

## **Introduction to the Hebrew Bible (BIBHB500)**

### **Modality: In person.**

January 2023 (January 9-20, 8:00am until 12:00 noon daily. *Please expect pre-work and daily homework also; see below.*)

Instructor: Dr. G. Brooke Lester (Associate Professor of Hebrew Scriptures; he/him)

Revision: November 11, 2022; *some changes may be made before the semester begins, and another revision will follow before we begin.*

***Please note: Students must read the David Carr textbook before the term begins. This will take most readers about twenty (20) hours; it may take you somewhat less or more. Learners should read actively, annotating the margins; instructions for this will follow.***

### **Contact Information:**

brooke.lester@garrett.edu

Dr. Lester may be reached by email. He checks email twice/day, and will respond within 36 hours. (See "Emergencies" in this syllabus.)

Office location: Shaffer 731. Office hours TBA.

### **Course Description and Objectives:**

This course will introduce the learner to the texts of the Hebrew Scriptures--Torah, Prophets, and Writings--with emphasis on their order and contents, the historical and cultural settings from which they arise, their literary forms, their religious themes, and the kinds of interpretive approaches that communities of readers have taken since the advent of modernity.

### **Learning Goals:**

- Students will develop basic historical understanding about the Hebrew Bible, the authors and settings of its writings, and its socio-cultural, political, and ideological environment in the ancient Near East.
- Students will gain acquaintance with interpretations from multiple perspectives.
- Students will acquire basic skills in exegesis of Hebrew-Bible texts.
- Students will develop skills in expressing and contextualizing what they have learned to broader audiences.

### **Required Textbooks:**

- Carr, David M. *The Hebrew Bible: A Contemporary Introduction to the Christian Old Testament and the Jewish Tanakh*. Second (2nd) Edition. Wiley-Blackwell, 2019. ISBN-13: 978-1119636670. ISBN-10: 1119636671. Amazon paperback new \$42.73 (as of 2022-11-11).
- Common English Bible and Joel B. Green. *The CEB Study Bible with Apocrypha*. Common English Bible, 2013. ISBN-13: 978-1609260293. ISBN-10: 1609260295. Amazon hardcover new \$79.99 (as of 2021-04-16; learners are encouraged to shop for used copies).

**Delivery:**

This class is in-person, with daily homework and a final paper.

1. Learners will pre-read the David Carr textbook, actively annotating margins.
2. We will meet in-person daily for four (4) hours. This will include all-together time, as well as small-group and individual break-out time. Each day will also include final-paper workshop time.
3. Every evening, learners will view a pre-recorded lecture of about one hour (60 minutes), informally sketch out connections to the textbook, and prepare genuine questions to bring into class.
4. Our session conclude January 20th, and a final paper is due January 27th.

**Accommodations Policy:**

Garrett-Evangelical is committed to providing a quality theological education and will provide reasonable accommodations for documented conditions. Students requiring specific assistance such as classroom changes, alternative ways of note-taking, different classroom procedures, or alternative testing formats are urged to request the appropriate accommodations from the director of academic studies/registrar. The director of academic studies/registrar can advise students on other support services and resources, for example, diagnostic testing. Students must complete a request for accommodations using the form available from the director of academic studies/registrar or through MyGETS documenting their condition(s) through appropriate verification methods.

**Participation Policy:**

- *All assignments and activities must be completed, as assigned and on deadline, in order for a student to continue in the course.*
- Students must attend the first session in order to continue in the course.
- Students may miss one (1) session, provided that they accept a written assignment to substitute for that missed day.
- Please see below regarding emergencies.

**Emergency:**

Students may sometimes find themselves beset by an emergency that is likely to threaten progress in this course. In such a case, the student should contact the office of the Registrar without delay to document their emergency. Depending on the nature of the emergency, it may not be possible for the student to complete the course; however, the instructor will work with the Registrar to determine what options are available (including an Incomplete for the course, an Extension for missing work, or other options).

**Assignments:**

1. Students will pre-read the David Carr textbook before the term begins, reading actively and annotating margins (guidance on this will be coming to registered learners).  
Approximate time: twenty (20) hours.
2. This class will involve daily in-class assignments and mini-projects.
3. Evenings, students will view a one-hour (60 minute) lecture, informally sketch out connections to the textbook and to earlier discussions, and prepare genuine questions to bring into class.
4. A final paper is due one week after the term ends.

**Grading:**

Pre-reading content exam: 20% (mandatory credit)

Daily activities and evidence of daily preparation: 45%

Final Paper: 35%

*Evaluation rubrics will be available on course Moodle site when the semester begins.*

***Some details may change before the first day of class.***

## Institutional Academic Policies

All students are required to abide by the academic policies detailed in the Academic Handbook for the current academic year. The following policies are of particular importance to the successful completion of one's coursework:

### *Writing*

- Academic integrity and plagiarism: (See 19-20 Handbook, 12, 78-83) All professors are required to respond to all suspected incidents of academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism. Repeated incidents of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may result in dismissal from the school.
- Writing and citations: The Turabian Manual for Writers and the Chicago Manual of Style footnote/bibliography format provide the standard formats for all introductory courses. Basic information on these formats is available online here. In advanced courses an instructor may require another style guide appropriate to the discipline (such as APA). (19-20 Handbook, 84)
- Writing Support: The Writing Center at Garrett-Evangelical offers programs to support all students' theological research and writing. See <https://www.garrett.edu/student-life/student-services> "Writing Center" for more detailed information.

### *Attendance and Class Participation*

- Inclusivity/Diversity: The basic commitments of the seminary to mutual love and searching for the truth in Christ lead to a principle that in the classroom and in course assignments, persons are always to be respected and ideas are to be freely discussed.... All participants in the teaching- learning process have an obligation to honor and respect varying perspectives on relevant issues. (See 19-20 Handbook, 9)
- Attendance and lateness policies: Attendance is required. Students who miss more than 20% of the class sessions (e.g., more than 2 classes in the weekly schedule, a proportionate amount for other class formats) should not expect to pass the class. (19-20 Handbook, 19)
- Some faculty may limit on the usage of electronic devices such as cell phones during class. At the least, all cell phones should be silenced during the whole of a class session.

### *Academic Accommodations*

- Student accommodations for documented conditions should be developed and requested before the beginning of the semester. See the Accessibility, Special Needs, and Disabilities policy and process set out in the Academic Handbook (19-20 Handbook, 12). Such accommodations are developed in consultation with the Registrar.
- Extensions: For Masters students, extensions, if granted, are normally for four weeks following the last day of class in spring and fall semesters or the final due date for coursework for January and summer terms. Extensions may not exceed three months following the end of the term. (19- 20 Handbook, 20)