cases of greater infringement, more serious action may be taken.

This subject does incorporate single assessment.

The evaluation will consist of two parts:

1) Exam (70%)

2) A work on a literary text (30%)

On carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place. The same assessment method as continuous assessment will be used.

Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than 1/3 of the assessment items.

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to asignificant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

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GRAMMARS AND METHODS

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Hannig, Rainer. 1999, *Wortschatz der Pharaonen in Sachgruppen: Kulturhandbuch Ägypten*s. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern.

Thesaurus Lingua Aegyptia. https://aaew.bbaw.de/tla/servlet/TlaLogin

Vocabulaire de l'Égyptien Ancien (VÉgA).: http://www.vega-vocabulaire-egyptien-ancien.fr/en/welcome-page/

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Software

JSesh, software for writing hieroglyphs.
It can be downloaded free of charge from: https://jsesh.qenherkhopeshef.org/

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this link. To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan/Spanish	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan/Spanish	first semester	morning-mixed