

COURSE SYLLABUS¹

RELS 6000
Readings in Ugaritic I
F 12:30-1:45
Dr. John C. Reeves
204B Macy
Office hours: W 2:00-3:00; or by appointment
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Course description: This course provides an introduction to the Ugaritic language and literature for those graduate students who are already reasonably conversant with the linguistic structures of biblical Hebrew. We will study the basic features of Ugaritic grammar, vocabulary, and syntax while simultaneously reading and translating a number of selections drawn from epistolary, administrative, ritual, and literary texts.

Required textbooks:

William M. Schniedewind and Joel H. Hunt, *A Primer on Ugaritic: Language, Culture, and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Some secondary tools, essays, and articles (to be distributed or assigned by the instructor).

Recommended purchases (not available at UNC Charlotte bookstore):

Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Analecta Orientalia 38; Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1965). Frequently reprinted with some corrections and supplements thereafter. Consists of three parts: (1) Grammar; (2) Texts in transliteration; Cuneiform selections; (3) Glossary; Indices.

J. C. L. Gibson, ed., *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (2d ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1978).

Simon B. Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997).

Dennis Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002).

Daniel Sivan, *A Grammar of the Ugaritic Language* (HO 28; 2d ed.; Leiden: Brill, 2001).

Course requirements:

a. *Diligent attendance and preparation.* Almost perfect attendance is an essential requirement for this course. Each class session builds upon the knowledge gained and skills acquired during previous meetings. Moreover, group study/discussion comprises practically the entirety of every class session. Weekly class meetings will involve the line-by-line study and English translation of an extensive selection of readings drawn from the surviving corpus of cuneiform texts that archaeologists have recovered from the ancient city of Ugarit and its environs. Some of these readings may be keyed to the individual interests of the students.

¹ Note: this course requires as its minimum prerequisite: (1) the successful completion at UNC Charlotte of LACS 1201 and 1202; i.e., 'Introduction to Biblical Hebrew I' and 'II'; or (2) an equivalent sequence of introductory biblical Hebrew courses at another institution of higher learning; i.e., amounting to two semesters, three quarters, or one year; or (3) the verbal permission of the instructor.

The instructor's assessment of one's attendance, class preparation, oral recitation, and verbal contribution to class discussions constitutes 100% of the final course grade.

b. *Critical discussions.* Almost every week during a portion of the class period students will orally expound and collectively discuss the content of at least one secondary article or essay that has been previously assigned by the instructor. Individual students may be asked to present and guide our discussions. The readings will come from the articles listed below. The instructor's evaluation of the student's contributions to these assignments will be factored into the class preparation component of the final course grade.

c. Each student is responsible for all lectures, class discussions, assignments, and announcements, whether or not he/she is present when they occur.

Miscellaneous information:

a. The grading scale used in this course is as follows:

91-100	A
81-90	B
71-80	C
0-70	U

b. One of the requirements of this course is to complete the work of the course on time. Sometimes there are legitimate reasons for late work—an illness or other emergency. 'Emergency,' however, does not include your social involvements, travel plans, job schedule, disk and/or printer failures, the state of your love life, your obligations to other courses, or general malaise over the state of the world. The world has been in a mess as long as anyone can remember, and most of the world's work is done by people whose lives are a mass of futility and discontent. If you haven't learned yet, you had better learn now to work under the conditions of the world as it is. Therefore:

1) All assignments are due at their announced dates and times. In other words (and please note well!), there will be NO MAKEUP OPPORTUNITIES scheduled. All missed assignments (these include weekly oral recitations!) will be averaged as a 0 in the computation of the course grade. No exceptions will be considered or granted.

2) Any written homework exercises for which a roman font is used must be typed and double-spaced; apart from Hebrew print or script, no handwritten exercises will be accepted. Written homework exercises are assessed according to the following formulae: $\sqrt{+}$ = A- (roughly 5 or fewer errors); $\sqrt{}$ = C+ (roughly 6-20 errors); $\sqrt{-}$ = U (more than 20 errors and/or incomplete work).

3) For accounting purposes, letter grades bear the following values: A=95; A-=92; B=85; C+=78; C=75; U=35.

4) Since your diligent physical participation is critical for the success of this course, attendance at class meetings will be monitored by the instructor. One absence is regrettable; two absences are the limit of tolerability. Three (3) or more absences will result in an automatic U for the course. Please note that the instructor does not distinguish 'excused' from 'unexcused' absences. Unsanctioned late arrivals and early departures will be tallied as absences.

5) Policy regarding Audits: the instructor expects auditors (whether formally enrolled as such or not) to meet the same attendance, preparation, and oral participation standards as those students who are taking the course for credit. The instructor does not expect auditors to prepare and submit any written assignments.

c. The [Cuneiform Studies Laboratory](#) (located in Macy 216) houses a number of lexical and grammatical aids (both print and electronic) for the close study of West Semitic languages such as Ugaritic, Phoenician, 'Canaanite,' and biblical Hebrew. Please consult with the instructor for access to this learning resource and the regulations regarding its use.

d. Assistance and solicitation of criticism is your right as a member of the class. It is not a privilege to be granted or withheld. Do not hesitate to request it nor wait too late in the course for it to be of help.

SOME READINGS FOR CONTEXTUALIZING CANAANITE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

- Walter Burkert, "Oriental and Greek Mythology: The Meeting of Parallels," in *Interpretations of Greek Mythology* (ed. Jan N. Bremmer; Totowa, N.J.: Barnes & Noble, 1986), 10-40.
- Richard J. Clifford, "Cosmogonies in the Ugaritic Texts and in the Bible," *Orientalia* 53 (1984): 183-201.
- Alan M. Cooper, "Canaanite Religion (Overview)," in *Encyclopedia of Religion* (ed. Mircea Eliade, et al.; 15 vols.; New York: Macmillan, 1987), 3:35-44.
- Michael David Coogan, "Canaanite Religion (The Literature)," in *Encyclopedia of Religion* (ed. Mircea Eliade, et al.; 15 vols.; New York: Macmillan, 1987), 3:45-57.
- William W. Hallo, "Isaiah 28:9-13 and the Ugaritic Abecedaries," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 77 (1958): 324-38.
- Zellig S. Harris, "Expression of the Causative in Ugaritic," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 58 (1938): 103-11.
- John F. Healey and Peter C. Craigie, "Languages (Ugaritic)," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 4:226-29.
- Delbert R. Hillers, "Analyzing the Abominable: Our Understanding of Canaanite Religion," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 75 (1985): 253-69.
- Baruch Levine, "Ugaritic Descriptive Rituals," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 17 (1963): 105-11.
- Samuel E. Loewenstamm, "Notes on the Pronouns in Ugaritic in the Light of Canaanite," in idem, *Comparative Studies in Biblical and Ancient Oriental Literatures* (AOAT 204; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1980), 55-77.
- Robert A. Oden, Jr., "Theoretical Assumptions in the Study of Ugaritic Myths," *Maarav* 2 (1979-80): 43-63.
- Dennis Pardee, "Ugaritic Studies at the End of the 20th Century," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 320 (2000): 49-86.
- Dennis Pardee and Pierre Bordreuil, "Ugarit (Texts and Literature)," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6:706-21.
- Simon B. Parker, "Some Methodological Principles in Ugaritic Philology," *Maarav* 2 (1979/80): 7-41.
- A. F. Rainey, "Observations on Ugaritic Grammar," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 3 (1971): 151-72.
- Marguerite Yon, "Ugarit (History and Archaeology)," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6:695-706.