

North Park Theological Seminary
OLD TESTAMENT II Prophets, Psalms, and Wisdom
BIBL 6121

Spring 2013 Online

Three Semester Hours A core requirement for all seminary degrees

Course Facilitator: James Bruckner, Ph.D., Professor of Old Testament

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Office Hours: I will be active in this online course on Monday and Friday mornings.

Office Location: Nyvall Hall N-23

Introductory Comments/Course Description

Welcome to Old Testament II! I love to teach the OT Prophets and Wisdom and look forward to our interaction together with these texts. Old Testament II is a seminary graduate course on the prophets, psalms, and wisdom literature of the Hebrew Bible. (We will use an English translation.) This three hour graduate course requires a lot of reading and writing. Please see this syllabus for details. It is your roadmap.

This three hour graduate course requires a substantial amount of reading and writing.

Please read the syllabus thoroughly for details. It is your roadmap. You will need access to a good Old Testament library to do your research projects. If you do not have access, you will need at least two (2) Bible Dictionaries, two (2) Introductions to the Bible, and one (1) book for deeper historical background *in addition to your textbooks*. (See recommended list below.)

The power and passion of the narratives and law we will read are essential parts of the “Scripture” to which 2 Timothy 3:16 refers. You should begin by reading the primary biblical document from Genesis through Esther.

This course surveys five wisdom and seventeen prophetic books of the Old Testament. It seeks to provide knowledge of the over-arching content (events, characters, themes) and original cultural and historical settings. Attention will be given to literary genres, critical issues, and inter-biblical interpretations as they aid interpretation of texts. The goal is to prepare students to appreciate, interpret, and teach from these books in ministries of the Church.

Required Textbooks

The books listed below can be found at many online bookseller site (amazon.com, buy.com, half.com). You will also need access to a good Old Testament library to do your research projects. If you do not have access, you will need at least two (2) Bible Dictionaries, two (2) Introductions to the Bible, and one (1) book for deeper historical background in your personal library *in addition to your textbooks* (see recommended list in this syllabus).

The Holy Bible. Any modern translation. Good advanced student study editions are *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* and the *Harper Collins Study Bible*. (Read Job through Malachi.)

Coogan, N.D. editor. *The Oxford History of the Biblical World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). paperback 0195139372

Limburg, James. *Psalms*. Westminster Bible Companion Series (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000). 0664255574

Miller, Patrick. *The Religion of Ancient Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000). 0664221459

Ballard, Jr., H.W. and Tucker, Jr., W.D. *An Introduction to Wisdom Literature and the Psalms* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000). 0865546525

Peterson, David L. *The Prophetic Literature: an introduction* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002). 0664254535

Additional or Recommended Readings

D. N. Freeman editor. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. Please note that the ISBN is 0802824005. Everyone should want this one volume goldmine. It is a reliable resource that will serve you well for a lifetime. Also valuable for preparation for the midterm and final exams.

If you have not previously studied the Bible at the college level, a basic introduction should also be read in conjunction with lectures. The following text is very useful and accessible: Bandstra, Barry L. *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1995 (3rd ed., 2003; 4th ed. March, 2008).

Course Requirements: In Brief

Successful completion of this course will include:

- 1) Reading the assigned weekly biblical texts and textbooks.
- 2) Weekly Writing assignments (500 words each) (20%)
- 3) Writing One Report on an assigned topic (4-6 pages) (10%).
- 4) Two objective Exams: a midterm (30%) and a final (30%).
- 5) Class Participation: attendance and engagement of material (10%).

Articles provided in Moodle: Much of the required reading comes from these articles. They will be important for your assignments, midterm, and final exam preparation.

Participant Learning Objectives

1. Comprehend fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories.
2. Develop specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course.
3. Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.

Specific Course Objectives

- Grow in appreciation of the passion and the power of the narratives and law contained in the primary biblical documents.
- Develop a personal facility for interpreting Old Testament biblical texts in the context of the Christian Church.
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate another person's perspective fairly and accurately.
- Analyze, evaluate, and gain new perspectives on issues raised in reading difficult biblical texts.
- Evaluate the significance of specific books of scripture in their literary contexts.
- Explain the significance of individual texts in their historical context.
- Synthesize understanding of the content of the primary and secondary source reading with personal perspective on the subject matter.
- Master the use of the précis format for summarizing reading.

Course Teaching and Learning Methods

It is very important for students to keep up with readings, writing assignments, and student forum posting. Assignments will be posted by the course facilitator on the course site on a weekly basis. Forum discussions will center on the weekly readings and professor's postings. Responses need *not* be directed to the course facilitator but can and should be in response to the thoughts and ideas of other students as well.

Some student work will be posted online for class member review and comments. The professor expects that each student will provide constructive and timely feedback to other class members on assignments as required. While the professor may also provide online feedback on assignments, grades for each course assignment will be given privately.

Course Schedule

Every week the assigned readings, student forum responses, and other writing assignments will be posted in the weekly modules. Officially, the "Week" runs from Sunday at midnight to the next Sunday at midnight. Please begin your reading at the beginning of the week so that you have time to write well before Sunday night. It is expected that students in a three (3) hour master's level seminary course will spend nine (9) hours each week to accomplish the reading and the writing. *Forum responses and written assignments are due before Sunday at midnight at the end of each module-week.*

Students in the past have often requested that the module content be made available a few days earlier (some students work ahead of schedule!). As a result of these requests, the week module will be made available on the Friday mornings before they "officially" begin (on Sunday). At the end of the official week, you will see that the forum is no longer available to you, so please stay current with this course.

Computer Requirements

In order to effectively participate in and successfully complete this course, each participant will need to have access to a computer and a high-speed internet connection. Please visit <http://www.northpark.edu/Current-Students/Computer-Services/Network/Minimum-Requirements.aspx> for information on computer requirements.

Technical Skills Required

The online Moodle Orientation Course should teach you the skills that you need to successfully complete this course. In addition, you will need to have basic email skills, occasionally to send and receive Word documents.

Participant Responsibilities

1. Attendance, presence, and full participation are required for this class. *You cannot successfully complete this course without completing the weekly readings and assignments.* You are expected to begin your reading early enough in the week so that you have time to write well before Sunday night. The “Week” runs from Sunday at midnight to the next Sunday at midnight.
2. Some of your assignments will be posted on-line for others to see. You will be asked to comment and provide feedback to one another on your work.
3. Although I strongly suggest that all issues, questions, and problems be dealt with online, you can feel free to call or e-mail me regarding these issues at any time, noting the office hours I am available.
4. Use proper “netiquette” (see *A Guide to Netiquette* in Course Information resource).
5. I advise participants to plan on spending nine to twelve hours total on course responsibilities (e.g. reading, assignments, and online discussion).

Course Facilitator Responsibilities

1. The course is designed so that students have every opportunity to achieve the learning objectives.
2. The course facilitator will respond to all questions in order to clarify important ideas and concepts.
3. The course facilitator will provide updated information on relevant resources for the various topics of interest.
4. The course facilitator will read and critically assess students’ assignments and provide feedback weekly throughout the course.
5. The course facilitator will respond to all student e-mails within 48 hours of receipt.

Assignment Grading based on 100 percentage points

A final grade for this course will be computed according to your successful completion of the following assignments:

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|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Forum Responses to Professor’s Weekly Postings | 10 percentage points maximum |
| 2. Journal Responses to Required Reading | 10 percentage points maximum |
| 3. Writing Assignments | 20 percentage points maximum |
| 4. Mid-term Exam | 30 percentage points maximum |
| 5. Final Exam | 30 percentage points maximum |

Course Grading

At the completion of this course, you will receive a letter grade reflecting your performance in this course. Letter grades (from A – F) will be awarded according to the existing policies of North Park Theological Seminary. The final course grade will be computed according to the total number of percentage points earned for all assignments as shown below:

<u>Total Points Earned:</u>	<u>Final Grade:</u>
98-100	A+
95-97	A
93-94	A-
91-92	B+
88-90	B
86-87	B-
84-85	C+
81-83	C
78-80	C-
76-77	D+
73-75	D
70-72	D-

Academic Honesty

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion.

Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination or using resources during examination of your memory.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.

In the special instance of group work, the instructor will make clear his/her expectations with respect to individual vs. collaborative work. A violation of these expectations may be considered cheating as well.

For further information on this subject you may refer to the Academic Dishonesty section of the University’s online catalog.

Support Services

Please see the Course Information resource for the Student Support content if you need assistance during your course.

Disabilities Accommodations

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact their program's office: Seminary: (773) 244-5619

Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. If needed, appointments can be relocated.