



## Course syllabus

Faculty Board of Humanities and Social Sciences  
School of Cultural Sciences

4RK400 Forntida religioner och religionsvetenskapens ämneshistoria,  
7,5 högskolepoäng

Ancient religions and the history of the study of religions, 7.5 credits

**Main field of study**  
Religious Studies

**Subject Group**  
Religious Studies

**Level of classification**  
Second Level

**Progression**  
A1N

**Date of Ratification**  
Approved by the Board of the School of Cultural Sciences 2012-12-04

The course syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2013

**Prerequisites**  
Religious Studies 90 credits, including a degree project at the Bachelor's level, and Swedish B and English A, or the equivalent.

### Objectives

#### Intended learning outcomes

After completing the course the student should, with a high degree of independence, be able to:

- account for and critically discuss the history of religious studies and their relation to adjacent subjects and general developments in society,
- relate their knowledge of the history of religious studies to studies of ancient religions in the Near East and the classical world, and account for current research,
- describe and explain the historical development in a couple of ancient religions in the Near East and/or the classical world, and demonstrate knowledge of religious documents,
- discuss strengths and weaknesses of the comparative method.

## Content

This course focuses on knowledge of ancient religions in the Near East and the Mediterranean area on the one hand, and the issues, theories, methods and preconceived ideas that have formed the basis for research on the time period and the area, on the other. By studying research history, the students develop their abilities to identify issues and research traditions of importance for the origin and development of the subject, which leads to new possibilities to study the time period and the area. At the same time, in-depth empirical knowledge give the students an understanding of the historical situation and the issues this in turn can bring forth. In addition to the main focus of the course – ranging from the debate on the Babel-Bible debate to contemporary discussions on the possible uniqueness of the Gospels – the students choose ancient traditions to specialise in.

## Type of Instruction

Teaching is delivered in the form of lectures and seminars.

## Examination

The course is assessed with the grades Fail (U), Pass (G) or Pass with Distinction (VG).

In order to receive the grade of Pass, the expected learning outcomes must be achieved. The course is examined through a memorandum and an oral examination in seminar form.

For students who do not pass the first examinations, retake examinations are provided in accordance with local regulations at the university.

## Course Evaluation

At the end of the course, a course evaluation is conducted. Results and analysis of the course evaluation are communicated to the students who have taken the course and the students who are taking the course when it is offered the next time. The evaluation is anonymous. The course evaluation is filed according to departmental regulations.

## Required Reading and Additional Study Material

### Subject-specific studies in religion

Assmann, Jan. (2008). *Of God and gods: Egypt, Israel, and the rise of monotheism*. Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press

Ehrman, Bart D. (2011). *The orthodox corruption of Scripture: the effect of early Christological controversies on the text of the New Testament*. Updated and with a new afterword. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Kippenberg, Hans Gerhard (2002). *Discovering religious history in the modern age*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press

Johnson, Luke Timothy. (2009). *Among the Gentiles: GrecoRoman religion and Christianity*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press

Johnston, Sarah Iles (ed.) (2004). *Religions of the ancient world: a guide*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press. In selection.

Smith, Jonathan Z. (1990). *Drudgery divine: on the comparison of early Christianities and the religions of late antiquity*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

Zetterholm, Magnus (2009). *Approaches to Paul: a student's guide to recent scholarship*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. In Swedish: Zetterholm, Magnus (2006). *Lagen som evangelium?: den nya synen på Paulus och judendomen*. Lund: Studentlitteratur

Articles provided by the teacher.

