Instructor: Prof. Peter Bedford  
Office: Lamont 302  
Phone: x8786 (518-388 8786)  
Email: bedfordp@union.edu  
Office Hours: M/W/F 3:00-4:00; others times by appointment

Please make use of office hours. Please stop by too if you are interested in advice about other offerings in Religious Studies or how Religious Studies might fit into your program. I am very happy to arrange to meet outside of office hours: just contact me!

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Ancient Iraq is often termed ‘the cradle of civilization’ since it is here that agriculture, urbanism, and writing first occurred. This course examines the early history of Iraq (ancient Mesopotamia) from the development of agriculture and permanent settlements through to the establishment of the first cities and states, down to about 1600 BCE. The class examines the social and economic contexts in which early Mesopotamian culture emerged, and it also gives attention to religious and religio-political ideas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
First exam (1 hour) in class on Wednesday, Jan 23rd  25%  
Second exam (1 hour) in class on Friday, Feb 8th   25%  
Third exam (1 hour) in class on Wednesday, Feb 27th  25%  
Fourth exam (1 hour) in final exam week  25%

The first exam covers the first two weeks or so of the curriculum: Pre-historic period, and an overview of the period 3200-1600 BCE, with the relevant readings handed out in class. It will include a map question. The second exam covers the next two weeks: “The Institutions” in Postgate, Early Mesopotamia. The third exam covers aspects of “The Economic Order” and “The Social Order” in Postgate. The fourth exam requires you to answer questions on Religion, the final part of the curriculum, taken from Bottéro, Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia.

The exam questions will be directly related to the class readings, lectures and the primary texts discussed in class and other handouts from class. The exams will consist of essay answers, normally writing three short essays in an hour (20 minutes each), chosen from about six topics.
TEXTBOOKS (can be purchased from the bookstore)


ABSENCES AND LATE WORK
No tests may be made up unless arrangements have been made in advance of the scheduled exam. Sick? Going on a field trip? Have an intercollegiate sports commitment? These things happen, but if you wish to have an opportunity to make up a test, you must contact your instructor ahead of time!

HONOR CODE
Union College recognizes the need to create an environment of mutual trust as part of its educational mission. Responsible participation in an academic community requires respect for and acknowledgement of the thoughts and work of others, whether expressed in the present or in some distant time and place. Matriculation at the College is taken to signify implicit agreement with the Academic Honor Code, available at honorcode.union.edu.<http://honorcode.union.edu>

It is each student's responsibility to ensure that submitted work is his or her own and does not involve any form of academic misconduct. Students are expected to ask their course instructors for clarification regarding, but not limited to, collaboration, citations, and plagiarism. Ignorance is not an excuse for breaching academic integrity. Students are also required to affix the full Honor Code Affirmation, or the following shortened version, on each item of coursework submitted for grading: “I affirm that I have carried out my academic endeavors with full academic honesty.” [Signed, Jane Doe]

ADA REQUIREMENTS
It is Union College policy to make accommodations for individuals with disabilities. If you have any disability or special concern, please let me know what your needs are in order that they may be accommodated. All discussions will remain confidential to the extent permissible by law.

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations must also:
1. Register with and provide documentation to the Dean of Students Office.
2. Bring a letter to the instructor from the Dean of Students Office indicating what academic accommodations you require. This must be done within the first two weeks of term

For more information about services available to Union College students with disabilities, please contact the Dean of Students Office:

Shelly Shinebarger, Director of Student Support Services
Dean of Students Office
shinebas@union.edu; (518) 388-6116
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Week 1
Mon 1/7;
Introduction to the class; themes, geography, historical overview

Section I

Week 1
Wed 1/9; Fri 1/11
Week 2
Mon 1/14; Wed 1/16; Fri 1/18
Week 3
Mon 1/21

Rise of agriculture and settled village life; archaeology of ‘pre-historic’ period 9000-3500 BCE; overview of period 3500-1600 with cultural and political developments; development of writing, social and economic institutions; urbanism, city-states, and early territorial states.

Reading:

Week 3
Wed 1/23  **First exam**

Section II

Week 3
Fri 1/25
Week 4
Mon 1/28; Wed 1/30; Fri 2/1
Week 5
Mon 2/4; Wed 2/6

*The Institutions:*
City and countryside
Household and family
The temple
The palace

Reading:
+ other readings to be handed out in class

**Week 5**  Fri 2/8  **Second exam**

**SECTION III**
Week 6  Mon 2/11; Wed 2/13; Fri 2/15
Week 7  Mon 2/18; Wed 2/20; Fri 2/22
Week 8  Mon 2/25

Selections from—
*The Economic Order:*
Crops and livestock + Water and land
The domestic economy + Foreign trade

*The Social Order:*
Craft and labor
Laws and the law (2 sessions)
War and peace + Order and disorder
Religion and politics

Reading:
+ other readings to be handed out in class (including ditillas, ‘codes’ of Lipit-Ishtar and Hammurabi)

**Week 8**  Wed 2/27  **Third exam**

**SECTION IV**
Week 8  Fri 3/1
Week 9  Mon 3/4; Wed 3/6; Fri 3/8
Week 10  Mon 3/11; Wed 3/13; Fri 3/15

*Early Mesopotamian Religion I:*
1  Introduction and overview
Reading:

2 The Gods and their Temples
A. The Divine Pantheon
Reading:
Bottéro, *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 29-41, 44-71

B. The Temples
Reading:

C. The Maintenance of the Gods: The Daily Cult, Cult Statue, and Calendar
Readings:
Bottéro, *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 125-134, 149-164
“Washing of the Mouth” ritual texts

*Early Mesopotamian Religion II*
1. Cosmos and Creation Mythologies
A. Creation
Readings:
Bottéro, *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 72-105
Atrahasis
Enuma Elish
Story of Adapa

2. Concepts of Death and Afterlife
Readings:
Bottéro, *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 105-110
Scurlock, “Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Mesopotamian Thought”
“Gilgamesh and the Netherworld”

*Early Mesopotamian Religion III*
1. Personal Religion/Piety
Readings:
Bottéro, *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia*, pp. 164-170
Prayers to a Personal God
“Eulogy for a Woman Dead in Childbirth”

2. Prophecy, Divination and Magic
Reading:

**Final exam in exam week**