



# Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

## Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

# Akkadian Historical Texts

Course Code	L_ABAOHW312
Credits	6
Period	P1
Course Level	300
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities
Course Coordinator	dr. S. Thavapalan
Examiner	dr. S. Thavapalan
Teaching Staff	dr. S. Thavapalan
Teaching method(s)	Seminar

## Course Objective

After having taken this course, students:

- will have a thorough overview of the political history of Assyria and Babylonia in the first millennium BCE and will have read key primary texts (in Akkadian and in translation) that illustrates this history
- will have thorough knowledge of the research tools in Assyriology necessary to conduct philological studies
- will be able to read and translate cuneiform texts from the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods independently
- will be able to critically assess these sources and will be able to use that evidence to formulate arguments

## Course Content

Ruthless wars, ambitions of empire and sumptuous palaces neo-assythat awed all those who came upon them... This course is designed to familiarize students with the diverse textual sources from the Neo-Assyrian (912-612 BCE) and Neo-Babylonian (627/612–539 BCE) periods and to explicate how scholars use them to reconstruct history. In the first part of the seminar, students will deepen their knowledge about the imperial phase of Assyria's history by reading selections from letters, annals and commemorative inscriptions in the original cuneiform. The second part of the course deals with two key Neo-Babylonian kings (Nebuchadnezzar II and Nabonidus) and the shift from the Neo-Babylonian to the Achaemenid (or First Persian) Empire in 539 BCE, with special attention paid to Cyrus II ("Cyrus the Great") and his conquest of Babylon. Themes to be explored during discussions include the political and administrative mechanics of imperial expansion, religious policies, the relationship between Babylonia and Assyria, strategies of diplomacy and the question of cultural clashes and cultural exchange. This course is designed to lay the basis for independent work, such as a BA thesis.

## Additional Information Teaching Methods

Seminar

## Method of Assessment

Take-home exam

## Entry Requirements

Successful completion of Elementary Akkadian 1-2

## Literature

The instructor will provide the weekly readings on canvas. Students will require the following materials:

1. **Sign list:** Rykle Borger, *Mesopotamisches Zeichenlexikon* (last edition 2010) or Rene Labat, *Manuel*

d'épigraphie akkadienne (last edition 1976).

2. **Dictionaries:**

3. CDA: A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian, 2nd edition 2000, edited by Jeremy Black, Andrew George and Nicolas Postgate.
4. AHw: von Soden, Wolfram. Akkadisches Handwörterbuch. 3 volumes. Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1965-1981.
5. CAD: The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. 21 volumes. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1956-2010. (Download individual volumes (PDF): <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/publications/assyrian-dictionary-orienta>)

### Additional Information Target Audience

Students of Ancient Studies (Oudheidwetenschappen) with specialization Ancient Near Eastern Studies