

Egyptian Hieroglyphs DeCal (Spring 2017)

Time: Thursdays, 6:30-8:00pm

Location: 247 Dwinelle

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Introduction

Welcome to the Egyptian Hieroglyphs DeCal! In this DeCal, we will introduce you to the history and culture of Ancient Egypt through the lens of its mystical language – Hieroglyphs. Hieroglyphs is a magical combination of art and language. As a language, it tells us how the Ancient Egyptians communicate and think; as an art form, it shows us the world in Ancient Egyptians' eyes and the stories of their lives. In this class, we will focus on the classical period of Egyptian language – the Middle Egyptian Hieroglyphs, a stage of language that has been used as written language for almost 2000 years, from ca. 2100 BCE to 300 CE. Here, you can learn to write (or maybe we should say, to draw) dozens of Egyptian glyphs and words, to learn the elementary Middle Egyptian grammar, and to appreciate the writings in the context of other Egyptian art forms such as on reliefs, sculptures, and minor arts. You will also have the opportunity to see how “Ancient Egyptian theme” and Egyptian Hieroglyphs are portrayed in modern productions like movies, comics and television shows and (finally) become able to judge the authenticity of these productions. Our goal is for you to become comfortable dealing with hieroglyphs, to have a better understanding of Ancient Egypt, and to have a head start if you decide to take the official Middle Egyptian class that Berkeley offers (official language class sequence starts with Egypt 100A by Professor Richter and taught every other year). We hope that this DeCal will be a fun and rewarding experience for everyone. Let's looking forward to a magical and fulfilling semester!

Course Organization

Class will begin with quiz (you will be told ahead of time if it is just vocabulary or vocabulary and grammar) that will include basic words allowing you to read texts. Class time will combine lecture and group activities. Activities include working with stela translation, writing on papyrus, and practice drawing the hieroglyphs. This course will cover fundamental grammar and vocabulary which will allow students to read stelae and tomb reliefs and create short sentences. Time will be set aside for themed movies and/or documentaries in which we will discuss the portrayal of Ancient Egypt and identify hieroglyphs. Students will also be required to research a topic of their choosing and report back to the class with a small (5-10minute), low-key presentation and submit a short write-up (half to a full page, single-sided). Students will also have the opportunity to influence topics covered.

Course Goals:

Students will be able to translate short stelae pieces (specifically *hṯp-di-nsw*) and have a rudimentary grasp on the fundamental grammar (e.g. plural, dual, and feminine nouns; adjectives, verbal sentences, honorific transposition, suffix pronouns, etc). They will also be able to read, write, and transliterate common Egyptian hieroglyphs and gain better context for Egyptian culture and communication.

Required Texts

None for purchase. Readings will be distributed to students as needed via bCourses or as a handout in class. Sources will come from Allen's *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, Gardiner's *Sign List*, and Manley's *Hieroglyphs for Complete Beginners*.

Recommended Texts (#1-4 available on bCourses)

1. Allen, James P. (2014). *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of*

Hieroglyphs. 3rd Edition. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press.

2. Faulkner, Raymond O. (2002). *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*. Oxford: Griffith Institute.

3. Fischer, Henry George. *Ancient Egyptian Calligraphy: A Beginner's Guide to Writing Hieroglyphs*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988. Free download at

http://www.metmuseum.org/research/metpublications/Ancient_Egyptian_Calligraphy.

4. Gardiner's Sign List - excerpt from Alan H. Gardiner's *Egyptian Grammar*, London: Oxford University Press, 1973-1982, pp. 442-548. Available as Reader at Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Ave., Berkeley, CA.

5. Richter, Barbara A. (2014). *Middle Egyptian Grammar Summary*. 4th Revised Edition. Berkeley: University of California, Near Eastern Studies Department. Available as Reader at Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Ave., Berkeley, CA

6. Manley, Bill (2012). *Egyptian Hieroglyphs for Complete Beginners*. 1st Edition. Thames and Hudson.

Highly Recommended Materials:

Access to a computer will be a necessity in this course. There will be some days where I will ask you advance to bring in a computer or tablet (if possible) to do certain exercises in class. On those days you will likely work in pairs or groups. Normally, simple paper and pencil will suffice.

Quizzes and Homework

There will be a quiz every class with signs or words chosen from a vocabulary list students will receive the previous week. Homework will be due each class as well and will count towards your grade as well as provide a comprehension check. Unfinished classwork becomes homework.

Grading

20% Homework – Finish weekly worksheets. You are allowed to miss 2 worksheets. 1 more worksheet you miss, as much as 2% of your grade will be deducted.

20% Quizzes – Take and pass weekly quizzes. You can drop 1 quiz. Missing more than 1 quiz may deduct 2% from your grade each time. Extra credit may be provided.

20% Midterms – There will be two midterms at most, one in the middle of the semester, one by the end. Each midterm counts as 15% of your grade. If there is only 1 midterm, the 15% percentage will be distributed evenly so that the weight of homework, quizzes, and participation increases by 5% each.

20% Attendance – Egyptian Hieroglyphs, like other language classes, is strongly attendance based. Therefore, to receive a passing grade, you cannot have **more than 2 unexcused absences**. Here are the general rules for absences:

- Students must inform their instructors 12 hours before class if they need to be absent in order for the absence to be excused.
- Students late to class for more than 15 minutes will receive a tardy. 2 tardies are equivalent to 1 absence.
- Students with excess absences/tardies will risk receiving a NP for the class.

10% Participation – Participation during homework review through writing on the board and answering questions is crucial to learning.

10% Presentation – The short presentation (~5 minutes) and write-up (half to 1 page) will comprise this category.

Tentative Schedule

The following is a tentative schedule of the grammar material we will cover this semester. Class

activities will relate to that week's topic. We will announce both in class and on bCourses of any changes to the schedule. Readings that may be assigned will come from the online sources on bCourses.

Week 1 - Introduction to Egyptian Language and Writing, Syllabus, Uni-literal Alphabet

Week 2 – Uni-literals, Determinatives, Multi-literals.

Week 3 – Nouns and Adjectives, Gender/Number, Adjectival Phrases

Week 4 – Suffix Pronouns, Adjectival Sentences, Exclamatory Duals

Week 5 – Review OR Stela Translation

Week 6 – Dependent Pronouns, Prepositions, Review of Adjectival types

Week 7 – Movie, Egypt in Media (This date will float to whenever the chosen movie is accessible through ILL/Media Resource Center in Moffit Library)

Week 8 – Egypt in Media, Stela Translation, Presentations

Week 9 – VsdoSODA, Pseudoverbals, Presentations

Week 10 – Review/Presentations/Egyptian Literature

Week 12 –Midterm

Week 13 – Tentative (and Optional) class: movie, field trip, etc