

Attention!

This is a representative syllabus.
The syllabus for the course you are
enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's
syllabus for more information on
specific requirements for a given
semester.

Syriac II

Reading Syriac and Introduction to Syriac Literary Tradition

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NELC 5126: (3 credit hours)

Professor
Office Hours:
E-mail:

Continuing from NELC 5125: Syriac I, this course has two components. The main part is intensive practice of reading Syriac prose and poetry from a variety of periods and genres, including biblical texts, philosophical prose, verse homilies, and historical narratives. You will also create a research bibliography on a topic of interest to you in Syriac studies, which you will share with your fellow students at the end of the course.

Course Books:

- ◆ Theodor Nöldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, trans. J.A. Crichton, Williams & Norgate, 1904 (reprint with Appendix by Eisenbrauns, 2004).
- ◆ J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, Oxford, 1903.

100 points possible (A=90, B=80, C=70, D=60)

25 pts. Homework (assigned in class) and reading in class

25 pts. Annotated research bibliography on approved topic

25 pts. Midterm exam

25 pts. Final exam

Note: Regardless of your point total, you must pass the final to pass the class!

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS (40 sessions including midterm)

Week 1: Jan 9, 11, 13

Week 2: No session MLK Day, Jan 16; Meetings Jan 18, 20

Week 3: Jan 23, 25, 27

Week 4: Jan 30, Feb 1; No session Feb 3

Week 5: Feb 6, 8, 10

Week 6: Feb 13, 15, 17

Week 7: Feb 20, 22, 24. Midterm Exam Feb 24

Week 8: Feb 27, Mar 1, 3

Week 9: March 6, 8, 10

SPRING RECESS

Week 10: No session Monday March 20; Meetings 22-24

Week 11: March 27, 29, 31

Week 12: April 3, 5, 7

Week 13: April 10, 12, 14

Week 14: April 17, 19, 21

Week 15: April 24: sharing research bibliographies

Final Exam: Tuesday May 2, 12:00-1:45pm

Readings (subject to changes in consultation with the students)

Gospels:

1. Old Syriac Gospels, excerpts used by early Christian ascetics

Chronicles:

2. Chronicle of Edessa.
3. So-called “Khuzistan Chronicle,” excerpts

Saint’s Lives

4. Life of Išo‘ sabran, excerpts
5. Letter of Šem‘on of Beth Arsham

Poetry

6. Ephraem, “On Admonition and Prayer” (from Thackston’s grammar)
7. Ephraem, *Carmina Nisibena*, selection

Philosophy

8. Bar Daišān, *Book of the Laws of the Countries*

Epistolography

9. A letter of Catholicos Yhabalāhā III

Annotated research bibliography (15 pages +)

In consultation with me, you will pick one subject for which you will develop an extensive, classified bibliography. Start early! A sample of possible topics:

Grammar	Historiography	Manuscripts
Lexicography	Philosophy and Science	Polemic against another religion
Saints’ Lives	Historical Geography	Formation of a specific church
Liturgy	Evolution of the language	Martyrdom
Manuscripts	Epigraphy	Translations from Greek

Annotate each bibliographic entry with 1-3 sentences summarizing the contents or claims of the item. You should include primary sources in Syriac as well as secondary sources.

Preface your bibliography with a brief (2-3 pp.) summary report of the state of the field you have chosen to research, pointing out the major questions that have been asked, approaches taken to answering them, and hypotheses proposed.