

Course Title: BIB 301 Introduction to the Old Testament: Sacred Texts and Imperial Contexts of the Hebrew Bible

Term: Fall 2022

Format: Online Asynchronous with Synchronous Zoom Meetings

Meeting Dates: Tuesday, September 6 (optional)
Tuesday, September 13
Tuesday, October 4
Tuesday, October 25
Tuesday, November 15
Tuesday, December 6
(Meetings will take place via Zoom, 7-8:30pm Central Time)

Instructor: Kay Apigo, PhD (she/her)
kapigo@bexleyseabury.edu (email preferred)
mobile: *Number will be provided in the syllabus posted on Canvas.*

Office Hours: Drop in* Thurs 12-2pm CT
Zoom link will be provided in the syllabus posted on Canvas.
Or by appointment. Please email to arrange to meet via phone or Zoom.

* I have set aside this time for you to “drop in” to chat. The link will bring you to a Waiting Room. If you are not let in right away, there may be another student meeting with me at the time, in which case I will message you via the Chat with an estimated wait time or alternate time.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course offers an introduction to the context and content of the Hebrew Bible and the field of modern biblical scholarship. We will explore traditions of the Old Testament in the context of ancient Israelite history and culture. In particular, we will discover ways in which the texts reflect Israel’s experiences of trauma, resilience, and survival amidst successive empires of the Ancient Near East. We will enter into conversation with the cacophony/symphony of biblical voices, focusing particularly on the topic of suffering as a case study for the diversity of biblical perspectives. Finally, we will engage with various methods of biblical interpretation in order to read old stories with new eyes and all of this for the sake of bringing the Old Testament into conversation with contemporary crises, diverse communities, and personal faith.

LEARNING METHODOLOGY:

Studying the Bible is seldom a mere academic exercise. For some, the Bible is an integral part of culture and tradition, a connection to the past and one’s community. For others it is a site of pain and trauma. Still for others, it is more than a collection of ancient literature: It is the very

Word of God, through which God continues to speak truth, peace, and hope through time and space and into the hearts and lives of individuals and communities. As we embark on this journey of learning together, I invite you bring all that you are, including your history with the Bible, into our classroom. There is room here for your questions, your doubt, your curiosity, and your passion.

In order to imagine ways that the Old Testament might continue to speak into the 21st century, we must first discover its message within its founding history and to its initial audience. We must acknowledge the ways the Bible is a foreign text, one written to a specific community living under the oppressive rule of great empires. Only then can we creatively reframe this message for our contemporary contexts and communities – to confront modern forms of oppression and the empires of our day.

This course is designed to equip you will the language and the tools to study the Old Testament beyond our time together. It is grounded in the past with an eye to the future. We will engage deeply with history through reading and writing, but we will also spend time in both self-reflection and communal discussion asking “So what?” as it pertains to personal faith, vocation and ministry, our communities, and the cause of justice in the world.

COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES:

1. Describe the major details (background, content, theology) of select Old Testament texts
 - a. *Create a timeline of biblical history and identify major biblical periods*
 - b. *Locate these stories along this timeline*
 - c. *Become familiar with their ancient audience*
 - d. *[Bexley Seabury Curricular Outcomes](#): MDiv 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.3***Assessment: Assignments 3, 4, 5, and 7**

2. Identify ways in which Old Testament texts address the experiences of imperial trauma and resilience characteristic of ancient Israelite history
 - a. *Connect the history of oppression with the stories it produced*
 - b. *Communicate the contemporary relevance of the trauma and resilience through storytelling model in interpreting biblical history and writing*
 - c. *Practice this model in settings of preaching and teaching*
 - d. *Curricular Outcomes: MDiv 1.1, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4***Assessment: Assignments 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7**

3. Practice engaging with a diverse range of methods for reading and interpreting the Old Testament, e.g. Indigenous, queer, womanist, etc.
 - a. *Develop interpretative skills in conversation with modern biblical scholarship*
 - b. *Recognize the significance of the Bible’s History of Interpretation*
 - c. *Decolonize biblical interpretation for ourselves and our communities of faith*
 - d. *Curricular Outcomes: MDiv 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1***Assessment: Assignments 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7**

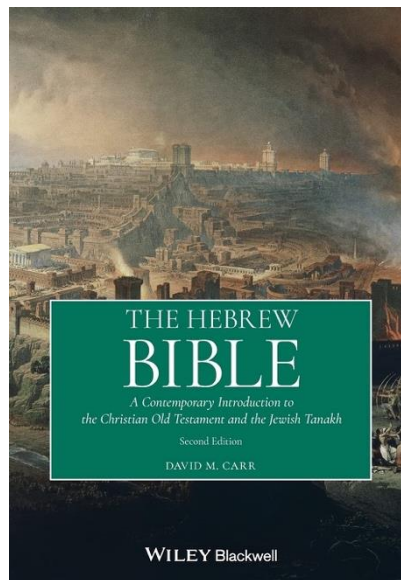
4. Frame useful questions for reading and interpreting the Old Testament for the sake of justice in the 21st century
 - a. *Apply the hermeneutic of trauma and resilience to address 21st century crises*
 - b. *Connect the Old Testament with modern movements of hope and change*

c. Curricular Outcomes: MDiv 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1

Assessment: Assignments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7

COURSE REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

- REQUIRED:
 - Any modern English Bible translation. Suggested: *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version*. Fifth Edition. Oxford University Press, 2018. ISBN: 0190276088.
 - **NOTE:** We will not do a lot with Apocryphal texts this semester, but it is good to own a Bible that includes Apocrypha for later academic study.
 - David M. Carr. *The Hebrew Bible: A Contemporary Introduction to the Christian Old Testament and the Jewish Tanakh*. Second Edition. Wiley-Blackwell, 2021. ISBN: 1119636671.
 - **NOTE:** Make sure you procure the **SECOND** (newer) edition of the Carr textbook, so that we are all (literally) on the same page. It looks like this:



- ON CANVAS (in the order assigned):
 - Sheckman, [“How Do Biblical Scholars Read the Hebrew Bible?”](#)
 - Barton, [“Biblical Criticism: A Common Sense Approach”](#)
 - Project TABS Editors, [“The Benefits of Studying Torah with Modern Biblical Scholarship”](#)
 - John H. Walton. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006: 131-211.
 - Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin, “Stories of Atrahasis” in *Old Testament Parallels: Laws and Stories from the Ancient Near East*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2016: 10-20.
 - Matthews and Benjamin, “Stories of Gilgamesh,” *OTP*, 38-52.
 - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “Death of Evil upon the Seashore: Sermon Delivered at the Service of Prayer and Thanksgiving, Cathedral of St. John the Divine” *The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project*, Stanford University.
 - Terence Fretheim, “God and Violence in the Old Testament,” *Word and World* 24, 2004: 18-28.

- Carolyn Pressler, "The Shema: A Protestant Feminist Reading," in *Escaping Eden: New Feminist Perspectives on the Bible* eds. H. Washington, S. Graham, and P. Thimmes. New York: NYU Press, 1999: 41-52.
- David W. Stowe, "Babylon Revisted: Psalm 137 as American Protest Song," *Black Music Research Journal*, 32, 1, 2012: 95-112.
- William S. Morrow, "Comfort for Jerusalem: The Second Isaiah as Counselor to Refugees," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 34, 2, 2004: 80-86.
- Matthews and Benjamin, "Thirty Teachings of Amen-em-ope," *OTP*, 325-335.
- Wilma Ann Bailey, "The Sorrow Songs: Laments from Ancient Israel and the African-American Diaspora" in *Yet with a Steady Beat: U.S. Afrocentric Biblical Interpretation*. Semeia Studies, SBL, 2003: 61-84.
- Newsom, "'Bakhtin, the Bible and Dialogic Truth.'" *Journal of Religion* 76, 1996: 290-306.
- Barbara Brown Taylor, "The Practice of Feeling Pain," in *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2009: 155-73.
- Prathia Hall Wynn, "When the Hurts Do Not Heal," in *Those Preaching Women: More Sermons by Black Women Preachers*. Valley Forge: Judson, 1985: 95-102.
- Phyllis Trible, "Eve and Adam: Genesis 2-3 Reread," in *WomanSpirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow, eds. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979: 74-83.
- Ken Stone, *Practicing Safer Texts: Food, Sex and Bible in Queer Perspective*. London: T&T Clark, 2005: 23-45.
- Carol Newsom, "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2-3" in *The Earth Story in Genesis*, eds. Norman C. Habel and Shirley Wurst. Sheffield: Pilgrim Press, 2000: 60-72.
- Renita Weems, "Song of Songs," in *The Women's Bible Commentary* eds. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992: 164-68.
- Ellen Davis, *Getting Involved With God: Rediscovering the Old Testament*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001: 65-86.
- David Carr, *Erotic Word: Sexuality, Spirituality and the Bible*. New York: Oxford, 2001: 109-151.
- Gale Yee, "She Stood in Tears Amid the Alien Corn": Ruth, the Perpetual Foreigner and Model Minority," in *They Were All Together in One Place?* eds. Randall C. Bailey, Tat-siong Benny Liew, and Fernando F. Segovia. Semeia Studies, SBL, 2009: 119-140.
- Laura Donaldson, "The Sign of Orpah: Reading Ruth through Native Eyes." In *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader* ed. R. S. Sugirtharajah. Blackwell, 2006.
- Laurel Koepf-Taylor, "Inside Out: The Othered Child in the Bible for Children" in *Society of Biblical Literature, Semeia studies, Volume 56 : Text, Image, and Otherness in Children's Bibles: What Is in the Picture?* July 2012, 11-30.
- RECOMMENDED:
 - **For History:** Miller, J. Maxwell and John H. Hayes. *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*. Second Edition. Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
 - **For Culture:** Walton, John H. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006.
 - **For Ancient Near Eastern Literature:** Matthews, Victor H. and Don C. Benjamin. *Old Testament Parallels: Laws and Stories from the Ancient Near East*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2016.

- **For Method:** McKenzie, Stephen L. and Stephen R. Haynes. *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application*. Second Edition. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.
- **For Everyday Ancient Israelite Life:** King, Phillip J. and Lawrence E. Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- **For Religion:** Keel, Othmar and Christoph Uehlinger. *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, trans. Allan W. Mahnke. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997.
- Bibliography of recommendations for specific books and topics forthcoming.
- Students are expected to access the “Tech Help” resources via the button at the bottom of the Canvas home page for a description of technology requirements.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

We will be using two forms of assessment in this class, formative and summative. Briefly:

Formative assessments are low-stakes, relatively brief assignments, designed to provide frequent opportunities for reflection and ongoing feedback on your learning. Taken together, these assessments make up the “Participation” in the course, worth 30% of your overall grade.

Summative assessments are one time, higher-stakes assignments, and will take more time and preparation. They are designed to evaluate your broader conceptual competency at key points during the semester, i.e. at the end of each unit.

Formative:

1. Biblical Autobiography
2. Five-minute Journal
3. 3-2-1 Exit Cards
4. Discussion Board Posts

Summative:

5. Short Paper #1
6. Short Paper #2
7. Final Portfolio

NOTE: A word about paper length and word count. One page of writing (double-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins) is approximately 250 words. The word counts listed below are intended as guidelines, not strict requirements. I am primarily concerned that you are communicating clearly, concisely, and with thorough consideration to the questions posed.

1. **Biblical Autobiography:** Please write a personal history of your relationship with the Bible. This can include exposure through personal reading, church, and/or academic settings, as well as both explicit and implicit encounters in media and the world around you. You might also consider the following questions (though you do not need to address them all): What does the Bible mean to you? Which parts of the Bible have been the most central in your encounters with it? Has your experience with the Bible been

positive or negative? What has been your personal history with the Old Testament specifically? Finally, spend the final paragraph of your Autobiography posing *at least* two questions that you've always wanted to know about the Old Testament.

- **500-750 words (2-3 pages double-spaced)**
- Submit via File Upload on Canvas. Due **Monday, September 12**

2. **Five-minute Journal:** Every week will begin with a brief journal prompt inviting you to either reflect on your past (prior to the class) experiences and presuppositions of biblical texts and themes *or* demonstrate your understanding of broad concepts previously covered in class. Despite the name, these reflections are not timed. Take a few minutes to jot down your thoughts in response to the prompt and then proceed to the tasks for the week. Because this exercise is designed to “prime the pump” for the material to follow, I *strongly* suggest you do the Five-minute journal *before* tackling the reading or other modules. (Submit via File Upload on Canvas)
3. **3-2-1 Exit Cards:** (Submit via Quiz module on Canvas) Every week, you will submit an Exit Card after completing all readings and modules. These can (and should) be presented in list form. Please write:

THREE ideas that you found interesting, challenging, surprising, inspiring, etc.

TWO questions that remain, either content-based or “big picture”

ONE application of how you might teach or apply in your personal context(s)

4. **Discussion Board Posts:** Discussion prompts will be provided on Canvas and are designed to help you engage with the material in community with your fellow scholars. We all bring unique perspectives, experiences, and expertise to the “table” and my hope is that we learn and engage *together* even as we live and work apart. To this end:

Please **Post your Initial Response** to the week’s Discussion Board by **Friday** evening. Generally, discussion prompts will not require you to have completed all of the week’s readings *or* readings for focus will be explicitly specified.

Please **Respond** to your classmates’ Posts by **Monday** evening. There is no upper *or* lower limit to this. I would encourage you to respond in a spirit of affirmation, “Yes, and...” or “Yes, but...” and to engage in as many conversations as your time and personal bandwidth will allow.

There is no Discussion Board for weeks leading up to a Synchronous Meeting.

5. **Short Paper #1:** (20%) This paper is the summative assignment for *Unit 1: The Biblical Story in Its History*. As such, it will assess your understanding of the model of trauma and resilience in relation to the major details (historical, cultural, social background, content, and theology) of an Old Testament text.
 - Choose one of the following texts: Psalm 72, Amos 5, Isaiah 63:7-64:12, Daniel 3 (If you would like to choose another text, please do so in consultation with me for approval by Monday, October 10.)

- **First:** Identify and describe its historical and cultural background. For this, you will have to consult research outside of the textbook. Research consultations are available via [The Styberg Library](#) to all Bexley Seabury students (~250 words)
 - [Check out this website](#) for a clear and thorough guide to Biblical Exegesis by The Styberg Library.
 - **Second:** Respond to the following questions: In what ways is the historical context evident in the text? Think particularly about the ways imperial influence is inscribed into the text. How does the text respond to its context? What message would it have communicated to its ancient audience? (500-750 words)
 - **Third:** Reflecting on this ancient message, what is the relevance of this passage for ministry in your context today? This section can take on a variety of forms:
 - A traditional, narrative response to the question (250-500 words)
 - A lesson plan for a short Bible study of the passage
 - A script for a commercial “advertising” the relevance of the passage
 - Some other creative idea that brings the text to bear on modern life
 - **1000-1500 words (4-6 pages double-spaced)**
 - Submit via File Upload on Canvas. Due **Friday, October 21.**
6. **Short Paper #2:** (20%) This paper is the summative assignment for *Unit 2: Diverse Biblical Perspectives on Suffering*. It will assess both your comprehension of the texts and articles covered as well as your ability to apply both the concept of biblical diversity and the diverse perspectives themselves to modern life, faith, and community.
- **First:** Write a preliminary statement describing how you viewed act-consequence and suffering prior to this class. (~250 words).
 - **Second:** Contrast the ways in which the following texts address the themes of act-consequence and suffering: Proverbs, Praise and Lament Psalms, the Book of Job, Ecclesiastes, and the apocalypse of Daniel (750-1000 words).
 - This is not meant to be a summary walk-through of each text, but a conversation between texts on various issues covered in this unit, e.g. the link between act and consequence, individual versus communal focus, and the role of the divine. What others can you think of?
 - There are a number of ways you can present these contrasts:
 - A traditional essay, organized thematically, with each section contrasting how each text would address a certain issue
 - A dramatic play or script imagining the texts in literal “conversation” with one another on the themes. Here you might even imagine a specific conflict and center the conversation around it.
 - A structured debate with a more formal Opening Statement, Q&A, Rebuttal format. You might even imagine a moderator.
 - If you can think of a different format, please consult with me for approval by Monday, October 31.
 - **Third:** How have your views on suffering changed as a result of engaging in this conversation? How would you communicate the themes from this unit in the context of your community or ministry? (250-500 words)
 - **1250-1750 words (5-7 pages double-spaced)**
 - Submit via File Upload on Canvas. Due **Friday, November 11.**

7. **Final Portfolio:** (30%) This is the summative assignment for the course as a whole and will bring together the various streams of the term to assess all course goals.
- **Reflecting back on your Five-minute Journal entries:** Describe THREE ways in which your previous understanding or presuppositions of the Old Testament have been altered over the past semester. (~250 words each = 750 words TOTAL)
 - **Engage:** Post ONE of these reflections to the Week 14 Discussion Board.
 - **Draw a Timeline of the Major Biblical Periods of the Old Testament:** You can hand draw and scan or use a digital timeline template (PowerPoint has one and there are others you can access online). Locate FIVE texts along that timeline and then describe how the historical background of the text is evident in its content. Another way of thinking about this might be: How does understanding the history help us to better understand the text? (100-250 words each)
 - **Choose ONE of the major ancient empires:** (Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece) Describe their interactions with the ancient Israelites and how these interactions influenced the composition and transmission of the Hebrew Bible (250-500 words).
 - **Choose FIVE voices/perspectives from the past semester:** These can be the texts themselves, e.g. First Isaiah or modern interpreters, e.g. Laura Donaldson. Place them in conversation with each other on a topic on your choosing, e.g. election, sin, justice, etc. If you need ideas, please consult with the instructor as soon as possible. Because you have these instructions ahead of time, you might even begin to collect perspectives as we work through the texts together over the course of the semester. As with Short Paper #2, this can take the form of a traditional essay or a creative script, debate, etc. (750-1000 words)
 - **Choose (or imagine) a community in your own life:** Briefly describe this community (~100-250 words) and then with this community in mind, create an advertisement for a seminar on the relevance of the Old Testament in the 21st century. This can be a script or speech. It can also be a visual-based brochure or presentation. What texts would you cover? What learning activities or discussion topics would you use? How would you get folks to apply what they've learned?
 - Your advertisement can be included with the rest of your Portfolio, i.e. in the Word document, or uploaded as a separate file if you choose to use a different Application, e.g. PowerPoint or video software.
 - **2500-3000 words TOTAL (10-12 pages double-spaced) + Advertisement**
 - **Submit via File Upload on Canvas. Due Monday, December 12.**

GENERAL POLICIES

Deadlines: All assignments are due by end of day (11:59pm CT) unless otherwise specified.

Assignment Feedback: You can expect feedback on all assignments *no later than* the Wednesday of the following week. Grades and feedback will be posted on Canvas.

Late Work: Late submission of formative assignments (exit cards, discussion board posts and responses) will receive late feedback. Late submission of summative assignments (short papers or portfolio) without prior arrangement with the instructor will receive a grade deduction (e.g. A to A-) for *each day* late. Please reach out earlier rather than later if you know you will need an

extension. I understand that “things come up” at the last minute and I am not unreasonable or unsympathetic, but the sooner you reach out, the better I can assist you in completing your work successfully.

Auditors/CEU: Auditors may complete all formative assessments for feedback, but need not do summative assessments. Any assignment submitted will receive feedback.

Worship: Participation in worship, while not required, is an integral part of students’ formation. We will begin each Synchronous Meeting with some form of worship with students invited to take the lead over the course of the semester. Further details on this will be discussed at our first mandatory Synchronous Meeting (Tuesday, September 13).

Library: Bexley Seabury Seminary has access to all physical and online resources at The Styberg Library and the Northwestern University Libraries. The Styberg Library also offers reference help and research consultation online through chat service, by phone, or by video conference. You can schedule a meeting on [the library website](#) or by reaching out to Daniel Smith (daniel.smith@garrett.edu), Research, Instruction, and Digital Services Librarian.

The Styberg Library also has an excellent online guide to Biblical Exegesis. I would encourage you to check it out at [this link](#). Here also is [a short list of Bible commentary series](#) put out by Harvard Divinity School to reference at the start of your research.

Course Evaluations: Course evaluations are an important part of the educational process. They help instructors understand what is working well for a course and what might benefit from some changes. I take student feedback very seriously and have used it to make adjustments to course design and assessment over the years. This very course has benefitted from the honest feedback of the students who have come before and for that (and them) I am deeply grateful.

Students taking the course for credit are expected to complete the evaluation as part of their participation in the learning experience. Auditors are encouraged to complete the evaluation as well. Evaluations will be available in Populi near the end of the course and will remain open until the grade deadline for each term. Evaluations should be completed based on your experience of the course and should not be based on your final grade. For this reason, during the grading period, you will not be able to see your grade in Populi until you have completed the evaluation. After the grade deadline, you will be able to see your grade in Populi, but you will no longer be able to share your voice through the course evaluation.

Institutional-level Assessment: Bexley Seabury Seminary regularly evaluates the quality of our programs using a variety of data, including documents that are deposited into student portfolios. These portfolios consist of designated student work (artifacts) from each course. Each artifact is graded and accompanied by a scored rubric that assesses the work in light of desired curricular outcomes. The designated assessment artifact for this course is **the Final Portfolio**.

We use your portfolio to assess student learning (in the aggregate) and the effectiveness of our curricula in reaching desired goals and objectives. This process does not involve any further evaluation of your work for grading purposes. No identifying information will be included in any evaluation or report provided to our accreditors or other outside parties. For further information, see the Student Handbook. You may also talk with your instructor, your advisor,

the Assessment Coordinator (Lelia Fry, lfry@bexleyseabury.edu), or the Academic Dean, (Jason Fout, jfout@bexleyseabury.edu).

Better Practices for Zoom Sessions: Zoom works best when certain criteria are met.

- The latest version of Zoom is installed. Check periodically to download updates.
- One computer to one user. Everyone should have their own device (including camera and mic) and zoom link. This helps everyone come to the space equally.
- If you are in a shared or noisy space, use headphones/earbuds. In general, it is normally best to keep your mic muted unless you are speaking to minimize background noise.
- Minimize distractions around you. If you must be in transit, mute your mic.
- Plan ahead to ensure you have a stable internet connection for the entire session.
- Cameras should generally be on unless your internet connection is unstable or you need to step away to take care of something. This contributes toward demonstrating your presence and participation in class during the session.

Academic Policies:

All students in Bexley Seabury courses are expected to be familiar with the following information that is provided on Canvas, in Student Resources:

- Academic policies and forms
- Requests for withdrawals, extensions, and incompletes
- Technological requirements and assistance
- Writing guidelines and assistance
- Course Netiquette
- Prohibition of plagiarism

COURSE GRADING & FEEDBACK:

- All grades and feedback for course assignments will be provided on Canvas.
- Students will also receive a narrative mid-term evaluation at the end of WEEK 8.
- NOTE: The Canvas gradebook reflects cumulative grades for assignments, but the final official grade for the course will be recorded manually in Populi.

Bexley Seabury requires a minimum grade of C to pass a course.		
Grade	Points	Description
A (4.00)	96-100	Superior/Mastery
A- (3.67)	90-95	Excellent
B+ (3.33)	87-89	Very Good
B (3.00)	84-86	Good (high)
B- (2.67)	80-83	Good (low)
C+ (2.33)	75-79	Acceptable (high)
C (2.00)	70-74	Acceptable/Adequate
F (0)	< 70	Unacceptable (Fail)
A grade of "P" in a Pass/Fail course is equivalent to a grade of C or above.		

COURSE CADENCE:

NOTE: The work week for this course *starts* on **Tuesday** and *concludes* on **Monday**. Our synchronous sessions will meet on **Tuesdays** (7-8:30pm CT). During these times we will draw together and discuss work done in the *previous* weeks.

CADENCE: Most weeks will follow the cadence of Consider → Engage → Apply.

Consider: Each week you will be invited to engage with passages from the Bible as well as readings from the textbook and/or essays provided on Canvas. There may also be art, video, music, or other media on Canvas for you to consider alongside what you read.

Engage: Five-minute journal exercises will lead you in reflecting upon past experiences and presuppositions of biblical texts. You will also connect with your classmates in online Discussion Boards and our synchronous meetings. Note that there is no Discussion Board on weeks leading up to a Zoom meeting.

Apply: Students will consider real life application of content through weekly Exit Cards as well as summative assessments due throughout the term.

COURSE CALENDAR:

Optional Synchronous Meeting September 6, 7pm CT

WEEK 1: [Beginning] September 6-12

Introduction & Orientation to Studying the Hebrew Bible

Consider: Carr Prologue and Chapter 1

Other Shectman, "[How Do Biblical Scholars Read the Hebrew Bible?](#)"
Barton, "[Biblical Criticism: A Common Sense Approach](#)"
Project TABS Editors, "[The Benefits of Studying Torah with Modern Biblical Scholarship](#)"

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Introduction Post
Synchronous Meeting Discussion

Apply: Exit Card
[Biblical Autobiography due Monday, September 12.](#)

Synchronous Meeting, September 13, 7-8:30pm CT

UNIT 1: THE BIBLICAL STORY IN ITS HISTORY

WEEK 2: September 13-19

The Emergence of Ancient Israel and its First Oral Traditions

Consider: Bible Jacob Stories: Genesis 27-35
Moses Stories: Exodus 1-2, 5-10

The Song of Deborah: Judges 5

Carr Chapter 2

Other John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 131-211

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Discussion Board Post & Response

Apply: Exit Card

WEEK 3: September 20-26

Echoes of Empires in Monarchal Israel

Consider: Bible Succession Stories: **Skim** 2 Samuel 9-20 and 1 Kings 1-2

Royal Psalms: 2, 21, and 110; 2 Samuel 23:1-7
Zion Psalms: 9, 15, 24, and 46

Primeval Stories: 6:5-9:17

Carr Chapters 3 and 4 to p. 91, 98

Other Excerpts from Atrahasis and Gilgamesh

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Discussion Board Post & Response

Apply: Exit Card

WEEK 4: September 27-October 3

Narrative and Prophecy in the Crucible of Imperial Domination

Consider: Bible Kingdom Stories: 1 Kings 12, **Skim** 2 Kings 14-20

Northern Prophecy: Amos 1-2, 7-9 and Hosea 1-2, 11-12

Southern Prophecy: Micah 1-3, 5-6 and Isaiah 1-11, 28-32

Carr Chapters 5 and 6

Other Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "The Death of Evil upon the Seashore"

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Synchronous Meeting Discussion

Apply: Exit Card

Synchronous Meeting, October 4, 7-8:30pm CT

WEEK 5: October 4-10

The Deuteronomistic History and the Phenomenon of Hybridity

Consider: Bible Josiah's Reform: 2 Kings 22-23:30

Deuteronomy 1-3, 6-7, 12, and 17

Skim: Joshua 1, 6, 11; Judges 1-5, 21; 1 Samuel 8, 12, 15-17;
2 Sam 7-20; 1 Kings 1-12, and 2 Kgs 17-23

Carr Chapter 7

Other **Read ONE:** Fretheim, "God and Violence in the Old Testament"
OR Pressler, "The Shema: A Protestant Feminist Reading"

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Discussion Board Post & Response

Apply: Exit Card

WEEK 6: October 11-17

Texts of Trauma: The Babylonian Exile

Consider: Bible Psalm 137
Lamentations 1

Skim Ezekiel 1-3; 36-37 and Isaiah 40-55

Genesis 1:1-2:3; 12:1-3; 17:1-27

Carr **Skim** Chapter 8
Chapters 9 and 10

Other David W. Stowe, "Babylon Revisited: Psalm 137 as American
Protest Song"
William S. Morrow, "Comfort for Jerusalem: The Second Isaiah as
Counselor to Refugees"

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Discussion Board Post & Response

Apply: Exit Card

WEEK 7: October 18-24

Resilience, Return, and the Formation of Scriptures

Consider: Bible **Skim** Nehemiah 1-8 and Ezra 1-10

Psalms 1-2

Skim Daniel 10-12

Carr Chapters 11 and 13

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Synchronous Meeting Discussion

Apply: Exit Card
Short Paper #1 due Friday, October 21.

Synchronous Meeting, October 25, 7-8:30pm CT

UNIT 2: DIVERSE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SUFFERING

WEEK 8: October 25-31

Proverbs, Praise, and Songs of Lament

Consider: Bible Proverbs 7-10; 22:16-23:12
Psalms 13, 22, 57, 74, and 88

Other Thirty Teachings of Amen-em-ope
Wilma Ann Bailey, "The Sorrow Songs: Laments from Ancient
Israel and the African-American Diaspora"

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Discussion Board Post & Response

Apply: Exit Card

WEEK 9: November 1-7

The Book of Job

Consider: Bible Job 1-5; **Skim** 6-21; 38-42

Other Carol Newsom, "Bakhtin, the Bible and Dialogic Truth"
Barbara Brown Taylor, "The Practice of Feeling Pain"
Prathia Hall Wynn, "When the Hurts Do Not Heal"

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Discussion Board Post & Responses

Apply: Exit Card

WEEK 10: November 8-14

Ecclesiastes and Daniel

Consider: Bible Ecclesiastes 1:1-3:22
Daniel 10-12

Other Epic of Gilgamesh, The Speech of Siduri

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Synchronous Meeting Discussion

Apply: Exit Card
[Short Paper #2 due Friday, November 11.](#)

Synchronous Meeting, November 15, 7-8:30pm CT

UNIT 3: OLD STORIES, NEW PERSPECTIVES

WEEK 11: November 15-21

The Garden of Eden

- Consider: Bible Genesis 2:4-3:24
- Carr Chapter 4, pp. 91-97
- Other Phyllis Trible, "Eve and Adam: Genesis 2-3 Reread"
Ken Stone, *Practicing Safer Texts: Food, Sex and Bible in Queer Perspective*, 23-45.
Carol Newsom, "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2-3"
- Engage: Five-minute Journal
Discussion Board Post & Response
- Apply: Exit Card

WEEK 12: November 22-28

The Song of Songs

- Consider: Bible Exodus 22:16-17, 19; Leviticus 18, 19:20-22; 20:10-21; 21:9;
Deuteronomy 5:18; 22:13-29; 23:18; 24:1-5
- The Song of Songs (whole book)
- Other Renita Weems, "Song of Songs"
Ellen Davis, "The One Whom My Soul Loves"
David Carr, "Come to the Garden: A Walk through Song of Songs"
- Engage: Five-minute Journal
Discussion Board Post & Response
- Apply: Exit Card

WEEK 13: November 29-December 5

The Book of Ruth

- Consider: Bible The Book of Ruth (whole book)
Isaiah 56:1-8
- Carr Chapter 12
- Other Gale A. Yee, "She Stood in Tears Amid the Alien Corn"
Laura E. Donaldson, "The Sign of Orpah: Reading Ruth through Native Eyes"

Engage: Five-minute Journal
Synchronous Meeting Discussion

Apply: Exit Card

Synchronous Meeting, December 6, 7-8:30pm CT

WEEK 14: December 6-12

Wrap-up and Final Portfolios

Engage: Discussion Board Post & Response

Apply: **Final Portfolio due Monday, December 12.**



Noah's Ark (Currier and Ives, 1868-78)

Public Domain through the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC

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