

**BIBHB-500: Introduction to the Hebrew Bible
Fall Semester 2022**

Room
Tuesdays 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm

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Course Description

The first goal of this course is to introduce the major aspects of the study of the Old Testament. These aspects include:

- the content of key blocks of Old Testament literature
- the historical context in which the Old Testament materials are thought to have been written
- methods of scholarly inquiries of the biblical text, including contextual hermeneutics
- communicating scholarly information to congregations

The second goal of this course is to teach students an ethical approach to interpreting the Hebrew Bible. Such an approach considers both the historical context in which these texts were written and the contemporary context in which they are interpreted.

Required Texts:

Accessed on March 12, 2022

The HarperCollins Study Bible, revised edition (2006), ISBN-13: 9780061228407

\$32.28 with 19% discount at amazon.com

OR

The New Oxford Annotated Bible 5th edition (2018), ISBN-13: 9780190276089

\$27.75 at amazon.com with 21% discount.

AND

David M. Carr, *The Hebrew Bible: A Contemporary Introduction to the Christian Old Testament and the Jewish Tanakh* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2021), \$44.73 with 12% discount at amazon.com.

https://www.amazon.com/Hebrew-Bible-Contemporary-Introduction-Christian/dp/1119636671/ref=sr_1_5?crid=3DEUREMHWFGO&keywords=david+carr&qid=1647219635&s=books&prefix=%2Cstripbooks%2C209&sr=1-5

Additional readings will be available on the course Moodle site

Course Requirements

Regular attendance and active participation in discussions (both on the online forum discussion and/or in person): 25%

Please note: Before each class, carefully read the assigned chapter from our textbook by David Carr and the specific biblical texts highlighted in the chapter.

It is *strongly* recommended that you maintain a list of definitions of the terms listed in each chapter (preferably done with one or two other students in the class).

Reflection essay (due October 4, 2022): 25%

Analytical essay (due November 8, 2022): 25%

Homiletical Exegesis (due December 13, 2022): 25%

Course requirements will include three written assignments to be written at home and submitted on the course Moodle site. The first is a reflection essay on an assigned article (Randall Bailey on the Bible as Culture, to be posted on Moodle), the second is an analytical paper on ONE of three articles (by Robert Allen Warrior, or Gale Yee on Isaiah 56:1-8, or Wilda Gafney on Delilah) that will be made available on Moodle and the third is a research paper on a pericope chosen by the student (a homiletical exegesis paper). Additional details on these assignments (and their rubrics) will be posted and discussed in class. All submitted assignments must contain a bibliography.

Timely submission of all work is critical. If any work is submitted after the deadline, the grade assigned will be lowered.

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)

Coaching Sessions:

The teaching assistant will offer coaching sessions in advance of the due dates for the written assignments. Each session will be one week after the assignments have been distributed and one week before your work is to be submitted. Ideally, students will have started work on their assignments before these sessions, and they can use this time to ask specific questions about their work.

These sessions will take place on the following dates:

September 27, 2022

November 1, 2022

December 6, 2022

Each session will start at 1:15 p.m. and end at 2:00 p.m. (about 45 minutes).

Class Schedule

September 6

Chapter 1: Studying the Bible in its Ancient Contexts

September 13

Chapter 2: The Emergence of Ancient Israel and its First Oral Traditions

September 20

Chapter 3: Beginnings of the Monarchy and Royal and Zion Texts

Reflection essay distributed

September 27

Chapter 4: Interlude: Echoes of Past Empires

Coaching Session #1

October 4

Chapter 5: Narrative and Prophecy Amidst the Rise and Fall of the Northern Kingdom

Reflection Essays Due before midnight

October 11

Chapter 6: Micah, Isaiah, and the Southern Prophetic Encounter with Assyria

October 18

Chapter 7: Torah and History in the Wake of the Assyrian Empire

October 25

Chapter 8: Prophecy in the Transition from Assyrian to Babylonian Domination

Analytical Essays assignment distributed

November 1

Chapter 9: Laments, History, and Prophecies after the Destruction of Jerusalem

Coaching Session #2

November 8

Chapter 10: Torah and Trauma

Analytical essays due before midnight

November 15

Chapter 11: The Torah, the Psalms, and the Persian-Sponsored Rebuilding of Judah

November 29

Chapter 12: Other Texts Formed in the Crucible of Post-Exilic Rebuilding

Homiletical exegesis assignment distributed

December 6

Chapter 13: Hellenistic Empires and the Formation of Multiple Scriptures

Coaching Session #3

December 13

Homiletical exegesis due before midnight

Resources

- Anderson, Cheryl B. "The Song of Songs: Redeeming Gender Constructions in the Age of AIDS," in Gay Byron and Vanessa Lovelace, eds., *Womanist Interpretations of the Bible: Expanding the Discourse*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016, pp. 73-92.
- _____. "Reflections in an Interethnic/racial Era on Interethnic/racial Marriage in Ezra," in Randall C. Bailey, Tat-siong Benny Liew, and Fernando Segovia, eds., *They Were All Together in One Place?: Toward Minority Biblical Criticism*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2009, pp. 47-64.
- Bailey, Randall C. "That's why they don't call the book Hadassah!' The interse(ct)/(x)ionality of Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Sexuality in the Book of Esther," in Randall C. Bailey, Tat-siong Benny Liew, and Fernando Segovia, eds., *They Were All Together in One Place?: Toward Minority Biblical Criticism*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2009, pp. 227-250.
- DeYoung, Curtiss Paul, and others, eds. *The Peoples' Companion to the Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010.
- Gafney, Wilda C. *Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction to the Women of the Torah and the Throne*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017.
- _____. *Wisdom Commentary: Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2017.
- _____. "A Womanist Midrash of Delilah: Don't Hate the Playa Hate the Game," in Gay Byron and Vanessa Lovelace, eds., *Womanist Interpretations of the Bible: Expanding the Discourse*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016, pp. 49-72.
- Lovelace, Vanessa. "'We Don't Give Birth to Thugs': Family Values, Respectability Politics, and Jephthah's Mother," in Gay Byron and Vanessa Lovelace, eds., *Womanist Interpretations of the Bible: Expanding the Discourse*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016, pp. 239-261.
- Nadar, Sarojini. "Barak God and Die: Women, HIV, and a Theology of Suffering," in R.S. Sugirtharajah, ed. *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, 3rd edition. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006, pp. 189-203.
- Nzimande, Makhosazana. "Isaiah," in Hugh R. Page, Jr., general editor, *The Africana Bible: Reading Israel's Scriptures from Africa and the African Diaspora*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010, pp. 136-146.
- Stone, Ken. "1 and 2 Kings," in Deryn Guest and others, eds. *The Queer Bible Commentary*. London: SCP Press, 2006, 222-250.

Tamez, Elsa. "Ecclesiastes 3:1-8: A Latin American Perspective in John R. Levinson and Priscilla Pope Levinson, eds. *Return to Babel: Global Perspectives on the Bible*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999, pp. 75-79.

Weems, Renita J. "1 and 2 Chronicles," in Hugh R. Page, Jr., general editor, *The Africana Bible: Reading Israel's Scriptures from Africa and the African Diaspora*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010, pp. 286-290.

_____. *Battered Love: Marriage, Sex, and Violence in the Hebrew Prophets*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

Warrior, Robert Allen. "A Native American Perspective: Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians," in R.S. Sugirtharajah, ed. *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, 3rd edition. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006, pp. 235-241.

West, Mona. "The Gift of Voice, the Gift of Tears: A Queer Reading of Lamentations in the context of AIDS," Ken Stone, ed. *Queer Commentary and the Hebrew Bible*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2001, pp. 140-151.

Yee, Gale. "Hosea," in Carol Newsom and others, eds. *Women's Bible Commentary*, 3rd ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012, pp. 299-308.

_____. "She Stood in Tears Amid the Alien Corn: Ruth as the Perpetual Foreigner and Model Minority," in Randall C. Bailey, Tat-siong Benny Liew, and Fernando Segovia, eds., *They Were All Together in One Place?: Toward Minority Biblical Criticism*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2009, pp. 119-140.