

**PRELIMINARY Syllabus for BIBL 5210-01**  
**Old Testament 1: Pentateuch and Interpretation**  
Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy  
Fall 2017 Campus (17/S1) 3 Credit Hours  
Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:00-9:15 a.m.  
North Park Theological Seminary  
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**Introductory Comments/Course Description**

*Welcome to Old Testament 1.* I look forward to our interaction with the texts of Genesis—Deuteronomy. OT1 is a graduate-level seminary course on the basic theological literature of the Hebrew Bible. We will use English translations.

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 written work. See the recommended list in this syllabus. The Canvas-site for this course contains many of the course documents in digital form. Please log-in and become familiar with it: <http://northpark>

**This course** investigates the over-arching narrative content of the first five books of the Old Testament known as the *Torah* and as *Pentateuch* (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). It also provides an overview of the main strategies for interpreting these books (hermeneutics) and the varied commitments behind each approach. The approach to the five books is both canonical and historical, so it covers theology of the texts as well as their most prominent interpretive settings in Israel's history. Attention will be given to cultural backgrounds, critical problems, and literary genres as they aid interpretation of specific texts. The primary goal is to prepare students to appreciate, interpret, and teach from these books in ministries of the Church.

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

**Required Reading**

*The Holy Bible.* Any modern translation. Good advanced student study editions are *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* and the *Harper Collins Study Bible*.

Birch, Brueggemann, Fretheim, and Petersen, *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd edition (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005). paperback 9780687066766. Please note that this textbook is required for both OT 1, 2, and 3 at NPTS. On RESERVE in the library.

D. N. Freeman editor. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000). Please note that the ISBN is 0802824005. Please note that this textbook is required for both OT 1 and OT 2 at NPTS. *NOTE: This is NOT the Eerdmans Bible Dictionary by Allen C. Meyers!*  
In the library REFERENCE section.

*Articles Online:* Much of the required reading comes from these articles. Find them online on Canvas. They will be important for your midterm exam preparation and for your Annotated Reading Log.

If you have not previously studied the Bible at the college level, a basic introduction can 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 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2003; 4<sup>th</sup> ed. March, 2008). Also recommended is *Old Testament Survey* (LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush). See the bibliography in this syllabus.

### **Course Requirements in Brief**

- 1) Class attendance/participation (10%)
  - 2) Completion of weekly writing assignments (40%)
  - 3) Mid-term exam (30%)
  - 4) Completion of an annotated reading journal (20%)
- Upload all your written assignments to Canvas. Late writing assignments will be marked down by 2% per day.

### **Course Requirements in Detail**

The general guideline is six (6) hours of work outside of class per week for a three (3) credit hour class. See the Class Schedule in this syllabus for the sequence.

#### **1) Reading the assigned weekly biblical texts and textbooks.**

Read the Bible and the secondary literature assigned as background information for the next week's lectures. Keep track (simple notes) of the main points of the secondary reading for future reference in exam preparation. In the second half of the semester, you will be required to hand in an *Annotated Reading Journal*, which will record your summary of the required readings for each week. You will add to this Journal each week and submit it for grading in Week 14. *See the Grading Rubrics at the end of this syllabus.*

#### **2) Weekly Writing Assignment Instructions (40% of grade).**

See Class Schedule in this syllabus for topics and due dates. Here is the basic information.

##### **Format**

Single spaced. Word.doc. See individual assignments for length. Cite all sources. If you use Turabian's "in text" format instead of full footnotes or endnotes, you must add a bibliography.

##### **Content**

Unless otherwise instructed, your short essays should be informed reflections on the

1) reading, 2) biblical texts, and 3) questions assigned in the "Class Schedule."

For some assignments you will want to consult sources listed under "Recommended Reading."

*Some of your writing assignments will instruct you to "Write a **précis**."* >>

**Instructions for Writing a Précis** (See "Class Schedule" for weeks when precise format is required.)

**Précis** means "a brief summary of essential points" or "a precise abstract." The form is as important as the content for the grade.

**Format:** The précis should be on one page, single spaced, block-style paragraphs, about 500 words. Do not quote more than a phrase or two.

In 3/4ths of the page (3-4 paragraphs) answer these questions:

- a. What is the author's interest? What question or problem is she addressing?
- b. What is the main point of the author's "answer" to that question?
- c. How does the author build her argument? What warrants (proof or logic) does she offer?
- d. Briefly summarize the main argument, step by step.

In 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the page offer your "critique" of the arguments which may include:

- a. What's missing?
- b. What assumptions do you question?
- c. Is the author's "interest" a helpful approach?
- d. What did you learn? What questions remain?

Always be sure to add the bibliographic reference of your article (Author, Title, Publishing information, page numbers).

**Optional writing assignment:** You may memorize and recite Deuteronomy 6:3-12 in place of any one writing assignment. Please notify me by email when you are ready to recite. This must be done before the last week of regular class.

### **3) One Objective Mid-term Exam (30% of grade)**

I will give you a complete study-guide several weeks before the exam. The guide will give you an idea of what may be included. I will ask you to describe basic concepts, people, and events.

### **4) Annotated Reading Journal (20% of grade)**

This course does not have a final exam. In the second half of the semester you will be required to keep an annotated reading journal (i.e., a Word.doc) compiled weekly in a single document and handed in to the Professor in Week 14.

Here is how you will create it:

1. Read the assigned texts, keeping track (simple notes) of the main points.
2. In a couple of sentences summarize, i.e. *annotate* the reading.
  - State the focus of the reading.
  - State the author's primary interest and thesis.
  - State what you found most engaging, troubling, or helpful.
  - Write about 200 words for each reading.
3. Please include a bibliographic reference with your annotation for each assigned reading. Be sure to back up your work. See grading rubrics in this syllabus.

This course does not have a final exam.

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#### **Disabilities Accommodations**

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the program's office (773-244-5619). Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. Please review the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/ada>

### Academic Honesty

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park 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.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.

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

### Title IX

Students who believe they have been harassed, discriminated against, or involved in sexual violence should contact the Dean of Students (773-244-5565) or Director of Human Resources (773-244-5599) for information about campus resources and support services, including confidential counseling services.

As a member of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students, and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty are legally obligated to share information with the University’s Title IX coordinator in certain situations help ensure that the student’s safety and welfare is being addressed, consistent with the requirements of the law. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of sexual assault, relational/domestic violence, and stalking.

Please refer to North Park’s Safe Community site for contact information and further details.

<http://www.northpark.edu/Campus-Life-and-Services/Safe-Community>

## Class Schedule

### Please Note

1. READING: Required articles that are not in your required textbooks will be posted on the Canvas-site for this course.
2. WRITING: Weekly writing assignments are due almost every week. For example, see *Week One* in this syllabus for the paper that is due on Monday of the second week of class. Upload your papers by the end of the day on Monday (midnight) to Canvas. Late papers will be reduced 2% per day.  
For guidelines, see the “Weekly Writing Assignment Instructions” in this syllabus.  
In place of one assignment, you may memorize and recite Deuteronomy 6:3-12. Please notify me by email to do this and let me know when you are ready to recite. This must be done before last week of class.
3. PLANNING: Please read the syllabus and mark your calendar to set aside at least six (6) hours to prepare for each week of class.

## Week 1: August 28—September 3 Introduction to Old Testament 1: Hermeneutics 1

### Reading Assignments

Read through this syllabus. Purchase your textbooks. You will need them beginning in Week 3.

Read the assigned texts (listed here with a +) in preparation for Monday of next week.

+Chapter 1 of Genesis

+Canvas-site Article #1\*: Blenkinsopp, “Introduction to the Pentateuch” in *New Interpreters’ Bible*, vol. 1, 305-18

+Canvas-site Article #2\*: Anderson, Bruckner, and Snodgrass, "The Centrality of the Word of God"

\*Articles are online on Canvas.

*Writing Assignment Due on Canvas by Monday, September 4:*

In 500 words or less, explain what *each* of the significant words and phrases of the following affirmation mean: "We believe in the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, as the Word of God, and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct." You may, but do not need to, use the Evangelical Covenant Church perspective article listed in this syllabus ("The Centrality . . .") as background, but do not quote or attempt to summarize it. Explain the meanings of the quotation in your own words.

Hand it in on time by uploading a Word.doc, before midnight on Monday on Canvas.

**Lectures**

*Monday:* Lecture 1.1 Introduction to the Course

*Wednesday:* Lecture 1.2 The World *Behind* the Text: Hermeneutical Landscape 1

*Value Added Resources*

+Your required textbook, *Eerdmans Dictionary* has background articles for this week. Be sure to see the sixteen maps in the back as well as the Hebrew Aleph-Beth and the following:

*On Interpretation:* Archeology; Tell; Pottery; Gezer; Hazor. Beth-Shean (e.g.s of archeological digs); Interpretation-Biblical; Haggadah; Halakhah; Biblical criticism; Yahwist; Elohist; Priestly document.

*On Genesis One:* Genesis-Book; Abyss; Chaos; Creation; Deep; Darkness; Day; Leviathan; Light.

+Additional Resource Article: "Archeology" in LaSor, *OT Survey*, 641-52.

Available on the Canvas-site.