

OT 131-3 Torah and Former Prophets
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Fall 2022
Tues & Thurs 10:00 – 11:20 AM
Schlegel 122

Prerequisites

None

Instructor Contact

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Office Hours: email for appointment

Course Description

This course provides a critical introduction to some of the literature of the Hebrew Bible in light of ways in which modern scholars engage with this literature. In terms of biblical content, we are not examining the entirety of the Hebrew Bible, but rather we will focus on the Torah and Former Prophets. In terms of our methods, students will learn to approach biblical texts with an eye toward the distinctive features and dynamic interplay of the world behind the text (i.e., ancient background and historical development that has led to texts' development), the world within the text (i.e., the literary artistry and theology unveiled by close reading), and the world in front of the text (i.e., the various contexts of readers).

Learning Goals

By completing this course, students will:

1. Gain a stronger familiarity with the content, organization, and distinctive features of the books of the Hebrew Bible that make up the Torah and Former Prophets.
2. Be able to analyze and exposit biblical texts through critical focus on the world behind the text, the world within the text, and the world in front of the text.
3. Develop greater competency with using major tools of exegetical study including print and digital resources.
4. Develop critical awareness of the impact (positive or negative, but always inescapable) of contextualized beings (including themselves) on biblical interpretation.
5. Reflect critically on the past, present, and future consequences of competing paradigms for the authority of the Bible and its relationship to other sources of authority.
6. Describe strategies, grounded in their practice, for working toward racial justice appropriate to their particular vocational settings. Students can demonstrate competence with this SLO in many ways including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Defining and using key terms in ways informed by a understanding of systemic racism
 - Identifying racism in its many manifestations (historical, structural, personal, communal, etc.)
 - Critical reflection on the history and current contexts regarding race, racism, and antiracism
 - Critical reflection on racist and antiracist practices and theologies
 - Developing and implementing antiracist policies, practices, and theologies

How Learning Happens

I have structured this course to follow a democratic, emancipatory model of education. This means that the goals and process of learning for us are geared toward creating a more just and democratic society. It also means that the teaching/learning process is not based on a unilateral sharing of packaged information, but rather on exercises designed to foster critical thinking, creative thinking, and collaboration. Our thought and study will be problem-oriented rather than positivistic and dogmatic; perspectival rather than relativistic; and geared toward contextual collaboration in the belief that engaging with our differences can enrich our thought and life.

Required Books

Students are required to have one of the following English study Bibles. Students *must* have the Bible with them for every class session.

Attridge, Harold W., ed. *The Harper Collins Study Bible*. New York: HarperOne, 2006.

Berlin, Adele, Marc Zvi Brettler, and Michael Fishbane, eds. *Jewish Study Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Coogan, Michael D., ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Harrelson, Walter, ed. *New Interpreter's Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003.

Recommended

One helpful resource for this class is a book by one of your professors Tyler Mayfield (*A Guide to Bible Basics*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2018). This book has plenty of the foundational information that you are required to learn.

As an introduction to the academic study of the Bible, this course includes a lot of new ideas and critical reading that can be challenging to the faith traditions that a student starts with. *Engaging Biblical Authority* (edited by William P. Brown. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2007) is a book with sixteen short reflections by diverse scholars (in biblical studies and theology) who share very different expressions of how they now understand biblical authority. Each reflection expresses insights relevant to their particular contexts and informed by the challenging things that they have learned about the Bible.

Contract Grading

The contract grading system below has been implemented in order to facilitate an environment that aligns with the democratic, emancipatory model of education. This system should foster more collaborative (rather than competitive) interactions and ease tensions about “making-the-grade.” Based upon your individual learning goals, each student can choose how much work to do for this course and expect a grade within the range displayed below.

Individual assignments will be graded on a basis of R (Re-do or Rewrite), S (Satisfactory), and E (Excellent). In the case of participation and the self-exegesis assignment, students will only be graded on a basis of S and E. For the Lecture Notes Assignment and Secondary Readings Assignment there is no chance for an R. Unsatisfactory work will result in no credit. Every student must complete ALL assignments to the standard of S in order for that assignment to count.

If a student receives an R, that student must re-do the assignment based on feedback and re-submit the assignment at the standard of an S. Re-do assignments are due within two weeks of the student receiving an R. Every student who receives an R must meet with the writing center and the professor before re-submitting their assignment. If the student fails to earn an S on a re-done assignment, the student will receive one mark against their ability to remain within the contract grading system. A student with two marks will negate their contract grade and will need to meet with the professor regarding the potential for them to pass this class.

Students can expect a grade within the range below based upon the proportion of assignments earning an S or E.

C Level Work (C- or C or C+)

1. Active participation in class and group discussions
2. Self-Exegesis Assignment
3. Quiz
4. Practicing Close Reading Assignment
5. Eight of eleven possible book outlines
6. Three of five possible reflection papers

B Level Work (B- or B or B+)

1. All the requirements of the previous level
2. Nine of eleven possible book outlines
3. Four of five possible reflection papers
4. Lecture Notes Assignment

A Level Work (A- or A)

1. All of the requirements of the previous level
2. Secondary Reading Notes Assignment

Please note: All work that you submit for this course must meet substantive (quality of your ideas) and formal (adherence to standards of proofreading and citation) requirements for a graduate level course in order for you to be eligible for the contract grade. If your work does not meet these requirements you may negate your contract grade. If I correct an earlier draft of your work and you re-submit the same errors, you will negate your contract grade.

Guidelines for all Assignments

Participation

Active participation is required in all class sessions. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned biblical text(s) and/or secondary reading(s) and prepared to engage with classmates in planned activities. All planned activities and discussion questions can be [found here](#). Aside from simply answering questions, active participation can be shown through activities like listening attentively to others, responding to others, asking relevant questions, and taking notes. Students must earn a grade of S or E on participation. Students at risk of earning an R in participation will need to meet with the professor to address this issue in order for the student to pass this course.

Self-Exegesis Assignment

Each student must submit the Self-Exegesis Assignment by **9:59 AM on September 22**. The assignment calls for students to answer questions that require deep personal reflection. Every student who completes the assignment and takes it seriously will earn an S. You are not evaluated on the content of your answers.

Books of the Bible Outlines

A major component of this course is students gaining a greater familiarity with the content of the Hebrew Bible (Course Learning Goal 1). Toward that end, every student is required to submit outlines of the biblical books that we cover in the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) and Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings). For these outlines, students **must** adequately complete the following:

1. Read through the book of the Bible.
2. Summarize (in approximately one sentence of their own words) the content of **every chapter in every book**.
3. Arrange those chapter summaries in the form of an outline that groups chapters into two or more major blocks that each make up a section of the book of the Bible that you are outlining.

By composing these outlines, students will be able to map out their own understanding of the literary design that contributes to the world within the text for each book of the Bible. With this overall understanding of each book of the Bible, students will be able to see the specific passage that we are studying on a given day of class in terms of how it fits with a larger whole. By comparison and contrast with peers, each student will be able to gain new perspectives on the meanings within the biblical text. Each book of the Bible outline is **due at 11:59 PM on the date before we cover that book** in class as indicated in the course schedule.

Assessment of book of the Bible outlines will follow the rubric below:

Name:	Course: Torah and Former Prophets	Date:	Book of the Bible: _____	Overall Grade: R (2 or more categories with R) S E (3 or more categories with E)
Criteria	Unsatisfactory / Rewrite “R” = Rewrite	Proficient/ Satisfactory “S” = Satisfactory	Excellent “E” = Excellent	Grade Each Category

a) Accuracy	Multiple summaries are factually inaccurate.	Almost no summaries are inaccurate; any errors do not detract from overall intelligibility.	Summaries of each chapter are factually accurate.	
b) Thoroughness	Summaries are vague or unclear; not written as complete sentences; lack action verbs; one or more chapters have not been summarized.	Intelligible summary of what happens; few sentence fragments instead of complete sentences; some lack action verbs to depict events.	Complete sentences are used for every chapter; action verbs describe all events; details mentioned show careful reading.	
c) Flow	There is no major book division OR the division does not make sense of the content therein.	Includes major divisions, but they are not labeled or they are not labeled insightfully.	Includes at least two major divisions of the book of the Bible; these divisions are keenly labeled; subdivisions are included when applicable.	
d) Creativity	Summaries are incoherently organized or not organized at all.	List of summaries by chapter.	Outline is visually creative beyond a mere list. It could be illustrated, include shapes or colors to show movement, use audio or video media, or have some other creative pieces.	

Practicing Close Reading Assignment

In this assignment, students will practice engaging with a theoretical concept we call the hermeneutical circle. By reading many texts, students will get some perspective for how to interpret one detail in a select text. This is an assignment that requires individual as well as group work. Students will:

1. [Sign up](#) for one of two options. There are 12 open slots for each option.
2. Complete the specific assignment that corresponds with the option selected. These are the [guidelines for option 1](#); and [these are the guidelines for option 2](#). [This document](#) has all of the relevant primary sources for both options. (You are free to work with other students on this assignment before coming to class).
3. Come together in groups to present during class. You will be following [these instructions](#).
4. After the class, each student will be writing an evaluation for another student by following [these instructions](#). All of the other work is in preparation for class. **The peer evaluation is due Oct 7 at 11:59 PM.**

Quiz

There is one quiz that you must master in order to orient yourself to some of the basic elements of the study of the Hebrew Bible. This is a closed book quiz, self-administered, performed on your own schedule. In order to pass the quiz, you **must score 70/73 or better (95%+)**. You are free to take the quiz as many times as necessary. The quiz will cover four basic areas of introductory material:

1. Terms for the Scriptures that we are discussing in this class
 - a. Use [this handout](#) to organize your notes
 - b. Consult class notes from 9/8
2. Biblical canons
 - a. You must memorize the order that follows the Jewish TaNaK. See [this handout](#).
 - b. Consult class notes from 9/8
 - c. Some excellent additional insights on canons can be gleaned from [this lecture](#) and [this lecture](#) from Gary Stevens' [History in the Bible Podcast](#). (Note: this is a good podcast to learn from. There are occasional inaccuracies and frequent mispronunciations of Hebrew, but it otherwise is a great idea and well executed.)
3. A chronology of ancient Israel
 - a. Consult your notes on 9/8
4. The geography of biblical Palestine and neighboring context
 - a. See the [List of Key Terms to Recognize on Map](#)
 - b. Consult your notes on 9/8
 - c. Familiarize yourself with the maps in your study Bible

Reflection Papers

There will be five reflection papers due during the course of the semester. Each is **due by 11:59 PM** on the date for which it is assigned. The **first reflection paper is required** from all students. Students aiming for a grade in the range of C must complete three; four must be completed for a grade in the B or A range. Papers must be typed, double-spaced, and carefully edited for style, grammar, and spelling. You must have a thesis statement near the beginning of your paper that gives some indication of the claim being made in your paper and an outline of the structure of your paper. Each paper must be a **minimum of 750 words** (without including any footnotes or bibliography). There is NO expectation of additional/outside reading (beyond assigned texts for this class) in order to adequately complete the reflection papers.

Note: See the guidelines [here](#) on how to cite sources. In order to receive an E on your paper, you must properly cite sources.

Students will earn an R, S, or E on each paper. Students who earn an R will have to resubmit their paper with revisions within two weeks of receiving an R. The maximum possible grade for a resubmitted paper is an S.

The guidelines for each reflection paper are below:

1. Translation as Interpretation

Download the "[Translation as Interpretation Handout](#)." As you read the assigned writings by van Wijk-Bos and Gafney and as you watch Lectures 11.1 and 11.2 on translation as interpretation, fill out the handout. Using this handout as notes, you will write your reflection paper on a few issues that complicate the simple dichotomy of formal equivalence vs dynamic equivalence. Choose three issues. For each issue write about the following: what are at least two options that people choose for translation? what is at

stake in the choice of each option? how is the issue greater than the difference between formal and dynamic equivalence? which option do you prefer and why?

2. Biblical Law and Power

There are many seemingly altruistic laws in the Hebrew Bible, but Douglas Knight cautions that readers should not ignore that the interests of the powerful can be maintained even with these laws. Choose one of the following seemingly altruistic laws: Exod 22:26 – 27; Lev 25:39 – 46; or Deut 15:10 – 11. In what ways might this law serve the political, economic, social or psychological interests of *ancient Israelite elites*? How can turning a critical eye toward the ways humanitarian laws serve interests of the powerful in the world behind the text help people today who are engaged in striving for liberation from oppression? How, if at all, can it be helpful for those who use the Bible as a resource in such struggles?

3. Slavery Abolitionists and Biblical Hermeneutics

Read Leviticus 25:44 – 46 closely. For pro-slavery apologists of the 19th century, this text would be one of many that seem to unambiguously demonstrate God’s approval of their system of slavery. However, Mark Noll describes two overarching approaches taken by interpreters of the Bible who opposed slavery in the antebellum period. In your paper (1) describe how each of these two approaches use the Bible to oppose slavery, (2) note the advantages and pitfalls to each approach, and (3) apply each of these two approaches to how one might exegete Leviticus 25:44 – 46. In your conclusion, state which of the two approaches you find most appealing and explain what it is about your background, experiences, theology, etc. that you believe influences you most to adhere to one of these approaches over another.

4. Rahab and Narrative Ambiguity

Your paper will focus on three ways one can interpret Rahab as a character in Joshua 2. In your paper, briefly explore (write one paragraph for each) how one could advocate the following three perspectives of Rahab’s characterization: (1) as an admirable person of faith, (2) as a traitor to her people, (3) as a pragmatist. As you explore each potential interpretation, you *must* appeal to evidence from the biblical text to show how it supports said characterization. After exploring these three interpretations, you will consider the implications of Warrior’s article on reading “with Canaanite eyes.” What difference does the context of the reader in front of the text make in influencing the interpretations that one develops?

5. Solomon and Ambivalent Storytelling

First consider how the Deuteronomistic History presents a positive view of King Solomon’s reign in 1 Kings 9:15 – 10:29. Then consider how the “Law of the King” in Deut 17:14 – 20 and the texts of 1 Kgs 5:13 – 18; 12:1 – 9 implicitly challenge this positive viewpoint. Note specific biblical texts for each point. What are the primary theological issues or concerns for the writer of Deut 17:14 – 20 in terms of the relationship between God and king?

The following rubric will be used to assess reflection papers:

Name:	Course: Torah and Former Prophets	Date:	Reflection Paper # _____	Overall Grade: R (2 or more categories with R) S E (3 or more categories with E)
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Criteria	Unsatisfactory/ Rewrite “R” = Rewrite	Proficient/ Satisfactory “S” = Satisfactory	Excellent “E” = Excellent	Grade Each Category
a) Writing mechanics, grammar, style, spelling, format of citations (SBL), word limit.	Many errors in grammar, spelling, or footnote citation format. Closer proofreading required. Contact writing center for assistance. Not between 750 – 1000 words.	Generally well written with some mechanical errors or grammatical errors that detract somewhat from the quality of the paper. Meets word count requirement.	Grammar, style, spelling and language mechanics are excellent. Good paragraph construction, citation format is excellent. Clearly written within 750 – 1000 words.	
b) Clear thesis statement, organization, persuasive argumentation related to the thesis	No clear thesis statement, lacks organization and/or arguments; evidence does not clearly support the thesis.	A fairly clear thesis and organization; arguments are generally persuasive with a few exceptions.	Crystal clear thesis, arguments are persuasive, conclusions are significant and insightful.	
c) Addresses very directly the issue and biblical texts assigned for the essay; only stays focused on assigned topic	The essay does not deal directly or fully with any questions relating to the prompt OR the essay includes a large section of discussion that is not immediately relevant to the prompt.	The content of the paper deals somewhat with the assigned questions but does not do so fully, OR some parts of the essay veer off into unrelated topics or issues.	The content of the paper is consistently focused on addressing very directly the assigned questions, and supports the student’s thesis with no extraneous material included.	
d) Use of evidence and data to support arguments and analysis. Citation of biblical text relies primarily on listing the biblical book, chapter number and verse number in the main body of the paper (not in footnotes) with only brief phrases. Avoids long quotations in the paper.	Specific biblical texts, other primary sources, and secondary sources are not cited throughout the paper in support of arguments and analysis OR too many generalizations made without specific support from the biblical text and/or academic publications OR paper uses long quotations in the	Generally adequate use of evidence and data to support arguments and analysis with a few omissions, unsupported generalizations, long quotations, or chapter and verse numbers in footnotes rather than in the main body of the text in parentheses.	Excellent and consistent use of evidence and data to support arguments and analysis. Cites biblical texts by book, chapter and verse number (e.g. Exod 32:14) rather than using long quotations. Perhaps occasional use of short key phrases in the biblical text as part of the analysis.	

	main body of the paper rather than simply citing chapter and verse numbers OR biblical citations of chapter and verse numbers are made in footnotes rather than in parentheses in the main body of the paper.			
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Lecture Notes Assignment

Students aiming for a grade in the **B-, B, B+** range must complete this assignment and submit it through Canvas by **11:59 PM on December 15**. This assignment has been chosen to demonstrate “B” level work because the student who completes this assignment will—as a byproduct of their work—have shown their dedication to learning the material, have a better grasp of the material itself, and be able to review material in the future. The purpose of this assignment is for you to be able to bring together the things that you learn in this class in a way that (1) highlights important material, (2) allows you to efficiently review and refresh your memory for any relevant work you do, and (3) includes some nuance of your individual learning style. This is not meant to replace or radically change how you take notes for class. Any ways that this assignment does change your note-taking should be beneficial to learning and retention.

You can work with **one or two** partners on this assignment, but you must acknowledge collaboration in your final submission. If you work with a partner, **DO NOT SHARE YOUR FINAL SUMMARY** of the thesis and main points. You are not allowed to merely copy another student’s summary. You can look at their actual notes from the lecture or you can have a conversation about the class. **Please note: if you submit unsatisfactory work for this assignment, there is no rewrite; you will simply receive no credit for the assignment.**

Use [this template](#) to complete the assignment. On the template, the lectures are organized by number; [these are the titles that correspond to each numbered lecture](#).

Your grade will be assessed according to this rubric:

Name:	Course: Torah and Former Prophets	December 15, 2022	Lecture Notes Assignment	Overall Grade: No Credit (2 or more categories with U) S E (3 or more categories with E)
Criteria	Unsatisfactory / No Credit “U” = Unsatisfactory	Proficient/ Satisfactory “S” = Satisfactory	Excellent “E” = Excellent	Grade Each Category
a) Accuracy	Many important points are factually inaccurate.	Few factual inaccuracies that do not detract substantially from overall assignment.	All summaries of the thesis and main points are factually accurate.	
b) Thoroughness	Many lecture notes with too few points OR assignment not complete for all lectures. If working with others, student copied summaries or did not give proper credit.	Assignment is complete for all lectures. There are three points mentioned in each. If working with others, the student supplied proper credit and apparently did not copy summaries.	Almost all lectures have a thesis and more than three important points explained well. If working with others, credit is given and their thesis and summaries show	

			independent thought.	
c) Substantive Content	Most important points are missed OR key ideas are named but not explained.	Usually includes the most important points.	Almost always extracts the most important points from the lecture.	
d) Organization, writing mechanics, grammar, style.	Student does not follow the supplied template and submits disorganized work OR writing is difficult to read due to errors.	Organization is sensible, writing is intelligible.	Everything is well organized according to template and writing is clear, lacking in errors, and refreshing to read.	

Secondary Reading Notes Assignment

Students aiming for an A- or A in this course must complete this assignment and submit it through Canvas by **11:59 PM on December 15**. By completing this assignment, students will not only earn a higher grade, but they will also learn the material better than those who do not complete the assignment. The purpose of this assignment is for you to be able synthesize what is most important from each of your readings. This is not meant to replace whatever notes or highlighting that you already do when you read; it is meant to supplement that work.

You can work with **one or two** partners on this assignment, but you must acknowledge collaboration in your final submission. If you work with a partner, **DO NOT SHARE YOUR FINAL SUMMARY** of the thesis and main points. You are not allowed to merely copy another student's summary. You can look at their actual notes from the reading or you can have a conversation about the reading. **Please note: if you submit unsatisfactory work for this assignment, there is no rewrite; you will simply receive no credit for the assignment.**

Use [this template](#) to complete the assignment.

Your grade will be assessed according to this rubric:

Name:	Course: Torah and Former Prophets	December 15, 2022	Secondary Reading Notes Assignment	Overall Grade: No Credit (2 or more categories with U) S E (3 or more categories with E)
Criteria	Unsatisfactory / No Credit "U" = Unsatisfactory	Proficient/ Satisfactory "S" = Satisfactory	Excellent "E" = Excellent	Grade Each Category
a) Accuracy	Many important points are	Few factual inaccuracies that do not detract	All summaries of the thesis and	

	factually inaccurate.	substantially from overall assignment.	main points are factually accurate.	
b) Thoroughness	Many reading notes with too few points OR assignment not complete for all readings. If working with others, student copied summaries or did not give proper credit.	Assignment is complete for all readings. There are three points mentioned in each. If working with others, the student supplied proper credit and apparently did not copy summaries.	Almost all readings have a thesis and more than three important points explained well. If working with others, credit is given and their thesis and summaries show independent thought.	
c) Substantive Content	Most important points are missed OR key ideas are named but not explained.	Usually includes the most important points.	Almost always extracts the most important points from the reading.	
d) Organization, writing mechanics, grammar, style.	Student does not follow the supplied template and submits disorganized work OR writing is difficult to read due to errors.	Organization is sensible, writing is intelligible.	Everything is well organized according to template and writing is clear, lacking in errors, and refreshing to read.	

All Assignments with Due Dates

Assignment

Due Dates

Self-Exegesis Assignment	Sep 22 @ 9:59 AM	
Genesis Outline	Sep 28 @ 11:59 PM	
Practicing Close Reading Assignment	Oct 6 @ 9:59 AM	Evaluation Due Oct 7 @ 11:59 PM
Exodus Outline	Oct 10 @ 11:59 PM	
Reflection Paper 1	Oct 17 @ 11:59 PM	
Reflection Paper 2	Oct 27 @ 11:59 PM	
Leviticus Outline	Oct 31 @ 11:59 PM	
Numbers Outline	Nov 2 @ 11:59 PM	
Reflection Paper 3	Nov 8 @ 11:59 PM	
Deuteronomy Outline	Nov 9 @ 11:59 PM	
Joshua Outline	Nov 14 @ 11:59 PM	
Reflection Paper 4	Nov 15 @ 11:59 PM	
Judges Outline	Nov 16 @ 11:59 PM	
1 Samuel AND 2 Samuel Outline	Nov 21 @ 11:59 PM	
Reflection Paper 5	Nov 29 @ 11:59 PM	
1 Kings Outline	Nov 30 @ 11:59 PM	
2 Kings Outline	Dec 5 @ 11:59 PM	
Quiz	Any Time before Dec 13	
Lecture Notes Assignment	Dec 15 @ 11:59 PM	
Secondary Readings Assignment	Dec 15 @ 11:59 PM	

Course Schedule

	Date	Primary Texts	Secondary Readings	Assignment Due	Topics ***NOTE: All handouts to be used in any class can be found here .
1	9/8				Introduction to the Syllabus Some basics of the Bible for the Quiz
2	9/13		Brown, “A Hermeneutical Adventure,” 3–10 [Canvas] Shectman, “How Do Biblical Scholars Read the Hebrew Bible”		Reading the Bible: Where Three Worlds Meet Hermeneutics and Theory
3	9/15		Use this link to choose ONE of the three readings below King and Stager, <i>Life in Biblical Israel</i> , 36–61 [Canvas] Sommer, “Appendix: Monotheism and Polytheism in Ancient Israel,” 145–174 [Canvas] Meyers, “Setting the Scene: The ancient Environment,” 38–58 [Canvas]		The World Behind the Text Brief Introduction to Modern Historical Critical Methodologies and Goals
4	9/20	Exod 2:1-10 “The Birth Legend of Sargon”	Alter, “A Literary Approach to the Bible,” 1–24 [Canvas]		The World Within the Text Literary Approaches

5	9/22		Gafney, "A Reflection on the Black Lives Matter Movement and Its Impact on My Scholarship," 204–207 [Canvas] Collins, "Modern Theology," 196–214 [Canvas]	Self-Exegesis Assignment	The World in Front of the Text Theological Interpretation Ideological Criticism
6	9/27		Gnuse, "Inspiration of Scripture," 2255–2260 [Print Reserve] Trible, "Authority of the Bible," 2248–2254 [Print Reserve] Courageous Conversations, The Authority of Scripture		The Bible as Scripture
7	9/29	Gen 1 – 2		Genesis Outline	Creation Myths in the Bible Four Modes of Ancient Revisions of Texts Two "Models" of God
8	10/4	Atrahasis Gen 6:1 – 9:17			The Bible in Its Ancient Southwest Asian and Northeast African Context
9	10/6	See texts on handouts		Practicing Close Reading Assignment	Literary Analysis: What Close Reading Looks Like
10	10/11	Exod 1 Excerpt from Hurston, <i>Moses, Man of the Mountain</i>	Smith, "Introduction," <i>Insights</i> , 1–21 [https://lpts.on.worldcat.org/oclc/987991985]	Exodus Outline	Womanist Interpretation
11	10/13	Exod 3	Gafney, "Appendix B" in <i>Womanist Midrash</i> , 281–292 [Canvas]	Reflection Paper 1 (due Oct 17)	Translation as Interpretation

			Wijk-Bos, “Writing on the Water’: The Ineffable Name of God,” 45–59 [Canvas]		
NO CLASS – READING WEEK					
12	10/25	Exod 14			Source Criticism
13	10/27	Covenant Code: Exod 19 – 24 Deuteronomic Code: Deut 12 – 26 Holiness Code: Lev 17 – 26 Priestly Code: Exod 25 – 31; 35 – 40; Lev 1 – 7; 11 – 15; 27; Num 5 – 6; 15; 18 – 19; 28 – 30	Knight, “Israelite Law and Biblical Law” and “The Law of Power,” 9–29 and 58–86 [Canvas]	Reflection Paper 2	Biblical Law Sociological Interpretation
14	11/1	Lev 1 – 4; 11 – 16; 18; Num 5	Klawans, “Concepts of Purity in the Bible” <i>The Jewish Study Bible</i> , 2041–2047 [https://lpts.on.worldcat.org/oclc/892869165] Nissinen, <i>Homoeroticism and the Biblical World</i> , 1–18, 37–56 [Canvas] Optional: David Carr, “Bible and Sex Lecture”	Leviticus Outline	Purity, Sacrifice, and Holiness in the Hebrew Bible Gender, Sexual Activity, and Sexuality

15	11/3	Num 25, 27, 31, 36	Optional: Gafney, <i>Womanist Midrash</i> , 129–169 [Canvas]	Numbers Outline	Womanist Interpretation
16	11/8	Exod 21:2-11; Lev 19; 25; Deut 15:1-18	Noll, “The Crisis over the Bible,” 31–51 [Canvas] Callahan, “The Poison Book,” 21–30 [https://lpts.on.worldcat.org/oclc/173818936]	Reflection Paper 3	The Bible and Slavery: How to Read the Bible Responsibly when Integrating the Three Worlds
17	11/10	Gen 19, 38; Exod 12:31 – 42; Deut 23:1 – 8; Neh 13:1 – 3; Ruth ; Prov 31		Deuteronomy Outline	Inner-biblical Interpretation and the Composition of Your Bible
18	11/15	Deut 7, 20; Josh 2 – 6	Warrior, “A Native American Perspective,” 277–285 [Canvas]	Reflection Paper 4 Joshua Outline	Reading From the Margins Ambiguity
19	11/17	Judg 13-16		Judges Outline	Reading in Literary Context
20	11/22	2 Sam 7	Fentress-Williams, “1 and 2 Samuel,” 90–106 [Canvas] Carr, “The Beginnings of the Monarchy and Royal Zion Texts,” 59–76 [Print Reserve]	1 Samuel Outline and 2 Samuel Outline	Royal-Zion Covenant Theology Deuteronomistic History
21	11/29	1 Kgs 1 – 12	Matthews, “The Period of the Divided Kingdom,” 53–75 [Canvas]	Reflection Paper 5	Solomon
22	12/1	2 Kings 18–19	Aubin, <i>The Rescue of Jerusalem</i> , 3–14 [Print Reserve] Optional: Bellis, “Did an Academic Outsider Determine What Saved Jerusalem from Conquest by the Assyrian Emperor	1 Kings Outline	The Saving of Jerusalem

			Sennacherib in 701 BCE?		
23	12/6	2 Kgs 25	Levenson, "The Last Four Verses in Kings," 353–361 [Canvas]	2 Kings Outline	Fall of Judah
24	12/8			Bring food please	Bringing It All Together

Course Policies

Inclusive and Expansive Language

Whether you are aware of this fact or not, Louisville Seminary emphasizes the use of inclusive and expansive language with regards to people in our written and oral communications. This intentionality of language should be representative of the span of humanity with respect to gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, as well as physical and intellectual capacities. With gender, for example, “humankind” is an inclusive alternative to the androcentric term “mankind.” For many of us, this type of writing, speaking, and thinking may be new or different and we encourage you to continue to work with it as one aspect of proclaiming the truth of the gospel for all people.

In this course, we will also discuss God with this intentionality of language in mind. While it is clear that the Bible often uses masculine forms to refer to God, the Christian faith has always taught that God is beyond male and female. In keeping with the Christian conviction that God is neither male nor female and the attempt to remain intentional with our language, you are encouraged to either avoid gendered pronouns when referring to God or use pronouns that intentionally reflect the metaphors, theology, or claims you are making. Part of this expectation is that members of this community will be intentional with what we say rather than complicit in perpetuating biases (especially those we do not agree with) based upon our ignorance or lack of effort. To help us remain intentional with our language, the instructor may encourage students, on occasion, to remain cognizant of the language that we use.

Direct quotations and translations from the biblical text need not be altered to conform with this policy; but, you may alter these as well if you so choose.

Attendance

Prompt attendance is mandatory. I’ll be using Zoom to track your attendance.

Excessive tardiness (in time or frequency) constitutes an absence. **Two unexcused absences negate your grading contract.** If absences become a problem, students must meet with the instructor regarding the possibility of passing this class.

Excused absences are rarely possible with the consent of the instructor. When they are permitted, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor ahead of time via email if you must be absent. In order to make up for any absence, the student must submit the Secondary Reading Notes Assignment and Lecture Notes Assignment that correlates to the date of the absence. In order to do the Lecture Notes Assignment, the student will need to obtain notes from a peer. The student has two weeks from their absence to submit these two assignments.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to submit their own work—or their own group’s work in the cases where we have group assignments. The use of any ideas or words from an outside source must be acknowledged by an appropriate citation of the author and source. Failure to follow these guidelines constitutes plagiarism and may result in failure of this course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff at the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center and should speak with the instructor as soon as

possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Policy on Late Work

All assignments must be turned in on time. Students may be offered grace with regards to one late assignment during the course of the term. A second late assignment will drop your overall grade by half a grade. A third late assignment will negate your contract grade. With three late assignments, you will need to meet with the instructor about the potential for you to pass this class. The Lecture Notes Assignment and Secondary Readings Assignments will not be accepted late.

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