INSTRUCTOR
John Steele, Department of Egyptology and Assyriology

MEETING TIME
TBC

LOCATION
Wilbour Hall 203

INSTRUCTOR OFFICE HOURS
THURSDAY 2:00 – 3:00 PM

COURSE OVERVIEW
This seminar will the development and practice of astronomy and the related astral sciences in Babylonia

CURRICULAR CONTEXT
This seminar is aimed at graduate students in the field of Assyriology or the History of the Exact Sciences in Antiquity. A basic knowledge of the Akkadian cuneiform is recommended but not essential. Likewise, some reading knowledge of French and German is recommended.

COURSE AIMS
The course has three main aims:

• To introduce students to the history of Babylonian astronomy, from both technical and cultural perspectives.
• To expose graduate students to current scholarly debates in the history of ancient science and scholarship.
• To encourage students to relate these debates to problems within their own research.
• To develop students’ research and writing skills and their familiarity with the scholarly practices of Assyriology and the history of science.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
By the end of the course students should be able to

• Demonstrate the ability to critically read and discuss key scholarship on Babylonian Astronomy.
• Undertake original research on Babylonian astronomy and its place within ancient astronomy and Babylonian scholarship.
• Write a research paper using the appropriate style of a journal in our field.

COURSE STRUCTURE
Each class will be devoted to discussion of a particular topic (see weekly schedule below). The first half of the class will be a lecture/discussion led by the instructor. The second half of the class will be a discussion on the readings led by a student. The student should briefly (no more than 10 minutes) highlight the most significant points in the readings, and prepare at least 4 discussion questions.

ASSESSMENT
Presentation of readings and discussion leadership: 20%
General participation: 10%
Bi-weekly problems (calculating using Babylonian methods, etc): 20%
Paper 1 (due by the meeting of week 10): 20%
Paper 2 (due by the last day of reading period): 30%

• The presentation of readings and discussion leadership will be assessed on the quality of the summary of the weekly reading (both depth of analysis of the reading and clarity of presentation will be considered), the selection of appropriate additional readings, and the quality of posted discussion questions.
• General participation will be assessed on a student’s involvement in class discussions and evidence of having read the assigned readings.
• Paper 1 will be on a topic set by the instructor in the fifth week of class. The paper should be 3000–4000 words in length and follow the style guidelines (reference styles, transcription conventions etc) of a major Assyriology or History of Science journal.
• Paper 2 will be a research paper on a topic related to the course that must be proposed by the student and approved by the instructor by week 9. The paper should be 5000–8000 words in length, follow the style guidelines (reference styles, transcription conventions etc) of a major Assyriology or History of Science journal, and contain original research and analysis.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT
Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the term if you have a disability or other conditions that might require accommodations or modification of any of these course procedures. You may speak with me after class or during office hours. For more information, please contact Student and Employee Accessibility Services at 401-863-9588 or SEAS@brown.edu. Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can contact one of the deans in the Dean of the College office.

COURSE HOURS AND EXPECTATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class meetings</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly class preparation (13 x 10 hours)</td>
<td>130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem sets (6 x 3 hours)</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 1 (research and writing)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 2 (research and writing)</td>
<td>30</td>
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It is expected that students will attend all of the classes and seminar discussions and arrive on time. All seminar discussions are to be conducted in a supportive, courteous, and inclusive manner - the aim is to learn from one-another not to score points against each-other.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND PRELIMINARY LIST OF READINGS

All readings will be available as pdfs.

1. INTRODUCTION, NUMBERS, BASIC NAKED-EYE ASTRONOMY, THE CALENDAR, SOURCES


2. EARLY ASTRONOMICAL TEXTS: ‘THREE STARS EACH’, EAE 14, MUL.APIN TABLET 1


3. MUL.APIN TABLET 2 AND RELATED MATERIAL.

4. **ASTRONOMY IN THE NEO-ASSYRIAN LETTERS AND REPORTS**


5. **THE ASTRONOMICAL DIARIES**


7. **GOAL-YEAR TEXTS, ALMANACS, NORMAL STAR ALMANACS**

8. MATHEMATICAL ASTRONOMY (I): PLANETARY SCHEMES


9. MATHEMATICAL ASTRONOMY (II): LUNAR SCHEMES


10. SCHEMATIC ASTRONOMY IN THE LATE PERIOD


11. LATE BABYLONIAN ASTROLOGY


12. ASTRONOMY AND ITS USES


13. THE LEGACY OF BABYLONIAN ASTRONOMY IN OTHER CULTURES
