Term Information

Effective Term   Autumn 2026

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area   Near Eastrn Lang and Cultures
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org   Near East S Asian Lang/Culture - D0554
College/Academic Group   Arts and Sciences
Level/Career   Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog   4900
Course Title   NESA Capstone
Transcript Abbreviation   NESA Capstone
Course Description   This course is designed to help students hone their critical thinking, research, writing, and oral
communication skills, from analyzing difficult research materials to polishing their arguments to sharing
their conclusions. They will also learn how artificial intelligence impacts the study and research of the
languages and cultures of the Ancient Near East, Modern Middle East, and South Asia.
Semester Credit Hours/Units   Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course   14 Week, 12 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course   Never
Does any section of this course have a distance No
education component?
Grading Basis   Letter Grade
Repeatable   No
Course Components   Lecture
Grade Roster Component   Lecture
Credit Available by Exam   No
Admission Condition Course   No
Off Campus   Never
Campus of Offering   Columbus

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites   Junior or Senior rank, or permission of the instructor
Exclusions
Electronically Enforced   Yes

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code   16.1199
Subsidy Level   Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank   Junior, Senior

Requirement/Elective Designation

Required for this unit's degrees, majors, and/or minors

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes	• 1. Students develop a research project that builds on skills developed in their NESA specialization pathway and articulate the significance of their research.
	• 2. Students write, revise, and present a strongly argued research paper based on original research and analysis in their field(s) of interest.
	• 3. Students can explain foundational concepts such as artificial intelligence, large language models, and machine learning, can discuss the potential benefits and limitations of AI applications in NESA fields, and can discuss the ethical, social,
	• legal, and practical implications of AI in the study of languages and cultures.
	• 4. Students can effectively use AI tools in NESA fields, including evaluating types of inputs and outputs foundational to AI systems and assess their quality and reliability; using AI tools to support research in the field;
	• and critically assessing outputs.
	• 5. Students become prepared to enter the workforce by developing a broader understanding of their academic and personal strengths. Students also learn about jobs that require particular sets of skills.
Content Topic List	• Please see the topic list on pages 4-6 in the syllabus
Sought Concurrence	No

Attachments

• NELC:SASIA 4900 NESA Capstone syllabus.docx

(Syllabus. Owner: McDonald,Carrie)

• NESA Capstone Syllabus.docx: syllabus--USE THIS ONE

(Syllabus. Owner: Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal)

Comments

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	McDonald,Carrie	11/21/2025 03:40 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Brenner,Naomi	11/24/2025 08:37 AM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal	12/01/2025 07:20 AM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler Neff,Jennifer Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Steele,Rachel Lea	12/01/2025 07:20 AM	ASCCAO Approval

NELC 4900 NESA Capstone

Mondays, in person 2:15-4.55pm (3 credit hours)
Location: Hagerty Hall 306
Professor: Naomi Brenner
Office hours: TBA

Course Description

This course brings together NESA majors pursuing one of four specializations (Ancient Near East & Modern Middle East; Arabic & Islamic Studies; Hebrew & Jewish Studies; South Asian Studies) to evaluate the skills and knowledge they have learned as part of the major, conduct research within their fields, present their research to showcase their expertise in the major, learn about AI applicability to NESA associated fields, and to reflect on the state and future possibilities within their fields of study.

The course is designed to help students hone their critical thinking, research, writing, and oral communication skills, from analyzing difficult research materials to polishing their arguments to sharing their conclusions. They will also learn how artificial intelligence impacts the study and research of the languages and cultures of the Ancient Near East, Modern Middle East, and South Asia. As a capstone for the NESA major, students will reflect on what they have learned in courses they have completed for the major, communicate the significance of their academic work, and engage with the work of their peers. They will meet with department faculty to discuss academic work, artificial intelligence, and professional pathways. They will gain an understanding of the languages, cultures, and disciplines encompassed within the Department of Near Eastern and South Asian Languages and Cultures and practical applications of these fields in multiple professional environments.

Course Goals

1. Students develop a research project that builds on skills developed in their NESA specialization pathway and articulate the significance of their research.
2. Students write, revise, and present a strongly argued research paper based on original research and analysis in their field(s) of interest.
3. Students can explain foundational concepts such as artificial intelligence, large language models, and machine learning, can discuss the potential benefits and limitations of AI applications in NESA fields, and can discuss the ethical, social, legal, and practical implications of AI in the study of languages and cultures.
4. Students can effectively use AI tools in NESA fields, including evaluating types of inputs and outputs foundational to AI systems and assess their quality and reliability; using AI tools to support research in the field; and critically assessing outputs.

5. Students become prepared to enter the workforce by developing a broader understanding of their academic and personal strengths. Students also learn about jobs that require particular sets of skills.

Course Materials

All course materials will be made available on CarmenCanvas. Please make sure that you have access to the class website and let me know immediately if you have trouble accessing it or any of the material on it.

Course Requirements

Please note that more details will be provided for all assignments on Carmen. Late work is not accepted unless arrangements are made with the professor via email or after meeting in person.

Attendance and Participation (10%)
This is a seminar that requires you to be present and prepared for each weekly session. Students who miss more than one class will be assessed a grade penalty unless absences are excused. Please see Carmen (Course Resources) for more information on how an absence can be excused, which will include a short writing assignment.

Core Courses Reflection (10%)
Over the course of this semester, you will revisit and reflect on courses that you have completed for the NESA major. For the core courses reflection, you will choose one reading that you did for one of your core courses that you think everyone should read. The reading must be at least 15 pages long. You will prepare the following:
   a) Abstract: 250-300 word abstract that summarizes the reading and explains its argument.
   b) Presentation: a short (2-3 minutes) class presentation in which you summarize the reading and its arguments and explain and why you think everyone should read it.

Specialization Reflection (10%)
For the specialization courses reflection, you will choose one reading that you did for one of your specializations courses (required, electives, or breadth) that you think everyone should read. The reading must be at least 15 pages long. You will prepare the following:
   a) Abstract: 250-300 word abstract that summarizes the reading and explains its argument.
   b) Presentation: a short (2-3 minutes) class presentation in which you summarize the reading and its arguments and explain and why you think everyone should read it.

Primary Source Translation/Analysis (15%)
Each student will select a primary source (text, film clip, visual material or similar) that relates to your final project. You will provide the following for the source that you have chosen:
 a) An AI-generated translation of the primary source, with your annotations
 b) One of the following options:
       a. Your translation of the source and brief analysis of the source and issues that arose during translation; OR
       b. a longer analysis of the source, including its social, cultural, and historical contexts, AND

c) lead a short discussion (~10 minutes) in class of your source. You will need to provide excerpts for the class and prepare a short introduction and at least 3 good discussion questions. Discussions should analyze the primary source and the translation(s).

AI Field Project (15%)
Each student will identify an academic paper, project, or initiative that benefits from AI in their area of specialization or interest. You will read and analyze the paper, project, or initiative in depth and write an assessment (500-700 words) that responds to the following questions:
-   What aspects of artificial intelligence, large language models, and/or machine learning does it use? How does it use these technologies? What does it accomplish?
-   What are the benefits and limitations of these applications and AI tools?
-   How does this paper/project/initiative contribute to its field(s)? What role(s) do AI tools and technologies play in these contributions?
-   Based on this example, how would you assess the ethical and practical aspects of using AI tools in the study of your specialization?

Final Project (35%)
Each student will develop, research, and present an original project that relates to their specialization, academic interests and/or professional interests. The project will include the following steps, with details provided on Carmen:
-   Step 1: Abstract (5%)
-   Step 2: Annotated Bibliography (20%)
-   Step 3: First Draft (10%)
-   Step 4: Peer Response (10%)
-   Step 5: Second Draft (10%)
-   Step 5: Presentation (20%)
-   Step 6: Final Project (25%)

Final Reflection (5%)
Each student will reflect on their experiences in the capstone and in the major in a reflection (500-750 words) on what they have learned. What skills have you learned? What knowledge did you find most valuable? What key ideas will you remember the most in 5 years?

Grade Breakdown

Attendance and Participation (10%)
Core Courses Reflection (10%)
Specialization Reflection (10%)
Primary Source Translation/Analysis (15%)
AI Field Project (15%)
Final Project (35%)
Final Reflection (5%)

Grading scale: A (93-100) A- (90-92) B+ (87-89) B (83-86) B- (80-82) C+ (77-79) C (73-76) C- (70-72) D+ (67-69) D (60-66) E (below 60)

Class Schedule

Week	Topic	Reading to be Completed	Assignments Due
1	Introductions	Syllabus; Course Resources module on Carmen	Student Survey (Carmen)
2	Near East? Middle East? South Asia? Geographical Considerations - Research Questions & Abstracts	Khalidi, "The Middle East as an Area in an Age of Globalization"; Mohammad-Arif, "Imaginations and Constructions of South Asia: An Enchanting Abstraction?"	
3	Studying the Ancient Near East & Middle East - Abstract workshop - Research skills (topics, keywords and effective search skills) - AI research: Near East & Middle East	Revisit Core course readings and choose one Choose topic for Project and develop research question	- Bring Draft Project Abstract to Class - Core Abstracts Due - Presentations #1 (Ancient Near East/Modern Middle East) Due
4	Studying Central and South Asia - Research skills (assessing sources, annotations, citations) - Using AI in humanities research - AI research: South Asia	Read Core course readings (Ancient Near East/Modern Middle East) selected by group	**- Project Abstract Due** - Core Presentations (South Asia) #2 Due
5	NESA research forum: Professor Ila Nagar (guest) - Constructing effective arguments	Read Core course readings (South Asia) selected by group Read Nagar, "Love-jihad: The Hindu right's conspiring Muslim men and innocent Hindu girls" (273-294)	**Annotated Bibliography Due**
6	Translation Workshop - Translating & using translated sources - AI and translation	Read Grossman, *Why Translation Matters* (excerpts)	- Choose primary source related to your project that you will translate/analyze

7	Language and Interpreting Guest from OSU's Translation and Interpretation Program - Strengthening arguments	Read Kilito, *Thou Shalt Not Speak My Language* (excerpts)	- Primary source translation/analysis due - Primary source discussions
8	Islamic Studies & Jewish Studies Constructing strong arguments - Draft troubleshooting	Revisit specialization course readings and choose one	- Specializations Abstracts Due - Specialization Presentations #1 (Arabic/Hebrew/Islamic Studies/Jewish Studies) Due
9	NESA research forum: Professor Sean Anthony (guest) - Strategies for constructive peer review	Read Anthony, "The Arabs and the *Ummah* of Muhammad" (363-408) Read specialization readings selected by group (Arabic/ Hebrew/ Islamic Studies/Jewish Studies)	- Specializations Presentations #2 (South Asia/Ancient Near East/Modern Middle East) Due **- First Draft Due**
10	New Technologies – AI tools, LLMs and machine learning	Dubrueil, *Humanities in the Time of AI* (excerpts) Burnett, "Will the Humanities Survive Artificial Intelligence?"	**- Peer Response Due**
11	NESA research forum: Professor James Moore (guest)	Read Moore, *New Aramic Papyri from Elephantine in Berlin* (excerpts) Read specializations readings selected by group (Ancient Near East/Modern Middle East/South Asia)	- AI Field Project Due
12	Final Project Updates	Individual meetings with instructors; in class writing workshop/peer consultations	**Second Draft Due**
13	Implications of New Technologies - Academic presentations - Understanding your audience	Berry, "AI, Ethics, and Digital Humanities" (445-457) Selim, "Thinking with Machines: AI, Ethics, and the Future of Humanities"	

14	NESA Presentations 1		**Project Presentations #1**
15	NESA Presentations 2		**Project Presentations #2** Final Reflections due
Exam Week			**Final Project Due**

Class Policies

Absences

To do well in this class, you need to attend class sessions unless there are circumstances that make it impossible. At the same time, if you are sick, I don't want you to come to class, for your health and the health of others in the class. Please keep the following in mind:

- I will be using Carmen to track absences, so that you can check whether you are marked present/absent for class sessions.
- If you believe you were marked absent incorrectly, please contact the instructor within one week of that absence.
- Carmen will not directly calculate the attendance and participation grade. You will receive your attendance and participation grade twice over the course of the semester: the middle of the semester and the end of the semester
- You have one "free" absence this semester that will not affect your grade. I strongly recommend you save those absences for later in the semester, when people often get sick, busy, or stressed.
- After you have used your "free" absence you can request an absence be excused if you are ill or have to deal with an emergency. You must provide documentation for emergencies (death in the family, childcare issues., etc.) or if you miss more than one class in a row for illness.
  - In order to excuse an absence, please submit an analysis of the day's assignments to make up participation points for that session. See Carmen for more details. This make-up work must be submitted within 1 week of the absence, unless other arrangements are made with the instructor.
  - If you miss class for another reason (oversleep, studying for another class, etc), that is considered an unexcused absence. After the "free" absence, unexcused absences will lower your attendance and participation grade.
- Three late arrivals or early departures will count as one unexcused absence. If you are late or need to leave early because of circumstances beyond your control, please let me know.

Keep in mind that whether or not your absence is excused, you are responsible for all material that you miss. **Do not email the instructor to ask what you missed.** Make sure you have the contact information (email, phone number) for two other students in class so that you can get the information that you need. Or, if you prefer, visit office hours to talk about what you missed.

If you need to miss several classes, especially if you have to miss more than one class in a row, let me know via email what's going on, so that I can make arrangements for you to make up participation points. Keep in mind that participation is 10% of your overall grade – if you aren't in class, your participation grade will suffer.

In Class

Please do not use laptops, tablets or phones in class, unless it is an active part of class activities. I realize that some people like to take notes on the computer, but multiple studies have shown that laptops are more disruptive and distracting than helpful in classes based on discussion. If you have special circumstances that make using a laptop necessary, please speak to me and we'll find a suitable arrangement. Using a phone in any way during class, and especially during film screenings, will result in an automatic 0 for that session's Participation grade. If you need to communicate with someone, step outside of the room for a minute and return when you're done.

Contact Me

Please come talk to me over the course of the semester if you have any problems or concerns, but also if you have questions or anything else that you'd like to talk about. It's great to have the opportunity to get to know you outside of class. Office hours are a good time to catch me, but you can also email me to set up an appointment to talk. For quick questions or concerns, email me after you have reviewed the syllabus and specific assignment guidelines.

If you email me, I will do our best to respond within 24 hours. I do not respond to emails on weekends.

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute Academic Misconduct.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so please review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If an instructor suspects that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, the instructor is obligated by University Rules to report those suspicions to the Committee on

Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that a student violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in the course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If students have questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, they should contact the instructor.

Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity

There has been a significant increase in the popularity and availability of a variety of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT, Sudowrite, and others. These tools will help shape the future of work, research and technology, but when used in the wrong way, they can stand in conflict with academic integrity at Ohio State.

All students have important obligations under the Code of Student Conduct to complete all academic and scholarly activities with fairness and honesty. Our professional students also have the responsibility to uphold the professional and ethical standards found in their respective academic honor codes. Specifically, students are not to use unauthorized assistance in the laboratory, on field work, in scholarship, or on a course assignment unless such assistance has been authorized specifically by the course instructor. In addition, students are not to submit their work without acknowledging any word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing of writing, ideas or other work that is not your own. These requirements apply to all students undergraduate, graduate, and professional.

To maintain a culture of integrity and respect, these generative AI tools should not be used in the completion of course assignments unless an instructor for a given course specifically authorizes their use. Some instructors may approve of using generative AI tools in the academic setting for specific goals. However, these tools should be used only with the explicit and clear permission of each individual instructor, and then only in the ways allowed by the instructor.

In this course, AI tools **should not** be used on any assignments unless it states otherwise on Carmen.

Religious Accommodations

Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the course. Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential.

With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious

accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates or research responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance.

A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement and the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the course begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a course begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy.

If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their course instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the Civil Rights Compliance Office.

Policy: Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances

Disability Statement (with Accommodations for Illness)

The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. If students anticipate or experience academic barriers based on a disability (including mental health and medical conditions, whether chronic or temporary), they should let their instructor know immediately so that they can privately discuss options. Students do not need to disclose specific information about a disability to faculty. To establish reasonable accommodations, students need to register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, students should make arrangements with their instructors as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that accommodations may be implemented in a timely fashion.

If students are ill and need to miss class, including if they are staying home and away from others while experiencing symptoms of viral infection or fever, they should let their instructor know immediately. In cases where illness interacts with an underlying medical condition, please consult with Student Life Disability Services to request reasonable accommodations.

slds@osu.edu
https://slds.osu.edu/
098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Ave
614-292-3307 phone

Intellectual Diversity

Ohio State is committed to fostering a culture of open inquiry and intellectual diversity within the classroom. This course will cover a range of information and may include discussions or debates about controversial issues, beliefs, or policies. Any such discussions and debates are intended to support understanding of the approved curriculum and relevant course objectives

rather than promote any specific point of view. Students will be assessed on principles applicable to the field of study and the content covered in the course. Preparing students for citizenship includes helping them develop critical thinking skills that will allow them to reach their own conclusions regarding complex or controversial matters.

Grievances and Solving Problems

According to University Policies, if you have a problem with this class, you should seek to resolve the grievance concerning a grade or academic practice by speaking first with the instructor or professor. Then, if necessary, take your case to the department chairperson, college dean or associate dean, and to the provost, in that order. Specific procedures are outlined in Faculty Rule 3335-8-23. Grievances against graduate, research, and teaching assistants should be submitted first to the supervising instructor, then to the chairperson of the assistant's department.

Creating an Environment Free from Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a welcoming community. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Civil Rights Compliance Office (CRCO):

Online reporting form: http://civilrights.osu.edu/
Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605
civilrights@osu.edu

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Civil Rights Compliance Office to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.

- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member.