



PCC Proposal to Establish a Bachelor of Arts in Religions of the Ancient Middle East (Senate Document #19-20-13)

TO Wallace D. Loh | President

FROM Pamela Lanford | Chair, University Senate

I am pleased to forward the accompanying legislation for your consideration and approval. Betsy Beise, member of the Programs, Curricula, & Courses (PCC) Committee, presented the PCC Proposal to Establish a Bachelor of Arts in Religions of the Ancient Middle East (Senate Document #19-20-13), which the University Senate approved at its meeting on October 2, 2019. Please inform the Senate of your decision and any administrative action related to your conclusion.

Approved:

Date:

10-30-2019

Wallace D. Loh
President

Copies of this approval and the accompanying legislation will be forwarded to:

- Mary Ann Rankin**, Senior Vice President and Provost
- Reka Montfort**, Executive Secretary and Director, University Senate
- Michael Poterala**, Vice President and General Counsel
- Cynthia Hale**, Associate Vice President for Finance and Personnel
- John Bertot**, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs
- Elizabeth Beise**, Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Programs
- Sylvia B. Andrews**, Academic Affairs
- Bonnie Thornton Dill**, Dean, College of Arts & Humanities
- Ralph Bauer**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Arts & Humanities
- Hayim Lapin**, Director, Meyerhoff Center for Jewish Studies
- Janna Bianchini**, Chair, Programs, Curricula, & Courses (PCC) Committee



PCC Proposal to Establish a Bachelor of Arts in Religions of the Ancient Middle East (PCC 18094)

PRESENTED BY Janna Bianchini, Chair, Senate Programs, Curricula, and Courses Committee

REVIEW DATES SEC – September 20, 2019 | SENATE – October 2, 2019

VOTING METHOD In a single vote

RELEVANT POLICY/DOCUMENT NA

NECESSARY APPROVALS Senate, President, University System of Maryland Board of Regents, and Maryland Higher Education Commission

ISSUE

The Meyerhoff Center for Jewish Studies, within the Colleges of Arts and Humanities (ARHU), proposes to establish a Bachelor of Arts in Religions of the Ancient Middle East. The major will offer students the opportunity to explore the world out of which biblical Israel and ancient Judaism, Christianity, and early Islam emerged, as well as the wide array of other religious and cultural beliefs, practices, and institutions that flourished between about 1200 BCE/BC and 850 CE/AD. Religion, and among them specifically Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, is clearly important to many students on campus; it is important in public policy and civil society from the local to the international level. Religion is also central to understanding the history and culture of the ancient Middle East, and in particular the emergence of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This program provides a framework for the study of the emergence of these traditions in a broad historical, cultural, and comparative context. The program also provides instruction in a broad variety of tools and methods that are required to do justice to the highly varied evidence for the ancient Near East. These tools and methods include (but are by no means limited to) close textual study, archaeology, economic modeling, historical inquiry, and comparative study.

The program is 30-credits. In Foundations courses (12 credits) students take at least one course that addresses a significant question about the nature of religion and religious change or the interplay of religious groups. In addition, they must take two courses that survey two geographical, cultural, or chronological sub areas. In addition to Electives (15 credits), all students take an interdisciplinary Capstone seminar, typically in their final year. The program will also have an optional language track, which requires 6 credits of Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, or other relevant language beyond the first-year level. An honors track is also available.

In anticipation that many students in the program will use this program as a second major, the program-credit level is set to 30 to allow for students to double major. The program is expected to have 20 to 30 students enrolled at steady state. Marketing survey results show that there is interest in the subject area, and biblical studies courses continue to enroll well. Although the number of students expressing interest is small relative to other majors, the responses indicate that there is enough interest to support a major with the anticipated enrollment size.

The courses needed for the program already exist. Faculty, mainly from Jewish Studies but also from other ARHU departments, already offer courses in this area. The physical and administrative infrastructure for the program also already exist in the Meyerhoff Center for Jewish Studies, which offers the Jewish Studies major. Consequently, the need for new resources to operate the program is minimal.

This proposal was approved by the Senate Programs, Curricula, and Courses committee on September 6, 2019.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula, and Courses recommends that the Senate approve this new degree program.

COMMITTEE WORK

The committee considered this proposal at its meeting on September 6, 2019. Hayim Lapin, Professor and Director of the Meyerhoff Center for Jewish Studies, and Ralph Bauer, Associate Dean for Arts and Humanities, presented the proposal and responded to questions from the committee. The proposal was approved by the committee.

ALTERNATIVES

The Senate could decline to approve this new degree program.

RISKS

If the Senate declines to approve this degree program, the University will lose an opportunity to offer an interdisciplinary and culturally-relevant undergraduate program that utilizes existing resources to fill an existing gap in the university's liberal arts offerings.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The courses, faculty, advising resources, administration, and facilities already exist for this program, and as a result, there are minimal financial implications for this major.

**University of Maryland PCC
Program/Curriculum/Unit Proposal**

PCC Log No: **18094**

Program: Religions of the Ancient Middle East

Department/Unit: JWST (Meyerhoff Center and Program for Jewish Studies)

College/School: ARHU

Proposal Contact Person (with email): Hayim Lapin (hlapin@umd.edu)

Type of Action (check one):

- Curriculum change (includes modifying minors, concentrations/specializations and creating informal specializations)
- Curriculum change is for an LEP Program
- Rename a program or formal Area of Concentration
- Establish/Discontinue a formal Area of Concentration
- Other:
- Establish a new academic degree/certificate program
- Create an online version of an existing program
- Establish a new minor
- Suspend/Discontinue a degree/certificate program
- Establish a new Master or Certificate of Professional Studies program
- New Professional Studies program will be administered by Office of Extended Studies

Italics indicate that the proposal must be presented to the full University Senate for consideration.

Approval Signatures - Please print name, sign, and date. For proposals requiring multiple unit approvals, please use additional cover sheet(s).

1. Department Committee Chair Hayim Lapin [Signature] 4/15/19
2. Department Chair Hayim Lapin [Signature] 4/15/19
3. College/School PCC Chair Alexander Canaque [Signature] 4/16/2019
4. Dean Ralph Bavel [Signature] 4/15/19
5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required) _____
6. Chair, Senate PCC Jane Bianchini [Signature] 4-6-19
7. University Senate Chair (if required) _____
8. Senior Vice President and Provost _____

Instructions:

When approved by the dean of the college or school, please send the proposal and signed form to the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building, Campus-5031, **and** email the proposal document as an MSWord attachment to pcc-submissions@umd.edu.

Summary of Proposed Action (use additional sheet if necessary):

Proposal to create a new undergraduate major within the Jewish Studies Department for Religions of the Ancient Middle East (RAME), giving students the opportunity to study the historical and cultural origins and developments of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic religious and cultural systems.

Unit Code(s) (to be entered by the Office of Academic Planning and Programs):

In order to complete this form, you will need to copy this template to your own document, then complete, print, and submit this proposal with the [PCC Cover Sheet](#)

Program: Religions of the Ancient Middle East (RAME)

Date of Proposal: February 3, 2019

Start Term for New Program: Fall 2019

A new degree program proposal will need to be approved not just by campus but also by the University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). New certificate programs need to be approved by the USM Chancellor and MHEC. The following prompts are based on academic policies for programs and reflect campus requirements and MHEC requirements. The prompts also include questions frequently asked by review committees. See http://mhec.maryland.gov/institutions_training/Pages/acadaff/AcadProgInstitApprovals/NewAcademicProgramProposals.aspx for more information about MHEC requirements. Please feel free to add additional information at the end of this document or in a separate appendix.

Mission and Purpose

1. Describe the program and explain how it fits the institutional mission statement and planning priorities. The University Mission Statement and Strategic Plan can be found on this site: <https://www.umd.edu/history-and-mission>.

Inasmuch as contemporary politics and the media debate the role of the Jewish State to American politics, the Christian character of the United States, and the relationship between Islam and terror, fostering the study of the historical, cultural, and archaeological contexts of the emergence of Judaism, Christianity, and earliest Islam, and promotes **knowledge in areas of importance to the State, the nation, and the world**.

The RAME program gives undergraduate students from across the academic spectrum the opportunity to study the historical and cultural roots of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic culture, and to study the origins and developments of these religious and cultural systems as fields of interest in their own right.

In addition, we respond to the following points raised by the University mission for undergraduate education.

- Programs that are comprehensive and challenging, and that serve students well as a foundation for the workplace, advanced study, and a productive, fulfilling life.

In addition to the long-term career benefits in **the workplace** of Humanities degrees that emphasize research, critical thinking, and writing, we certainly aim to provide the foundations for **advanced study**, and believe strongly that a rich, critical, nuanced understanding of religious systems still in place today contribute to a **productive and fulfilling life**.

Program Characteristics

2. Provide the catalog description of the proposed program. As part of the description, please indicate any areas of concentration or specializations that will be offered.

The major in Religions of the Ancient Middle East (RAME) (30 cr) offers students the opportunity to explore the world out of which biblical Israel and ancient Judaism, Christianity, and early Islam emerged, as well as the wide array of other religious and cultural beliefs, practices, and institutions that flourished between about 1200 BCE/BC and 850 CE/AD. In *Foundations* courses students take at least one course that addresses a

significant question about the nature of religion and religious change or the interplay of religious groups. In addition they must take two courses that survey two geographical, cultural, or chronological sub areas. In addition to *Electives*, all students take an interdisciplinary *Capstone* seminar, typically in their final year.

Language Track (min. 36 cr). Although there are no language requirements for the major, students who wish to incorporate ancient languages into their work are encouraged to pursue a language enhanced track. Students take six credits of language at the second year level as part of their major. They are also expected to make use of their target languages in completing the research project for the Capstone course.

The University currently offers Arabic, Hebrew, and Greek. The number of credits per course varies by language. Other languages such as Aramaic, Akkadian, or Syriac taken through CourseShare or the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area may be substituted.

Note: Students pursuing the language track may need to take up to 12 credits in language prerequisites to attain the second year level.

Honors Track (min 36 cr). We encourage students with very strong research interests and academic performance in the major to apply to the Honors Track.

As a prerequisite for applying to Honors in Religion and Culture in the Ancient and Late Antique Near East students must also pursue the language track and have acquired basic knowledge of at least one ancient language by the end of their third year.

The plan of study is as follows:

- In the first semester of third year, candidates apply in writing to pursue the honors program. The application must include a proposed area of interest, and be accompanied by a letter of support from a faculty mentor who will work with the student to develop a plan for honors study.
- Students complete two upper-level, H-section, or graduate courses that support their field of study, selected in consultation with the mentor. These may be completed between the second semester of the third year and the end of their fourth year and replace two upper division electives taken by RAME majors.
- In the first semester of the fourth year, students take RELS408H, a tailored section of RELS408 (capstone course). It is expected that work in RELS408H seminar will contribute to the student's foundations for later thesis work.
- In the second semester of the fourth year, students enroll in RELS488 (Honors Thesis Research). This course replaces three credits of upper division major electives.

3. What are the educational objectives of the program?

1. RAME is not JWST

To avoid confusion that has arisen at the College PCC level, we preface this discussion of educational objectives with a discussion of the difference between the proposed major and the Jewish Studies major. Jewish Studies majors study modern Hebrew, and take courses that span some three thousand years and have a geographical range that includes not only the Levant and Mesopotamia, but Africa, Europe, and the Americas. In addition, courses that fulfill the Jewish Studies major always deal with Jews, Judaism, or Jewishness as a primary subject either directly (e.g., History of the Jews) or indirectly (as in courses that deal with Israel and the Middle East, or with Anti-Semitism).

By contrast, RAME deals with antiquity, has a geographical focus, and Jews are only one of the groups whose history, literature, and culture is studied. Majors study Levantine or Mesopotamian polytheism, Hellenistic and early Roman culture in the Near East, the rise of Christianity, and early Islam. In addition, the I-Series courses required of all majors are interdisciplinary in that they explicitly deal with methodological questions involving the impact of religion on human communities and on human change, and generally many cover multiple religious groups.

Some ten to twelve TTK and PTK faculty teach in Jewish Studies. Of these, only three are directly involved with RAME. The RAME committee includes an early Islamicist who is not in Jewish Studies, and will work collaboratively with faculty in Classics and Art History and Archaeology.

A substantial number of RAME courses *do* originate in Jewish Studies. Partly, this has to do with the nature of the fields that RAME covers: None of the relevant RAME faculty in JWST had their training in departments of Jewish Studies, and their research and teaching expertise and areas of interest expand beyond the “Jewish” alone. In addition, they have been voluntarily offering these courses to fill obvious gaps in the course offerings on campus.

2. RAME educational objectives.

“Critics not Caretakers.” Religion, and among them specifically Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, is clearly important to many students on campus; it is important in the public policy and civil society of the State of Maryland, and in national and international politics. Religion is also central to understanding the history and culture of the ancient Middle East, and in particular the emergence of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Not surprisingly, the lines between who we are and how we study the past, how we see winners and losers and right and wrong, can become deeply tangled. This major aims, first of all, to provide a framework for the study of the emergence of these traditions in a broad historical, cultural, and comparative context. Second, the program endorses the view formulated by Russ McCutcheon that as **academic** teachers about religion, our goal is to encourage students to be “critics”—to cultivate the distance, and the analytical tools to separate their own prior understanding based on their own contemporary knowledge or beliefs from those of the people they study, and to question the assumptions and practices of ancient founders and practitioners—rather than to be “caretakers” whose analyses must always be measured against the traditional values of the religious groups including those of contemporary leaders and practitioners.

Continuity and Change. Students take courses in more than one time period, region, or cultural area. Students learn that, for instance, to study Biblical Israel and Jews in late antique Iraq, or the world of Jesus and of Christianity in the fourth century, even though there are strong continuities between the first and the second, means, taking into account significant changes of context and circumstances, and taking seriously the view that new developments are important in their own right not merely accretions to an originally pure form.

Interdisciplinarity. A broad variety of tools and methods are required to do justice to the highly varied evidence for the ancient Near East. These include (but are by no means limited to) close textual study, archaeology, economic modeling, historical inquiry, and comparative study. The individual courses typically reflect a range of methods, informed by the instructor’s specific areas of expertise. Moreover, the Capstone seminar by design is organized around an interdisciplinary question (death, attitudes toward sex, law), and students are encouraged to deepen their understanding of areas they have already studied, enriched by interests and approaches that the instructor and other seminar participants bring to the class.

4. Describe any selective admissions policy or special criteria for students interested in this program.

There are no selective admission criteria

5. Indicate the course requirements with course numbers, titles and credits. If applicable, indicate if any course will also count for a general education requirement. In an appendix, provide the course catalog information (credits, description, prerequisites, etc.) for all of the courses. Note that suffixed "selected" or "special" topics courses should be avoided. If suffixed-selected or special topics courses are offered regularly in the new program, you should make the courses permanent. Also, please review the basic requirements of [degree programs](#) or [certificate programs](#) to ensure that they meet the minimum policy requirements.

Please note: new courses or modifications to courses need to be submitted through the Testudo Curriculum Management system and will need to follow the normal VPAC course proposal review process. You may submit individual course changes to VPAC concurrently with the PCC proposal; however, the course changes may be held depending on the outcome of the PCC proposal.

1. The Major.

Foundations (12 cr)

One approved I-Series course (3 cr)

RELS 289I: What is Religion? (DSHU, DSCC)

RELS 289M: Jesus, Mani, and Muhammad (DSPS, DSHU)

JWST 289J: Jerusalem in Antiquity: The History of Sacred Space in a Holy City (DSPS, DSHU)

JWST 230: Inventing Tradition: The Making of Rabbinic Judaism[*] (DSPS, DSHU)

Three courses in two or more geographical, chronological, or cultural sub-areas (9 cr)

HIST120: Islamic Civilization (DSHU)

RELS264: Intro to New Testament (DSHU)

JWST225: Religions of the Ancient Near East (DSHU)

JWST231: Jewish Texts and Cultures of the Second Temple Period (DSHU, DSPS)

JWST262: Intro to Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (DSHU)

Electives (15 cr; four courses at the upper level)

CLAS305: Archaeological Methods and Practice (DSHS)

HIST110: The Ancient World (DSHU)

HIST320: Early Christianity: Jesus to Constantine

HIST428R: Selected Topics in History; Transition to Islam: From the Ancient to the Medieval Muslim World

JWST324: Biblical History and Culture (3)

JWST325: Jews and Judaism in Antiquity I: Sixth Century BCE through the First Century CE (DSHS or DSHU, DSSP, DSPC)

JWST326: Jews and Judaism in Antiquity II: First through Seventh Centuries (DSSP)

JWST430: Dead Sea Scrolls (DSHU, DSSP)

JWST468: Readings in the Hebrew Bible (3-4)

JWST469: Readings in Rabbinic Hebrew (3-4)

Other courses by permission.

Capstone (3 cr)

RELS408: Capstone Seminar in Religion and Culture in the Ancient and Late Antique Near East [**]

2. Language Track (min. 6 additional cr.; min. 36 total)

Prerequisite: First year language (6-12 credits).

Six credits in Hebrew, Arabic, Greek or other relevant language beyond the first year level.

Note: Students who place directly into second year language or above need only complete six credits of language. The number of prerequisite language credits varies by language.

3. Honors Track (Language Track + in-track requirements; min. 36 total)

Six credits in the upper-level, H-section, or graduate-level coursework, taken in consultation with with faculty mentor.

RELS408H: Capstone Seminar in Religion and Culture of the Ancient Near East (3) [**]

RELS488: Honors Thesis in Religious Studies (3) [**]

Note: The Honors Track does not add any credits beyond those required by the Language Track. .

[*] Existing course, currently under review for I-Series approval.

[**] New course, VPAC and GenEd submission in coordination with this proposal.

6. Summarize the factors that were considered in developing the proposed curriculum (such as recommendations of advisory or other groups, articulated workforce needs, standards set by disciplinary associations or specialized-accrediting groups, etc.).

The University of Maryland has been offering a credential (first, a “citation;” later, a “minor”) in Religious Studies since 2001. For most of that time, it has been administered by the Meyerhoff Center for Jewish Studies. Since 2001 interested faculty have consulted regularly about developing an undergraduate major. However, we have historically been unable to guarantee coverage across the major regions and religious formations of the world. In addition the difficulty of coordinating shared courses across BSOS, ARHU as well as other Colleges with no budget or FTEs has been daunting.

The RAME major is proposed as a first step and a “proof of concept” for a major in Religious Studies. Our assessment is that we can support religious studies in three areas: The ancient Middle East, Religions of the West (that is, Europe and the Americas, but without many resources for indigenous religions), and Islam. This proposal takes on the first of these. Structurally, the broader major would really require only one small adjustment: All students would take RELS289I. Beyond that, the basic pattern of foundations, concentration, and electives would govern the major.

Concurrently, faculty in Jewish Studies, which has historically housed the Religious Studies minor, noticed that despite a rather precipitous decline in the major and in some historically well-enrolled classes, classes in “biblical studies” broadly conceived (Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, Ancient Near East, Early Christianity, and so on) did continue to enroll well. These courses are taught by Jewish Studies faculty either in JWST or (as in the case of one faculty member with a joint appointment in History) HIST. Since we have faculty in place and demonstrable student interest in one coherent (and perennially salient) slice of the field: the history, literature, and culture that gave birth to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, we elected to develop this as the first step toward a religious studies major.

To facilitate this, we have brought the early Islamicist in HIST fully into our planning and have also invited the archaeologists and art historians in ARTH with expertise in related chronological or geographical fields to participate in the committee. We have consulted with HIST and with CLAS to make sure that we were not unintentionally undermining programs or creating administrative burdens for these two units. In fact, for a time the plan was for a major jointly run by CLAS and JWST. While we would not rule out such a program in the future, both units found it simpler for JWST to proceed along a separate track.

Finally, we conducted a marketing survey, sent to approximately 9,000 students, predominantly First Years. The survey had a 13% rate of return (almost 1,200 respondents).

There was very high interest in the subject area. As an indicator, more than half of respondents said that they would like to be contacted about further developments. Language questions had a surprisingly high rate of

return with almost half saying they were interested in language at some level. In the question about interest in specific languages, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic or Aramaic **each** received about **200 (194) or above** positive responses.

The number of students expressing interest in the major is relatively small, but large enough to support a major: about 11% of all respondents, and 16% of those who responded to the question about interest in the major showed some interest in the major. The same question asked students about a minor as well, which may have driven down the response about the major. There is every indication that this would be a very popular minor and we will strongly consider adding a RAME minor in the near future.

7. Sample plan. Provide a term by term sample plan that shows how a hypothetical student would progress through the program to completion. It should be clear the length of time it will take for a typical student to graduate. For undergraduate programs, this should be the *four-year plan*.

Sample 4-Year Plan #1 (Basic Major)

Year 1 Fall

- ENGL101 (FSAW)[1] (3 credits)
- ARHU158 (3 credits)
- RELS289I [2] (DSHU #1; SCIS #1) (3 credits)
- Diversity #1 [3] (DVUP) (3 credits)
- 1xx-2xx elective (3 credits)

15 credits

- [1] Must attempt by 30 credits
- [2] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses of the major approved for SCIS and DSHU credit.
- [3] The DVUP and DVCC courses may also fulfill DS and IS categories

Year 1 Spring

- Math (FSMA) [1] (3 credits)
- HIST120 [4] (DSHU #2) (3 credits)
- DSHS #1 (3 credits)
- Diversity #2 [3] (DVUP or DVCC) (3 credits)
- SCIS #2 (3 credits)

15 credits

- [1] Must attempt by 30 credits
- [3] DVUP and DVCC courses may also fulfill DS and IS categories
- [4] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses of the major approved for DSHU credit.

Year 2 Fall

- RELS264 [5] (3 credits)
- Analytic Reasoning (FSAR) (3 credits)
- DSSP #1 (non-major) [6] (3 credits)
- 1xx-2xx Elective (6)

15 Credits

- [5] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses.
- [6] DSSP courses may also fill other DS categories.

Year 2 Spring

JWST225 [5] (3 credits)
Natural Sciences (DSNS) (3 credits)
Oral Communication (FSOC) (3 credits)
1xx-2xx Elective (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (3 credits)

15 Credits
[5] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses.

Year 3 Fall

Major elective, lower level (3 credits)
Major elective, upper level (3 credits)
Natural Science Lab (DSNL) (4 credits)
Global Engagement (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (3 credits)

16 Credits

Year 3 Spring

Major elective, upper level (3 credits)
Major elective, upper level (3 credits)
DSHS #2 (3 credits)
FSPW (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (3 credits)

15 Credits

Year 4 Fall

RELS 408 (DSSP #2, proposed) (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (12)

15 Credits

Year 4 Spring

Major Elective (upper level) (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (12)

15 Credits

Total Credits: 121, at least 45 credits 3xx or above.
Total Major Credits 30; at least 15 credits 3xx or above.

Sample 4-year plan #2: Language Track

Year 1 Fall

ENGL101 (FSAW) [1] (3 credits)
Language prerequisite #1 (3 credits)
RELS289I [2] (DSHU #1; SCIS #1) (3 credits)
Diversity #1 [3] (DVUP) (3 credits)
1xx-2xx elective (3 credits)

15 credits

[1] Must attempt by 30 credits

[2] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses of the major approved for SCIS and DSHU credit.

[3] DVUP and DVCC courses may also fulfill DS and IS categories

Year 1 Spring

Math (FSMA)[1] (3 credits)

HIST120 [4] (DSHU #2) (3 credits)

Language prerequisite #2 (3 credits)

DSHS #1 (3 credits)

SCIS #2 (3 credits)

15 credits

[1] Must attempt by 30 credits

[4] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses of the major approved for DSHU credit.

Year 2 Fall

RELS264 [5] (3 credits)

Second year language (3 credits)

Analytic Reasoning (FSAR) (3 credits)

DSSP #1 (non-major) [6] (3 credits)

Diversity #2 [3] (DVUP or DVCC) (3 credits)

15 credits

[3] DVUP and DVCC courses may also fulfill DS and SCIS categories

[5] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses.

[6] DSSP courses may also fill other DS categories.

Year 2 Spring

JWST225 [5] (3 credits)

Second year language #2 (Global Engagement) (3 credits)

Natural Sciences (DSNS) (3 credits)

Oral Communication (FSOC) (3 credits)

3xx-4xx Elective (3 credits)

15 Credits

[5] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses.

Year 3 Fall

Major elective, lower level (3 credits)

Major elective, upper level (3 credits)

Natural Science Lab (DSNL) (4 credits)

3xx-4xx Elective (6 credits)

16 Credits

Year 3 Spring

Major elective, upper level (3 credits)

Major elective, upper level (3 credits)

DSHS #2 (3 credits)

FSPW (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (3 credits)

15 Credits

Year 4 Fall

RELS408 (DSSP #2, proposed) (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (12)

15 Credits

Year 4 Spring

Major Elective (upper level) (3 credits)

3xx-4xx Elective (12)

15 Credits

Total Credits: 121, at least 45 credits 3xx or above.

Total Major Credits: 6 language prerequisite; 36 required; at least 15 credits 3xx or above.

Sample 4-year plan #3: Honors Track

Year 1 Fall

ENGL101 (FSAW) [1] (3 credits)
RELS289I [2] (DSHU#1; SCIS #1) (3 credits)
Language prerequisite #1 (3 credits)
Diversity #1 [3] (DVUP) (3 credits)
1xx-2xx elective (3 credits)

15 credits

[1] Must attempt by 30 credits

[2] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses of the major approved for SCIS and DSHU credit.

[3] DVUP and DVCC courses may also fulfill DS and SCIS categories

Year 1 Spring

Math (FSMA) [1] (3 credits)
HIST120 [4] (DSHU #2) (3 credits)
Language prerequisite #2 (3 credits)
DSHS #1 (3 credits)
SCIS #2 (3 credits)

15 credits

[1] Must attempt by 30 credits

[4] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses of the major approved for DSHU credit.

Year 2 Fall

RELS264 [5] (3 credits)

Second year language (3 credits)
Analytic Reasoning (FSAR) (3 credits)
DSSP #1 (non-major) [6] (3 credits)
Diversity #2 [3] (DVUP or DVCC) (3 credits)

15 credits
[3] DVUP and DVCC courses may also fulfill DS and SCIS categories
[5] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses.
[6] DSSP courses may also fill other DS categories.

Year 2 Spring

JWST225 [5] (3 credits)
Second year language #2 (Global Engagement) (3 credits)
Natural Sciences (DSNS) (3 credits)
Oral Communication (FSOC) (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (3 credits)

15 Credits
[5] Can be substituted by other Foundations courses.

Year 3 Fall

Major elective, lower level (3 credits)
Major elective, upper level (3 credits)
Natural Science Lab (DSNL) (4 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (6 credits)

16 Credits

Year 3 Spring

Major elective, upper level (H-section or graduate level) (3 credits)
DSHS #2 (3 credits)
FSPW (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (6 credits)

15 Credits

Year 4 Fall

RELS 408H (DSSP #2, proposed) (3 credits)
Major elective, upper level (H-section or graduate level) (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (9)

15 Credits

Year 4 Spring

RELS488 (Honors Thesis) (3 credits)
3xx-4xx Elective (12)

15 Credits
[3] The UPS and CC courses may also fulfill DS and SCIS categories

Total Credits: 121, at least 45 credits 3xx or above.

Total Major Credits: 6 language prerequisite; 36 required; at least 15 credits 3xx or above.

8. Indicate whether the program will be offered either online or off-campus. Please note that MHEC requires a separate proposal for off-campus delivery. If the program will be offered exclusively online or will have both a face-to-face and online version of the program, please complete this additional form and add as an appendix:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ojpUBt4mAWINPCiQNzZ48UH68zGPYj31TPgEOfW3q1E/>

On campus delivery

9. If the program will be offered in a non-semester format, identify the term structure that will be used for the program:

- Approved Campus 12-Week Term (see [Academic Calendars](#))
- *Non-Standard Term

*If you are using a non-standard term structure, indicate whether relevant offices, such as the Registrar's Office and International Scholar & Student Services, have been notified and support the program. Non-standard terms need to fit within the university's scheduling system calendar, and non-standard terms need to work with international student visa requirements.

Term structure: Standard semester format

10. For Master's degree programs, describe the thesis requirement and/or the non-thesis requirement.

NA

11. List the intended student learning outcomes. In an appendix, provide the plan for assessing these outcomes.

Major

Successful Majors in Religions of the Ancient Middle East (RAME) will:

- **Demonstrate an understanding of** fundamental methodological, historical, and/or comparative approaches to the study of religion and culture in the ancient Near East and **apply this understanding** to specific relevant examples. [Demonstrated through written work or final exam in one of the approved I-series courses]
- **Describe** and **illustrate** the development of at least two chronological, geographical, or cultural sub-areas. [Foundations]
- **Formulate** and **defend** an argument about religion and culture in the ancient near east informed by the modern scholarship and amply illustrated with reference to ancient evidence. [Demonstrated through written work, potentially including a major research paper, in the capstone course]

Language Track

In addition to the above, Language Track students

- **Demonstrate** the ability to use the languages they have studied as a tool for deep engagement with ancient source material.

Honors

In addition to the above, Honors students in RAME

- **Apply** knowledge and approaches to **investigate** a high-level research question and to **defend** a thesis that is methodologically informed, makes ample use of ancient textual and/or non-textual evidence as well modern scholarly work, and present the results in clear and well-organized academic prose.

See Appendix: Item 11 Learning Outcomes

12. Identify specific actions and strategies that will be utilized to recruit and retain a diverse student body.

Introductory courses in Religious Studies have proven to provide significant recruitment tools for the current Religious Studies minor, and we expect them to be even more effective as an advertisement for the new major. Among the current Religious Studies course offerings are three I-series classes (RELS 289I “What is Religion?”; RELS 289J “Jerusalem in Antiquity”; and RELS 289M “Jesus, Mani, and Muhammad”) that attract 60 to 100 students each time they are taught. These courses are highly attractive to students from a wide variety of backgrounds and disciplines, not only for their contents but because they fulfill significant General Education requirements (in Humanities, Cultural Competence, I-Series). Advertisement of the new major in these courses will provide an opportunity to recruit a diverse student body to the major.

Both currently and throughout its 18-year history, the Religious Studies minor has attracted students of highly diverse racial, ethnic, religious, gender, and sexual identities. The subject matter under discussion lends itself to broad and diverse interest, and our commitment to personal and engaged academic advising has always contributed to retention of diverse students from across the university.

Relationship to Other Units or Institutions

13. If a required or recommended course is offered by another department, discuss how the additional students will not unduly burden that department’s faculty and resources. Discuss any other potential impacts on another department, such as academic content that may significantly overlap with existing programs. Use space below for any comments. Otherwise, add supporting correspondence as an appendix.

The proposed major relies in part on courses offered by or cross-listed with HIST. Based on our assessment, there is room in these classes for additional students and that the major will create incentives for additional students to take historically under-enrolled classes.

In drafting this proposal, we include almost no classes from Classics (with the exception of a general Archaeology class cross listed by several units). In fact, Greek language and some Classics courses are quite relevant, but we wanted to demonstrate clearly that the proposed program does not unduly rely on Classics or reproduce its Classical Cultures track. We are pleased to report that Classics fully supports this proposal. Currently ARTH does not offer courses that would clearly count toward the major. (The two scholars in that department closest to the field emphasize time periods or geographies that are outside our proposed scope.) For that reason, we have not requested letters of support, although we would certainly welcome relevant courses from that department.

Letters of support from Classics and History are attached: Appendix: Item 13a and b, Letters

We add in addition that the various units on campus that support research and teaching in ancient history, languages, and culture (ARTH, CLASS, JWST, HIST) have always worked collaboratively. Recent and anticipated retirements in History have prompted renewed conversations about how we can best support the study of antiquity. Our program, far from negatively impacting existing programs, is proposed in a spirit of providing greater teaching and learning opportunities in the field of ancient Mediterranean and Middle Eastern Studies.

14. Accreditation and Licensure. Will the program need to be accredited? If so, indicate the accrediting agency. Also, indicate if students will expect to be licensed or certified in order to engage in or be successful in the program's target occupation.

None

15. Describe any cooperative arrangements with other institutions or organizations that will be important for the success of this program.

Faculty and Organization

16. Faculty and organization. Who will provide academic direction and oversight for the program? As an appendix, please indicate the faculty involved in the program. Include their titles, credentials, and courses they may teach for the program.

The program will be overseen by the Meyerhoff Program and Center for Jewish Studies, which also houses the Religious Studies minor.

As an interdisciplinary unit, the Meyerhoff Center has a mechanism for granting "Core Faculty Status" to faculties not appointed in Jewish Studies. We expect to extend this structure for RAME faculty as well. We note that this will require a change of the plan of organization of the Meyerhoff Center.

At this point the faculty committee consists of three faculty from Jewish Studies and one from History.

See Appendix: Item 16 Faculty

Resource Needs and Sources

17. Each new program is required to have a library assessment prepared by the University Libraries in order to determine any new library resources that may be required. Please contact the University Libraries staff person who is your departmental/programmatic liaison or Daniel Mack at dmack@umd.edu, Associate Dean of Collections, to request a library assessment that will be added as an appendix. Please note that this assessment must be done by the University Libraries.

See Appendix Item 17 Library Assessment.

There are no new needs. The Meyerhoff Center already supports the collections of the Libraries to a higher degree than most units.

18. Discuss the adequacy of physical facilities, infrastructure and instructional equipment.

The program needs no new facilities.

19. Discuss the instructional resources (faculty, staff, and teaching assistants) that will be needed to cover new courses or needed additional sections of existing courses to be taught. Indicate the source of resources for covering these costs.

Faculty:

We do not anticipate considerable new resource requirements. Most of the courses listed for the major are currently taught already. The principle task will be to make sure that Foundations courses are taught frequently enough. This can primarily be met by reallocating teaching responsibilities away from under-enrolled classes to make sure necessary courses are covered. To do so, the Meyerhoff Center is prepared to re-allocate up to the equivalent of 0.4 FTE (but spread between several faculty members) to teaching specifically for this major. In practice, however, we expect the actual reallocation to be 0.2 to 0.3 FTE. Occasionally, we may need to use soft funds to hire an adjunct instructor or buy out a course from another unit to allow a faculty member to teach for the major.

20. Discuss the administrative and advising resources that will be needed for the program. Indicate the source of resources for covering these costs.

Staffing:

The program is not expected to generate extensive *new* scheduling or business related tasks for staff and only modest increase in existing scheduling or appointment duties. We estimate that at a *maximum* together this will require an additional 0.05 FTE (2-3 weeks per year), mostly falling on the coordinator in Jewish Studies. To free this time, we will consolidate or reduce other activities such as visiting lectures and conferences.

Advising:

Because of a sharp reduction in the number of JWST undergraduate majors and minors in recent years, our advisor is under utilized. The half-time GA currently assigned to undergraduate advising should be sufficient to serve the anticipated major in the immediate term.

21. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) commission requires financial tables to describe the program's financial plan for the next five years. Please consult with our [office](#) before completing these templates: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1V6iSZG05edMitWP6CAOXjCoGO58Gf6VXxPaacKfrhZ4/edit#gid=0>. Once finalized in consultation with our office, these tables must be added as attachments. Use the space below for any additional comments on program funding.

See Appendix: Item 21 Budget.

Implications for the State (Additional Information Required by MHEC and the Board of Regents)

If the proposed program is for a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate that is derived entirely from existing courses within an existing Master’s degree program, then you **only** need to respond to prompts 22 (on market demand) and 25 (curriculum of current master’s degree program).

22. Explain how there is a compelling regional or statewide need for the program. Argument for need may be based on the need for the advancement of knowledge and/or societal needs, including the need for “expanding educational opportunities and choices for minority and educationally disadvantaged students at institutions of higher education.” Also, explain how need is consistent with the [Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education](#).

The proposed program advances knowledge around a key set of issues about which Americans are woefully ignorant. It promotes diversity and inclusion per the MSPPSE, and meets the MSPPSE stated principle of Innovation.

- Complex political issues rooted in the rise of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are debated every day at the local, state and federal level and in the national media. These debates often take place on the basis of uninformed opinion or conventional knowledge that is frequently based on one person’s own religious community’s biases about others. Our major fosters knowledge and clear-eyed, unsentimental understanding of origins and the historical past as one factor in decision making, in addition to political, diplomatic, and military factors.
- For the Meyerhoff Center, the proposed major represents a specific effort to enhance its ability to reach a diverse population. Our courses—and particularly the courses that are at the foundations of the proposed BA program—have often drawn widely across the campus, and we have actively sought out CORE and now GenEd approval precisely to reach those students. However, the name (and subject matter) of the JWST major is too tied to one sub-population on campus to really attract a diverse student body. With this proposed major we break out of the existing mold and actively seek out the much broader student body interested in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic origins.
- As we note below (item 24) there is no comparable program to the one we propose at any State of Maryland institution. We provide an opportunity for students to explore fundamental issues of personal importance to many students and of significance to contemporary society that is not available elsewhere in the State.

In addition, we note consistently high enrollment in ancient history courses and the number of heritage students in the DC area, especially of Iranian and Ethiopian descent.

23. Present data and analysis projecting market demand and the availability of openings in a job market to be served by the new program. Possible sources of information include industry or disciplinary studies on job market, the USBLS [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#), or Maryland state [Occupational and Industry Projections](#) over the next five years. Also, provide information on the existing supply of graduates in similar programs in the state (use MHEC’s Office of Research and Policy Analysis [webpage](#) for Annual Reports on Enrollment by Program) and discuss how future demand for graduates will exceed the existing supply. As part of this analysis, indicate the anticipated number of students your program will graduate per year at steady state.

Our proposed major is not a professional degree, and we cannot link it with specific job prospects. It does provide important preparatory work for Museum work, for education at the secondary level, and for government work in the Middle East. Location in the greater Washington area means that there are significant opportunities for graduates.

Employment rates from BAs from the College of Arts and Humanities are at 90-95%. In addition, we note that the most recent [Humanities Indicators Report](#) showed that while for Humanities BAs unemployment was higher than for some other BA/BS fields, it was lower than the total US average, and that Humanities graduates find significant job satisfaction.¹

When fully in place, we expect the major to be between 20 and 30 students at any given time.

24. Identify similar programs in the state. Discuss any differences between the proposed program and existing programs. Explain how your program will not result in an unreasonable duplication of an existing program (you can base this argument on program differences or market demand for graduates). The MHEC website can be used to find academic programs operating in the state: http://mhec.maryland.gov/institutions_training/pages/HEPrograms.aspx.

The proposed program is truly unique among humanities offerings in the state of Maryland.

At present, a half dozen institutions in the state offer majors in Religious Studies (Towson University, Hood College, Goucher College, McDaniel College, St. Mary's College of Maryland, and Notre Dame of Maryland University), while another handful (including UMD) offer minors in the field (UMBC, Morgan State, Salisbury University, and Stevenson University; students at Morgan State can also complete a major in Philosophy that incorporates a religious studies track). Other relevant offerings in the state include a major in Near East Studies (Johns Hopkins University); minors in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, Medieval Studies, and Renaissance Studies (Hood College); and a minor in Book Studies (Goucher College).

The proposed program is in conversation with each of these other areas of study, but it overlaps directly with none of them. It will be the only program in the state to focus on the study of religion and culture in the ancient and Late Antique Near East. As such, it will also be the first program in the state to introduce students to the integrated study of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, in both their origins and their extended historical development.

25. Discuss the possible impact on Historically Black Institutions (HBIs) in the state. Will the program affect any existing programs at Maryland HBIs? Will the program impact the uniqueness or identity of a Maryland HBI?

The proposed program does not impact the uniqueness or identity of any Maryland HBI. It is most comparable to the offerings of Morgan State University, whose Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies offers a minor in Religious Studies and a Major in Philosophy with a Religious Studies track. However, while the program at Morgan State offers general instruction in Religious Studies (comparable to the general Religious Studies minor already offered by our program), the proposed program is more specifically focused in terms of geography, time period, and culture. Other Maryland HBIs, including Coppin State University, Bowie State University, and the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, include religious studies courses in their catalogs but do not provide specific programs in religious studies.

26. For new Post-Baccalaureate Certificates derived from existing master's programs only, include the complete curriculum of the existing master's program.

¹ See also: <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Jobs-Will-Save-the-Humanities/243767>

Appendix: Item 11 Learning Outcomes

RAME Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan

- Annually: Collect data from Foundations and I-Series classes, Capstone courses, and Honors theses.
- Faculty in relevant courses use rubrics to assess majors. Data compares majors to all course takers
 - Faculty reports outcomes to LOA coordinator
 - Rubrics are attached.

Year 1

- Outcome 1: Methodological, historical, and/or comparative approaches
- Assessment based on final assignment in an I-Series Foundations courses
- Outcome 2: Developments in two or more regional, geographical, or chronological sub-areas
- Assessments of individual areas based on Foundations courses
 - LOA coordinator and committee will need to cross-check to verify that students are meeting expectations in two or more areas.

Year 2

- Outcome 3: Formulate and defend an independent argument about religion and culture in the ancient Near East
- Assessment based on final work product in Captstone/Thesis
- Language track: Use the primary languages as a tool for deep engagement
- Assessment based on final work product in Captstone/Thesis
- Honors track Apply knowledge and approaches to a high level research question
- Assessment based on final work product in Captstone/Thesis

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- Successful Majors in Religions of the Ancient Middle East (RAME) will **demonstrate an understanding of** fundamental methodological, historical, and/or comparative approaches to the study of religion and culture in the ancient Near East and will **apply this understanding** to specific relevant examples. [Demonstrated through written work or final exam in one of the approved I-series courses]

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Understanding of method/theory	Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the historical backdrop and major innovations of the approach. Shows a deep understanding of key terminology and an integrated sense of the relationships of concepts within the approach.	Demonstrates an understanding of the historical backdrop and major innovations of the approach. Shows some understanding of key terminology and begins to integrate concepts within the approach.	Has difficulty demonstrating an understanding of the historical backdrop and major innovations of the approach. Can identify key terminology but may have trouble integrating concepts within the approach.
Application of method/theory to relevant examples	Identifies a relevant example for which this approach is appropriate. Applies the approach to the example in a consistent, thorough, and descriptive manner. Coherently integrates this application into a larger understanding of the approach.	Identifies an example for which this approach may be appropriate. Applies the approach to the example and provides some description. Provides a context for integration of this application.	Identifies an example for assessment of this approach, without attention to appropriateness. Applies the approach to the example. Has some difficulty providing a context for integration of the application.
Critique and analysis of method/theory	Understands the limits of the approach and can suggest contexts in which it might be especially valuable or in some way problematic.	Can identify limits for the approach and some of its potential benefits or shortcomings.	Has difficulty identifying the limits of this approach and its potential benefits or shortcomings.
Extrapolation from findings	Extrapolates in creative, interesting, and novel ways from this work to its larger possibilities.	Can extrapolates from this work to its larger possibilities.	Has difficulty extrapolating from this work to its larger possibilities.

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- Successful Majors in Religions of the Ancient Middle East (RAME) will *describe* and *illustrate* the development of at least two chronological, geographical, or cultural sub-areas. [Demonstrated through written work or final exam in one or more of the approved foundations courses]

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Description of a chronological, geographic or cultural subgroup (must be completed for two different groups)	Shows a deep understanding of the historical setting and development of the group. Demonstrates a coherent and sophisticated understanding of major social, cultural, and historical developments of the group. Uses concepts and terminology with rigor and clarity.	Shows an understanding of the historical setting and development of the group. Demonstrates understanding of some social, cultural, and historical developments of the group. Can define concepts and terminology with some clarity.	Has difficulty showing understanding of the historical setting and development of the group. Can identify some social, cultural, and historical developments of the group. Can define concepts and terminology to a limited extent.
Illustration of historical example (must be completed for two different groups)	Identifies a relevant and significant example of social, cultural, or historical significance. Engages with the example in a consistent, thorough, and descriptive manner. Coherently integrates this illustration into a larger understanding of group.	Identifies an example of some social, cultural, or historical significance. Engages with the example and integrates it into a reasonable understanding of group.	Has difficulty identifying a relevant and significant example of social, cultural, or historical significance. Engages minimally with the example and shows a limited ability to understand it in terms of group.
Critique and analysis of the process	Understands the limits of the illustration process and can suggest contexts in which it might be especially valuable or in some way problematic.	Can identify limits for the process and some of its potential benefits or shortcomings.	Has difficulty identifying the limits of this process and its potential benefits or shortcomings.
Extrapolation from findings	Extrapolates in creative, interesting, and novel ways from this work to its larger possibilities.	Can extrapolates from this work to its larger possibilities.	Has difficulty extrapolating from this work to its larger possibilities.

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- Successful Majors in Religions of the Ancient Middle East (RAME) will *formulate* and *defend* an argument about the ancient near east informed by the modern scholarship and amply illustrated with reference to ancient evidence. [Demonstrated through written work, potentially including a major research paper, in the capstone course]

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Formulation of argument	Thinks creatively about the possibilities for cultivating a research question that is significant and responsible. Sets appropriate limits for the range and content of the argument to be defended.	Develops a reasonable research question and sets some limits on the range and content of the argument to be defended.	Has difficulty developing an independent research question and setting limits on the range and content of the argument to be defended.
Research in support of argument	Identifies relevant and appropriate primary and secondary sources. Reviews sources using a coherent approach, and records findings in responsible detail.	Identifies a limited number of primary and secondary sources. Reviews sources with relative thoroughness and records findings in some detail.	Has difficulty identifying relevant and appropriate sources. Reviews sources without a coherent approach, and does not fully record findings in responsible detail.
Presentation and defense of argument	Generates a convincing argument, supported by copious primary and secondary sources. Presents final paper with proper attention to style, mechanics, and annotation.	Generates an acceptable argument, supported by primary and secondary sources. May have some shortcomings in style or mechanics, but not in annotation.	Generates an argument, not fully supported by sources. Presents final paper with significant problems in style or mechanics. (Failure demonstrate proper annotation may be an honor offense).
Scholarly sophistication and creativity	Presents work that reflects scholarly creativity and insight.	Presents work in which some scholarly independence is evident.	Has difficulty working independently.

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In addition to the above, Language Track students

- **Demonstrate** the ability to use the languages they have studied as a tool for deep engagement with ancient source material.

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Support a thesis or argument that depends on use of extended source material in the original language	Claims based on the reading of the source material are always correct and conclusions drawn always appropriate to the source material.	Claims based on the reading of the source material are usually correct and conclusions drawn usually appropriate to the source material.	Claims based on the reading of the source material are frequently incorrect and/or conclusions drawn inappropriate to the source material.
Support a thesis or argument with analysis of specific grammatical, morphological, or syntactic data from the source material.	Analysis is always correct and conclusions drawn always appropriate to the source material.	Analysis is usually correct; conclusions drawn are usually appropriate to the source material.	Analysis may be substantially incorrect and/or conclusions drawn inappropriate to the source material.

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In addition to the above, Honors students in RAME

- **Apply** knowledge and approaches to *investigate* a high level research question and to *defend* a thesis that is methodologically informed, makes ample use of ancient textual and/or non-textual evidence as well modern scholarly work, and present the results in clear and well-organized academic prose.

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does not Meet Expectations
Assembly and critical assessment of bibliography	The student is always able to recognize appropriate source material.	The student is able to recognize appropriate source material.	The student is not able to recognize appropriate source material.
Clarity and coherence of writing	The student's writing is consistent in its organization and lucidity, displaying a clear objective.	The student's writing is organized and/or displays a clear objective.	The student's writing is not well organized and displays a clear objective.
Articulation of a thesis and extended argument	The student is able to identify a problem in research and organize a strong argument around this problem.	The student is able to identify a problem in research and organize an argument around this problem.	The student is not able to identify a problem in research and organize an argument around this problem.
High level research question	Research question and use of sources critique and/or extend current research in the field.	Research question and use of sources correctly and fully represent scholarship without extensive critique or extension.	Research question and use of sources may not show correctly or adequately reflect current research. Student is unable to critique current approaches.

Appendix: Item 13a Classics Letter



Department of Classics
1210 Marie Mount Hall
College Park MD 20742

January 31, 2019

Professor Hayim Lapin
Meyerhoff Center for Jewish Studies
University of Maryland
4141 Susquehanna Hall
Campus

Dear Hayim,

I am writing in support of the proposed major in Religions and Cultures of the Ancient Near Eastern that JWST is proposing. Although we use a different method to encourage languages within the major, we like your idea of formalizing an "advanced" language-enhanced track.

We appreciate the concern that your new major may conflict with the Classical Humanities track in the Classics major. Although you make a point of not listing Classics courses in the description of the major (to emphasize the lack of conflict), I think most of your constituency will be different from ours. In the same way that JWST or RELS courses have been counted toward the Classical Humanities major track, Classics would have no problem with Classics courses counting toward the new proposed major.

In fact, if a student wanted to undertake both majors, I would encourage it. And if enough of your students wanted to take Greek to make it feasible for us to offer *koine* Greek (the Greek of the New Testament) every year, we could do that too.

If I can provide any further information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Lillian E. Doherty
Professor and Chair
Department of Classics
Ldoherty@umd.edu
301-405-2022

Appendix: Item 13b History Letter



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

2115 Francis Scott Key Hall
4282 Chapel Lane
College Park, MD 20742-7316
301.405.4263 TEL 301.314.9399 FAX

February 4, 2019

Professor Hayim Lapin
Meyerhoff Center for Jewish Studies
University of Maryland
4141 Susquehanna Hall
Campus Mall

Dear Hayim,

I am writing in support of the proposed major in Religions and Cultures of the Ancient Near Eastern that Jewish Studies is proposing. The Department of History supports this major and sees no conflict between this new major and the undergraduate History major.

In addition, I can affirm that history plans to continue to offer the following History courses that are regularly cross-listed with JWST or RELS.

HIST110: The Ancient World (3)

HIST120: Islamic Civilization (3)

HIST219I: Religions of the Ancient Near East (3)

HIST281: Rabbinic Movement: History and Culture (3)

HIST289T: Jesus, Mani, and Muhammad

HIST320: Early Christianity: Jesus to Constantine (3)

HIST320: Early Christianity: Jesus to Constantine (3)

HIST321: Biblical History and Culture (3)

If I can provide any further information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Wien".

Peter Wien
Professor and Interim Chair

Appendix: Item 16 Faculty

Religions of the Ancient Middle East

JWST Faculty

Maxine Grossman, Associate Professor JWST; Coordinator for the new major. *Dead Sea Scrolls; Hebrew Bible; Religious Studies Methodology*

- RELS 289I: What is Religion?
- JWST 262: Intro to Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
- JWST 231: Jewish Texts and Cultures of the Second Temple Period

Hayim Lapin, Professor JWST and HIST; Director Meyerhoff Center. *Judaism in Late Antiquity; Early Christianity; Religion in the Later Roman World.*

- RELS 289M: Jesus, Mani, and Muhammad
- HIST 281: Inventing Tradition: The Making of Rabbinic Judaism
- RELS 264: Intro to New Testament
- JWST 230: Rabbinic Movement: History and Culture

Matthew Suriano, Associate Professor JWST. *Archaeology, Ancient Near East, Hebrew Biblical Studies*

- JWST 289J: Jerusalem in Antiquity The History of Sacred Space in a Holy City
- JWST 225: Religions of the Ancient Near East
- JWST 262: Intro to Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Other Faculty

Antoine Borrut, Associate Professor HIST. *Islam, Pre- and Early Islamic Arabia and the Middle East.*

- HIST 120: Islamic Civilization
- HIST 428R: Selected Topics in History; Transition to Islam: From the Ancient to the Medieval Muslim World

Appendix: Item 17 Library Assessment

DATE: 2/11/19
TO: Dr. Hayim Lapin
Director, Jewish Studies Program
FROM: On behalf of the University of Maryland Libraries:
Yelena Luckert, Director of Research and Learning and Liaison to Jewish Studies
Maggie Saponaro, Director, Collection Development Strategies
Daniel Mack, Associate Dean, Collection Strategies & Services
RE: Library Collection Assessment

We are providing this assessment in response to a proposal by Dr. Hayim Lapin, Chair, in the Jewish Studies Program to create a new major program in Ancient Middle eastern Religions and Cultures. The Jewish Studies Program asked that we at the University of Maryland Libraries assess our collection resources to determine how well the Libraries support the curriculum of this proposed program. It is important to note that the new Ancient Middle Eastern Religions and Cultures will be based on gathering the existing courses already being offered by the University of Maryland. These courses primarily will come from the existing JWST offerings, supplemented by the HIST and Religious Studies Program. The Libraries have already more than adequate resources for these courses. In fact our general collections in Jewish Studies, including Ancient Middle Eastern Religions and Cultures, consisting of over 100,00 monographs and multitude of other resources, is one of the best in the Mid-Atlantic Region, second only to the Library of Congress.

Serial Publications

The University of Maryland Libraries currently subscribe to a number of scholarly journals—almost all in online format--that focus on ancient Middle East, religion, Judaism and Islam. Here are some examples:

- Journal of Ancient Middle Eastern Religions
- Journal of Islamic Studies
- Islamic Quarterly
- Revue de Qumran
- Megilot: mehkarim bi-megilot Midbar Yehudah.
- Dead Sea discoveries: a journal of current research on the scrolls and related literature.
- The Jewish Bible Quaterly
- Journal for the study of the Old Testament
- The Review of Rabbinic Judaism
- Sinai

Databases

The Libraries' *Database Finder* (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/dbfinder>) resource offers online access to databases that provide indexing and access to scholarly journal articles and other information sources.

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Many of these databases cover subject areas that would be relevant to this proposed program. Databases that would be useful in the field of Ancient Middle Eastern Religions and Cultures are

- RAMBI Reshimat Ma'amarim Be'mada'e Ha-yahadut/Index of Articles on Jewish Studies
- IJP - Index to Jewish Periodicals
- ATLA (American Theological Library Association) Religion Database
- Biblical Archaeology Society Online Archive
- Middle Eastern & Central Asian Studies (MECAS)
- Index Islamicus
- AnthroSource

A very important database that would be relevant to this curriculum is *The Global Jewish Database (the Responsa Project)*, which can be described as a text mining tool.

Also three general/multidisciplinary databases, *Academic Search Premier*, *MasterFILE Premier* and *ProjectMUSE* are good sources of articles relevant to this topic.

In many-and likely in most--cases, these indexes offer full text copies of the relevant journal articles. In those instances in which the journal articles are available only in print format, the Libraries can make copies available through either the Libraries' Scan & Deliver Program (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/access/scan-deliver>) or via Interlibrary Loan. (Note: see below.)

Monographs

The Libraries regularly acquire scholarly monographs in Ancient Middle Eastern Religions and Cultures and allied subject disciplines. Monographs not already part of the collection can usually be added upon request.

A search of the University of Maryland Libraries' WorldCat UMD catalog was conducted, using a variety of relevant subject terms. This investigation yielded sizable lists of citations of books that we own. For example, a quick search on "ancient middle east religion" yielded 662 monographs; on "Qumran" 579; and on "ancient Judaism" 1259. A further search revealed that the Libraries' membership in the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA) increases these holdings and citations, however not by much, as our Judaica holdings are superior to other BTAA institutions.

Scan & Deliver and Interlibrary Loan

These services offer online delivery of bibliographic materials that otherwise would not be available online. As a result, remote users who take online courses may find these services to be helpful. Scan & Deliver and Interlibrary Loan are available free of charge.

The Scan & Deliver service scans and delivers journal articles and book chapters within three business days of the request--provided that the items are available in print on the UM Libraries' shelves or in microform. In the event that the requested article or chapter is not available on campus, Scan & Deliver will automatically refer the request to Interlibrary Loan (ILL). Interlibrary Loan is a service that enables borrowers to obtain online articles and book chapters from materials not held in the University System of Maryland.

Additional Materials and Resources

In addition to serials, monographs and databases available through the University Libraries, students in the proposed program will have access to a wide range of media, datasets, software, and technology. Library Media Services (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/lms>) houses media in a variety of formats that can be utilized both on-site and via ELMS course media. GIS Datasets are available through the GIS Data Repository (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/gis/dataset>) while statistical consulting and additional research support is available through the Research Commons (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/rc>) and technology support and services are available through the Terrapin Learning Commons (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/tlc>).

The subject specialist librarian for the discipline, Yelena Luckert, yluckert@umd.edu also serve as an important resource to programs such as the one proposed.

Other Research Collections

Because of the University's unique physical location near Washington D.C., Baltimore and Annapolis, University of Maryland students and faculty have access to some of the finest libraries, archives and research centers in the country vitally important for researchers in Ancient Middle Eastern Religions and Cultures, in particular the Library of Congress.

Conclusion

With our substantial monograph collections, journals holdings and index databases, as well as additional support services and resources, the University of Maryland Libraries have resources to support teaching and learning in the Ancient Middle Eastern Religions and Cultures. Additionally, the Libraries Scan & Deliver and Interlibrary Loan services make materials that otherwise would not be available online, accessible to remote users in online courses. As a result, our assessment is that the University of Maryland Libraries are able to meet the curricular and research needs of the proposed the Ancient Middle Eastern Religions and Cultures.

Appendix: Item 21 Budget

TABLE 1: RESOURCES

Resources Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1. Reallocated Funds	\$ 89,784	\$ 92,178	\$ 94,643	\$ 97,182	\$ 99,798
2. Tuition/Fee Revenue (c+g below)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
a. #FT Students	20	20	20	20	20
b. Annual Tuition/Fee Rate	\$ 13,575	\$ 13,982	\$ 14,402	\$ 14,834	\$ 15,279
c. Annual FT Revenue (a x b)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
d. # PT Students	1	2	3	5	5
e. Credit Hour Rate	\$ 565.40	\$ 582.36	\$ 599.83	\$ 617.83	\$ 636.36
f. Annual Credit Hours	20	20	20	20	20
g. Total Part Time Revenue (d x e x f)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
3. Grants, Contracts, & Other External Sources	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
4. Other Sources	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL (Add 1 - 4)	\$89,784	\$92,178	\$94,643	\$97,182	\$99,798

Undergraduate
(FY2019)

	Full time annual	Part Time per credit hour	Full time inflation	Part time % in state	
resident tuition	\$ 8,651.00	\$ 360.00	1.03	0.80	0.90
non-resident tuition	\$ 33,272.00	\$ 1,387.00		0.20	0.10
diff'l addition (BMGT, ENGR, CS)	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 116.00			

Graduate
(FY2019)

	annual	per credit hour
resident	\$ 17,208.00	\$ 717.00
non-resident	\$ 37,152.00	\$ 1,548.00

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TABLE 2: EXPENDITURES

Expenditure Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1. Faculty (b+c below)	\$45,220	\$46,577	\$47,974	\$49,413	\$50,896
a. #FTE	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
b. Total Salary	\$34,000	\$35,020	\$36,071	\$37,153	\$38,267
c. Total Benefits	\$11,220	\$11,557	\$11,903	\$12,260	\$12,628
2. Admin. Staff (b+c below)	\$9,310	\$9,589	\$9,877	\$10,173	\$10,478
a. #FTE	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
b. Total Salary	\$7,000	\$7,210	\$7,426	\$7,649	\$7,879
c. Total Benefits	\$2,310	\$2,379	\$2,451	\$2,524	\$2,600
3. Total Support Staff (b+c below)	\$6,650	\$6,850	\$7,055	\$7,267	\$7,485
a. #FTE	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
b. Total Salary	\$5,000	\$5,150	\$5,305	\$5,464	\$5,628
c. Total Benefits	\$1,650	\$1,700	\$1,750	\$1,803	\$1,857
4. Graduate Assistants (b+c)	\$18,604	\$19,162	\$19,737	\$20,329	\$20,939
a. #FTE	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
b. Stipend	\$10,000	\$10,300	\$10,609	\$10,927	\$11,255
c. Tuition Remission	\$8,604	\$8,862	\$9,128	\$9,402	\$9,684
5. Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Library	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. New or Renovated Space	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Other Expenses: Operational Expenses	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
TOTAL (Add 1 - 8)	\$89,784	\$92,178	\$94,643	\$97,182	\$99,798
resources - expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

benefits 0.33
inflation 1.03

Appendix: Item 26 Survey

Ancient Mediterranean Religions and Cultures

Start of Block: About myself

Q1.1 Thank you for agreeing to take this brief survey!

Please tell us a bit about yourself. This will help us gauge student interest and plan for the future. At the end, you can give us contact information and be entered to win an Amazon gift card.

Q1.2 Next semester, I will be a:

- First year student (1)
 - Second year student (2)
 - Junior (3)
 - Senior (4)
 - Gone! I'm graduating! (5)
-

Q1.3 My major(s)

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Q1.4 My minor(s)

End of Block: About myself

Start of Block: About the proposed program

Q2.1 I would be interested in a **major or minor** that studies the religions and cultures of the ancient world

	Major (1)	Minor (2)
Yes (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maybe (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q2.2 My primary interests are in (click as many as apply):

Ancient Near East (1)

Ancient Judaism (2)

Biblical Israel (3)

Early Christianity (4)

Early Islam (5)

Greek and/or Roman paganism (6)

Other (7) _____

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Q2.3 Within those primary interests I would be most interested in (as may as are relevant):

Archaeology (1)

History (2)

Reading primary texts (3)

Rituals and practices (4)

Gender Studies (5)

Mythology (6)

Other (7) _____

End of Block: About the proposed program

Start of Block: Languages

Q3.1 Some students interested in this major might want to study ancient languages. Your answers here will help us gauge that interest.

Q3.2 Reading sources in the original languages is of interest to me:

Yes! Sign me up! (1)

I'm mildly interested, but not excited. (2)

No, thank you, I'll stick with translations (3)

Skip To: End of Block If Reading sources in the original languages is of interest to me: = No, thank you, I'll stick with translations

Q3.3

Given the opportunity, I would be interested in studying ...

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(click as many as apply)

- Biblical Hebrew (1)
- Classical or New Testament Greek (2)
- Qur'anic Arabic (3)
- Aramaic (Biblical, Jewish, or Christian Syriac) (4)
- Ancient Near Eastern languages (Akkadian, Sumerian, Ugaritic) (5)
- Late antique languages (Coptic, Ethiopic, South Arabian, Armenian) (6)
- Other (7) _____

End of Block: Languages

Start of Block: Following up

Q4.1

Can we be in touch with you to keep you informed about developments or to ask for feedback?
By giving us your contact information, you will be entered to win an Amazon gift card.

Q4.2 Please contact me and/or keep me in the loop

- Yes please contact me (1)
- No do not contact me (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Please contact me and/or keep me in the loop = No do not contact me

Display This Question:

If Please contact me and/or keep me in the loop = Yes please contact me

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Q4.3 Contact information

First Name (1) _____

Last Name (2) _____

Email (3) _____

Q4.4 Additional thoughts?

Please feel free to add any information or ideas that might help us make this program a reality.

End of Block: Following up

Start of Block: Thank you!

Addendum

The Honors track portion of the proposal represents initial thinking, and will not necessarily be implemented as written. A separate proposal for an Honors designation within the major will be submitted for review by the Honors College after the program is approved but prior to implementation.