

Biblical Archaeology

[Visit Department Website](#)

[Departmental Mission Statement](#)

[Program Requirements](#)

[Course Descriptions](#)

Associate Dean, [Jeffrey P. Greenman](#)

The discipline of Biblical Archaeology seeks to integrate both ancient material culture and epigraphic finds with study of the Bible in order to assist the student to better understand the Scriptures. It has long been recognized that archaeology is an indispensable tool for interpreting the Bible because it provides cultural, historical, social, religious, and linguistic information that sheds light on the context of biblical passages. The program emphasizes four areas: Archaeology, Biblical Geography, Biblical Languages, and Biblical Studies. Two concentrations are offered: Old Testament and Near Eastern Studies, and New Testament and Classical World. There is a required semester of study in Israel at [Jerusalem University College](#) (JUC) and six weeks of summer excavation for credit.

This program provides students with a solid basis for doctoral studies in Archaeology, Ancient History, Biblical Studies, and Church History. Students are not required to write a thesis but may do so if granted permission by an advisor and the department. All students are required to pass a comprehensive exam unless the thesis option has been granted. Those who consider this program as a terminal degree will be well trained for teaching courses in Old and New Testament, Bible backgrounds, ancient history, and archaeology in church and school settings.

Admission is contingent upon current U.S. State Department travel advisories for the Middle East.

Admission to the program does not require a specific undergraduate major. Students must, however, demonstrate:

- A basic knowledge of Bible content and historical periods of the Old or New Testament; and
- Prerequisite competency in Hebrew or Greek, according to chosen concentration. Competency is defined as passing a competency exam or taking [HEBR 301](#), (or BL 610 at JUC), [302](#), and [401](#) or [GREK 101](#), (or BL 555 at JUC), [102](#), and [201](#). These language prerequisites do not count toward the completion of degree requirements of 42-44 hours whether taken on-campus or while at JUC, but students may take the languages concurrently with the program.

Departmental Requirements:

The program begins with participation in a six-week excavation in Israel during the summer prior to the first semester. The first fall semester is taken in Israel at [Jerusalem University College](#). Remaining work is completed at Wheaton.

The required 44-46 hours include: a) 10-14 hours at [Jerusalem University College](#), including Physical Settings (GEO 511) and Historical Geography (GEO 513) for all students, as well as HIST 535 (Old Testament track) or HIST 658 (New Testament track); b) 12 hours of core

courses including [BITH 554](#), [BITH 565](#), and [ARCH 525](#), [ARCH 526](#); c) 12-16 hours in either the Old Testament or New Testament tracks. The Old Testament track includes [ARCH 521](#), [BITH 541](#), [BITH 562](#), four hours of Old Testament exegesis, and two to four hours of electives in Ancient Near Eastern language or graduate archaeology courses. The New Testament track includes [ARCH 522](#), [BITH 543](#), [BITH 564](#), four hours of New Testament exegesis, and [BITH 551](#) or an approved elective.

Archaeology Courses (ARCH)

ARCH 517. Egyptian Hieroglyphics. An introduction to Middle Egyptian which involves learning how to read and translate texts.

ARCH 518. Akkadian Cuneiform. An introduction to cuneiform which leads students through the techniques for transcription, transliteration, and translation of Assyrian or Babylonian literature. (2 or 4)

ARCH 521. Advanced Archaeology and the Old Testament. A study of ancient Near Eastern archaeological methods and materials and their relationship to the historical, social, and religious settings of the Old Testament, with special emphasis on Israel's early history and the monarchic periods.

ARCH 522. Advanced Archaeology and the New Testament. A study of archaeological methods and materials of the Mediterranean world and their relationship to the historical, social, and religious settings of the New Testament, with special emphasis on the Hellenistic world, the intertestamental period, the first century A.D., and the early centuries of the Christian era.

ARCH 525. Archaeological Field Work. Field experience involving excavation, interpretation, and studies in Israel or the Mediterranean world. Graded pass/fail unless petitioned for a grade. (6)

ARCH 526. Method and Theory. A basic examination of the field of archaeology and how the history of the field affects current practice. Graded pass/fail unless petitioned for a grade. (2)

ARCH 534x. Historical Geography. See [BITH 334](#). (2)

ARCH 536x. Religion of Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East. See [ARCH 369](#).

ARCH 545. Archaeology of the Classical World. Excavations, monuments, epigraphic materials, and papyri from the Minoan, Mycenaean, Aegean, and Greco-Roman times. (2)

ARCH 552x. Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament. See [BITH 552](#).

ARCH 554. Topics in Archaeology. Separate courses devoted to specialized topics in archaeology. (2 or 4)

ARCH 594. Seminar: Current Issues. A seminar devoted to exploring the current issues in Near Eastern archaeology that relate to biblical studies, especially those touching on historiography, historicity, social and cultural backgrounds, methodology, and faith. (2)

ARCH 695. Independent Study. (2-4)

ARCH 698. Thesis.

ARCH 699. Thesis Continuation. See M.A. Thesis/Applied Thesis/Action Research. (0)

Revision Date: May 1, 2009