

Old Testament History & Religion

BIB 101 - Fall, 2006

Section 6 (MWF)

Point Loma Nazarene University

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I. Course Description

Within the context of the history of Israel, an overview of the literature of the Old Testament with special attention to its literary history and theological themes. (PLNU Catalog).

Old Testament History and Religion is designed to help the general college student understand the literary, historical, and theological aspects of the Old Testament, and to develop skills useful for meaningful personal Bible Study. If this course serves its purpose, students will feel more comfortable reading and studying Scripture with the goal of understanding its message and its impact on their own spiritual journey and for the life of the Church of which they are a part. This course is designed to provide a foundation for a lifetime engagement with the Bible and the Old Testament as part of the larger message of Scripture.

The methodology of the course will be to consider the Old Testament as testimony and witness, the various ways men and women of Faith have told about the interaction between God and people in the unfolding history of the Israelites and later Jews. This testimony takes many different forms in Scripture that include recollection, law codes, prophetic pronouncements, liturgy, priestly instruction, reflective poetry, prayers, practical advice, encouragement, and historical reflection. As a result the literature of the Old Testament uses a range of literary styles (genre) to communicate its message. This course will examine not only the various kinds of literature of the Old Testament used to bear witness to God and his self-revelation in history, but also the historical and cultural context of that testimony, always with a view to hearing what the text says about God, about human beings, and about our relationship with God.

This course is one of the components of the General Education Program at PLNU, under the category of "Responding to the Sacred." By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the faculty supports the study of Scripture and Christian heritage as foundational in the pursuit of knowledge and the development of personal values.

II. Objectives of the Course

The readings, lectures, and class interaction of this course aims to enable the student to:

- ...describe the overall flow of Old Testament history including important dates, people, and events.
- ...describe some main cultural characteristics and geographical features of the Old Testament world.
- ...know the literary structure and main confessional story line of the Old Testament.
- ...know the significant characteristics and theological themes in each book of the Old Testament.
- ...understand the basic Old Testament witness to God's self-revelation in human history as a basis to address current moral, ethical, and spiritual issues.
- ...understand some of the connections between the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- ...read Old Testament passages with greater understanding.

III. Textbooks

Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 3rd ed.; Zondervan, 2003

Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book*, Zondervan, 2002.

The New Interpreter's Study Bible, Abingdon, 2003

Other required readings as assigned: <http://www.crivoice.org/PLNU/NT/BIB101.html>

IV. Class Schedule, Course Outline, and Textbook Readings

All sections listed in the reading will be included in the corresponding Unit Exam. You are expected to read this material before the time indicated as preparation for class discussion. *A word to the wise: Since there is a lot of reading for this course, it is better to plan a little reading each day throughout the semester, taking notes on important persons, events, and ideas as you read. You will not do well on exams if you try to "cram" a lot of reading into a short amount of time.*

The following schedule is tentative, and may be adjusted based on class response and interest. All of the web readings are located on the web site: <http://www.crivoice.org/PLNU/NT/BIB101.html>. These Readings are **NOT** available in EClass.

A note about the Bible readings: In addition to the biblical texts assigned, you are expected to read all of the additional material in *The New Interpreter's Study Bible*, including the Excurses, Book introductions, outlines, and footnotes.

BB= *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* AW= *How to read the Bible for all Its Worth* NISB= *New Interpreter's Study Bible*

Date	Course Outline	Text/Required Readings	Bible Readings
Unit One:	I. Introduction	(Web) " What I Learned from My First Bible Class "	
Week 1	A. Faith Journeys B. Why Study Scripture?	AW, 17-31; (Web) " Beginning Bible Study " (Web) " Devotional and Exegetical Reading "; " Problems with 'Plain Sense' Reading of Scripture "	
	II. The OT World		
	A. OT Geography and History	NISB, Maps 1-10, 2274-2279; BB 9-20; (Web) " Key Biblical Dates "	
	B. Ancient Culture	(Web) " Community and Testimony "; " Baal Worship "	
Oct 23	Data Quiz: Maps	(Covers only the maps and geography)	
Week 2	III. The Torah	(Web) " JEDP: Sources in the Pentateuch "	
	A. Genesis	BB 24-33; AW 89-106; (Web) " Sons of God and Giants ";	Gen 1-12, 15, 17-19, 22, 27-28, 32, 37, 50.
	B. Exodus	BB 34-42; (Web) " The Yam Suph ";	Exod 1-7, 11-16, 20-22
	C. Leviticus-Numbers	BB 43-54; AW 163-180	Lev 4, 6-7, 16, 20, 23, 25 Num 13-14, 21-22
	D. Deuteronomy	BB 55-62	Deut 1-6, 8, 28, 30, 34
Oct 30	Exam 1: Unit 1	(covers sections I-III, people)	
Unit Two	IV. Former Prophets		
Week 3	A. Joshua	BB 63-69	Josh 1, 6-8, 23-25
	B. Judges, Ruth	BB 70-81; (Web) " The Judges of Israel ";	Jud 2, 4-8, 16; Ruth 1-4
Week 4	C. Samuel	BB 82-90	1 Sam 1-3, 8, 12-13, 16-17; 2 Sam 1, 2, 5, 7, 11-12
	D. Kings/Chronicles	BB 91-107; (Web) " Israelite Kings Date Chart ";	1 Kng 2, 3, 8, 11, 12, 17-19, 21; 2 Kng 2, 4-5, 17-19, 25; 1 Ch 10-11, 22; 2 Ch 6-7, 26, 33-35
Week 5	V. Latter Prophets	(Web) " Israelite Prophets Date Chart "	
	A. Isaiah	BB 171-185; AW 181-204; (Web) " Prophecy and Prediction "	Isa 1-2, 6-9, 11, 40, 42, 45, 55, 58, 61, 65
	B. Jeremiah	BB 186-194, 166-170	Jer 1-2, 4, 7, 11, 17-18, 23-24, 28-29, 31-32, 36; Lam 1-3
Nov 20	Exam 2; Unit 2 (to this point)	(covers sections IV-V:B, people)	
Week 6-7	C. Ezekiel	BB 195-203	Eze 1-3, 5, 10-11, 16, 18, 34, 36-37
	D. The Twelve	BB 211-265; (Web) " Hosea 11:1-11 "	Hos 1-4, 11, 14; Joel 1-2; Am 1-5, 7, 9; Ob 1; Jon 1-4; Mic 1-3, 6-7; Na 1-2; Hab 1-3; Zeph 1-3; Hag 1-2; Zech 1, 4, 6, 11; Mal 1-4
Unit Three	VI. The Writings and Wisdom	(Web) " The Wisdom and Psalms Traditions "	
Week 7	A. Psalms	BB 119-120, 130-143; AW 205-223; (Web) " Introducing the Psalms "; " Structure, Genre, and Theology in Psalms "	Psa 1, 5, 8, 13, 18, 22-24, 46, 51, 84, 88, 91, 104-107, 118, 121, 127, 130, 137, 139
	B. Proverbs	BB 144-153; AW 225-248; (Web) " An Introduction to Old Testament Wisdom Literature "	1. 2. 3. 6-7. 10. 22-23. 30-31
Week 8	C. Job	BB 121-129;	Job 1-4, 8-9, 11, 13, 34-35, 38-42
	D. Scrolls, Daniel	BB 114-118, 154-165, 204-210	Eccl 1-6, 9, 12; Song 1, 4; Est 1-4, 7; Dan 1, 3, 5, 7, 12
	D. Ezra-Nehemiah	BB 108-113	Ez 1, 3-4, 6-7; Neh 1, 2, 4, 8, 13
Dec 13	Final Exam: Unit 2C-3, People Data, Course	(covers section V:C-VI, people, Comprehensive of the course)	

A note about internet resources: There are a lot of good resources online, as well as a lot of junk! Be aware that not all internet sites are a good source for outside reading or for biblical study resources. One of the best portal sites for biblical study is [The Text this Week \(http://www.textweek.com/\)](http://www.textweek.com/). It is organized around the lectionary readings of the Church Year, but there is also an [index by biblical books](#). There are links to many helpful articles on various aspects of biblical history and interpretation. There are also a variety of articles and Bible Studies on the [CRI/Voice](#) site that you might find helpful.

V. Course Requirements

1) Reading

Attached is a checklist of the assigned biblical readings as given in the schedule above. You should check off this list as you read the material. Do not count any biblical readings that you have read before the start of this course or any that you intend to read in the future. You may only report as read those chapters that you have read for this class and during this semester. The report of this reading on the checklist is **due December 8**. A copy of the checklist is included on the website to download. Reading will count for 10% of the course grade. *NOTE: The reporting of this reading is on the honor system. You will be expected to demonstrate honesty and personal integrity in reporting your readings.* On the other hand, it is unlikely that you will do well on exams without reading the material.

2) Geography of the Old Testament World

A study guide of significant areas and locations in the Old Testament world is attached. A quiz will be given at the beginning of the second week of class (**October 23**) covering this material. **The student is responsible for studying the maps and preparing for this quiz.** Practice maps are included with the study guide. The quiz will count for 10% of the course grade.

3) Old Testament Characters

Attached is a study guide of significant people of the Old Testament. A section of each exam will include facts about the people related to that Unit of study. The final exam (**December 13**) will also include a section covering all of the people on the study guide. While some of these people may be discussed in class lectures, **the student is responsible for compiling the information and preparing for this part of the exams.** Resources to consult are Bible Dictionaries, such as *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (1996), or *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (1998). These are available in the reference section of the library. There are several online Bible dictionaries, such as *Easton's Bible Dictionary*, but they are sometimes less reliable.

4) Interpretation projects

There will be three short interpretation projects due during the course, one from each section of the Old Testament. The instructions for these projects will be provided later. These will be **due October 27** (Torah), **November 17** (Prophets), and **December 8** (Writings). These will count for 30% of the course grade (3 Projects @ 10% each).

5) Exams

There will be three exams, two unit exams and a final exam that will include the last unit, the biblical characters from the study guide, as well as possible material from the entire course. Exams will cover both the textbooks and class lectures, including biblical reading, and will count for 50% of the course grade (2 Unit exams @ 15% and the Unit exam/final @ 20%). *NOTE: Keep in mind while reading and taking class notes that these exams count for a large percentage of the course grade. You will not do well on the exams without reading the textbooks carefully AND taking careful class notes.* Group study is often helpful for these exams. Exam dates: Unit 1: **October 30**; Unit 2a: **November 20**; Unit 2b-3, People, Comprehensive: **December 13**.

6) Extra Credit

There will be opportunity to do a limited amount of extra credit work that will be accepted at the discretion of the professor. This option is given to allow students who have unexpected problems arise during the semester the opportunity to catch up or is offered to those who want to excel. It is not intended to provide an escape for students who do not regularly hand in assignments, who are habitually late with assignments, or who simply do not study for tests. Information on this will be provided about mid-term. While you may do the extra credit work any time during the semester, no work for extra credit will be accepted finally unless all regular assignments have been completed. Only students who have not missed more than 3 class periods will be allowed to count extra credit points in their grade. Maximum credit for all extra credit work is 5 percentage points of the course grade. This will not be averaged into the grade, but will simply be added directly to the grade. *NOTE: Extra credit work is not an automatic grade. It will be graded just like any other assignment. Extra credit work will not be accepted after December 1!*

VI. GRADING

Exams and papers will be given a numerical grade of 0-100, which represents a percentage of credit for the assignment. Grades for this course will be posted on EClass (Blackboard) as soon as they are available.

Grading scale:

94-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	below 60 F
90-93 A-	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D	
	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-	

NOTE - A word about grading: Since this is an undergraduate course, average work is considered a C. Papers handed in late receive 80% credit. Students should ask the professor if there are any questions about the grading.

Factors considered in grading essays and research papers (roughly in order of importance):

1. How well the paper addresses the topic and expresses understanding of the church tradition
2. Demonstrated thought and reflection about the topic
3. Clarity and coherence of thought, good organization, smooth transitions
4. Amount and quality of reading done
5. References in the paper to specific sources read
6. Length of paper relative to assignment, adequate margins, correct spelling, proper grammar, neat appearance
7. Engaging style, readability, creativity
8. A separate bibliography page with references in proper form

Assignment Summary:	Weight	Due Dates
Reading	10%	December 8
Map Quiz	10%	October 23
Interpretations (3 @ 10% ea)	30%	October 27, November 17, December 8
Unit Exams (2 @ 15% ea)	30%	October 30, November 20
Final Exam	20%	December 13
<i>Extra Credit</i>	5%	

VII. CLASS POLICIES

Attendance Policy

Given the nature of this course and the importance of class interaction regular attendance and participation is imperative. The attendance policies of PLNU as outlined in the 2006-2007 school catalog will be followed in this class. There are no excused absences unless directly related to University activities and approved in writing by the Provost.

Any student who misses 10% of the class (MWF=5; TR=3) will be warned by e-mail and a report to the Vice-Provost for Academic Administration that de-enrollment is pending. If absences reach 20% of the course (MWF=9; TR=6) the student will automatically be de-enrolled. Note that de-enrollment after the last day for dropping a class will result in a grade of F or NC. Absences are counted from the first day of class regardless of the time the student enrolled in the class. Excessive tardiness or leaving class early will count as an absence. It is the student's responsibility to inform the professor if s/he came to class after the roll had been taken. If extra credit work is offered, only students who have not missed more than 3 hours of class (MWF=3 classes; TR=2 classes) will be allowed to count extra credit points in their grade.

Technology Policy

Cell phones should be turned off or to silent mode during class. Answering a phone during class will be considered leaving class. Students with any kind of audio headset (phone or music) in class will be counted absent.

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please consult the Undergraduate school catalog in the section "The Academic Program" under the heading "Academic Honesty" (p. 61) to learn the professor's intended policy regarding student dishonesty in academic work. Academic Dishonesty on an assignment will result in an automatic F on that assignment without the possibility of making up the assignment. A second violation will result in dismissal from the course with a grade of F. Signing roll sheets for another student is considered a breach of academic integrity and will result in an automatic absence for *both* students and a report to the Vice-Provost for Academic Administration

ESL Policy

If your first language is not English, consult with the professor for possible accommodations.

Learning Disability Assistance:

All students are expected to meet the standards for this course as set by the instructor. However, students with learning disabilities who have submitted appropriate documentation to the Academic Support Center (ASC) and may need accommodations should discuss options with the ASC during the first two weeks of the class. The ASC, at the request of the student, will then contact the instructor with suggested classroom strategies and recommended academic accommodations for this course. Approved documentation must be on file in the ASC prior to the beginning of the semester.

Inclusive Language Policy:

The School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the department urges students, faculty and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings.

Miscellaneous

1. It is the responsibility of the student to read the syllabus and fulfill the requirements of particular assignments and the course. Excuses such as "I didn't know" will not be accepted. Ask the professor for any clarification of assignments or due dates.
2. All assigned work is due at the beginning of class on the day due. Except under extenuating circumstances, late work will receive only 80% credit. Work more than one week late may not be accepted. No late work or extra credit work will be accepted after December 1.
3. Because of a large number of students, all written assignments must be submitted in hard copy in class. The Eclass dropbox is not available for this course.
4. Students should arrange their schedules to insure that they take examinations at the scheduled time. In no case may any exam be taken early, and make up tests will be permitted only in very extraordinary circumstances and only with prior approval (8:00 AM the day of the exam will not normally be considered "prior"). Students do not have the option of choosing when to take exams. "Not feeling well" will NOT be considered a valid reason for missing an exam! Make-up tests will be at the discretion of the professor. Normally, an exam not taken at the scheduled time will only receive 50% credit. Students should not make travel plans at the end of the semester that interfere with the final no matter when it is scheduled.