

**NEW YORK**  
**THEOLOGICAL**  
**SEMINARY**  
*...continuing the Biblical Seminary in New York*

A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY OF LEARNING WITH A HISTORICAL URBAN FOCUS

**Course Syllabus**

BBH1004

**INTRODUCTION TO  
THE FIRST TESTAMENT  
COMMONLY KNOWN AS  
THE OLD TESTAMENT OR THE HEBREW BIBLE**

LAST UPDATED: 8/15/2014

Fall 2014  
Thursdays, 6-9 pm  
Riverside Church Room 430  
Break-out rooms: 418, 421, 423

All students are required to read and have a thorough understanding of the syllabus.

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**PERSONAL GREETING**

Welcome to BBH1004 Introduction to the First Testament commonly known as the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible! We seek to listen for God's word that comes to us through the first part of the Bible, that is, the first of the two Testaments in one Bible. In this class, that voice of God may come through others whom we encounter in the sacred space God has given to us to study the Bible together in this semester.

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF COURSE**

This course presents an overview of the First Testament with a particular emphasis on the formation of biblical literature and the cultural and historical background of ancient Israel. Special attention will be paid to exegetical tools that will help us to understand the literary structure of the biblical corpus and the social history of biblical tradition. Implications for theological reflection and ministry will also be explored.

This course is the first component of the Bible Sequence of the first year of the Masters programs at NYTS. It is followed by Exegesis Practicum (winterim) and Introduction to the Second Testament (spring). These three courses are best taken in immediate sequence.

### **THEME SCRIPTURE**

*Sing to him a new song;  
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.  
For the word of the LORD is upright,  
and all his work is done in faithfulness.  
He loves righteousness and justice;  
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.  
By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,  
and all their host by the breath of his mouth.-----Psalm 33:3-6*

### **THE OUTCOMES OF THE ARE:**

New York Theological Seminary is a diverse and inclusive community of learning with a historic urban focus. With Christ at its center, and with a curriculum informed by biblical witness and Christian thought and tradition, the Seminary prepares women and men for the practice of ministry in congregations, the city, and the world. Led by the Spirit, and in active partnership with churches, we seek to heed God's call for reconciliation, justice, evangelism, and transformation.

*As the student fulfills the requirements of this program, s/he will be:*

1. Informed biblically (*religious heritage*)
2. Steeped in Christian thought and tradition (*religious heritage*)
3. Skilled in the practice of ministry for personal, ecclesial and social transformation (*capacity for ministerial and public leadership*)
4. Committed to the call of the Gospel for reconciliation, justice, evangelism and transformation (*capacity for ministerial and public leadership*)
5. Equipped for diverse and inclusive partnerships in congregations, the city, and the world (*cultural context*)
6. Centered in a spiritual tradition which is dynamic in its formation and open to God's continuing revelation (*personal and spiritual formation*)

### **COURSE COMPETENCIES/LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Among the requirements listed above, this course seeks to fulfill this learning outcome in particular: Informed biblically (*religious heritage*)

Upon completion of this course,

- (1) you will be familiar with the material content and the world of the First Testament/Old Testament/Hebrew Bible;

- (2) you will be able to explain the overall outline of the history of ancient Israel in the last two millennia before the Common Era and place blocks of passages in the major historical periods of ancient Israel;
- (3) you will be able to identify major issues in the study of the Old Testament. Examples of the important topics include Exodus and Sinai; the settlement of Israel in Canaan; relationship of kings and prophets; Jerusalem as the center; role of wisdom in ancient Israel; and Old Testament apocalyptic;
- (4) you will demonstrate that you can interpret a biblical text with critical confidence, using standard tools of biblical exegesis; and
- (5) you will be able to engage the Bible in the context of believing communities.

The expected outcome will be measured through the student's level of participation and performance in written and oral assignments and class activities listed in this syllabus.

## MOODLE INFORMATION

All students *are required* to enroll in their courses in Moodle after registration. Upon registration, you should have received a handout that explains the basics on how to enroll yourself into your courses and another one on how to use Moodle (including your login settings). Read both carefully and follow the instructions in them. You are expected to enroll yourself into the Moodle site of this course. You can do this with the enrollment key, which is: **bbh1004** (all lowercase).

After working through the steps in the Moodle Documentation (also found at the Moodle website: <http://online.nyts.edu>), if you have problems and/or are not able to login, have questions concerning the use of Moodle, send an email to our help desk at [helpdesk@mail.nyts.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mail.nyts.edu). Describe the problem in detail and include your full name, your email address, and telephone number(s). Most teaching faculty and assistants can also aid you.

*All important announcements and communication for this class will take place through Moodle and the NYTS email addresses of the students.* Make sure that you periodically check the course and your NYTS email inbox to stay informed and communicate with your professor and classmates. Students should always include their first and last name at the end of all e-mail messages. This will enable the professor to quickly identify the student and course, facilitating a timely response. The teaching faculty and any assistants of this course are expected to respond to students' emails within 2-3 business days.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

We recommend you start building a library for your present and future ministries or vocations. The following are the books required for this course. All students are expected to have purchased the books by the first day of the class.

1. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical Writings*, Fourth Edition, New Revised Standard Version. (You may use another standard translation in

addition to the NRSV. The NRSV is available in an electronic format, but you will be most benefited from this course when you use the print edition of this Bible in class.)

2. Norman K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Brief Socio-Literary Introduction*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009. [abbreviated: *HBS*]
3. James B. Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011. [abbreviated: *ANE*]
4. Adrian Curtis, ed., *Oxford Bible Atlas*. 4th ed. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. [abbreviated: *Atlas*]

These required textbooks are available at the Columbia Bookstore (2922 Broadway, New York, NY; 212-854-1238 or 212-854-9722; [www.columbiabookstore.com](http://www.columbiabookstore.com)).

You may also purchase the course textbooks at a local bookstore and/or utilize a book distributor such as [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com); [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com); <http://www.cokesbury.com>; or [www.bibliofind.com](http://www.bibliofind.com). Since online purchases can take a week or longer, make sure to order the textbooks as soon as possible. Most required material can be also found in our libraries and/or the NYC public library system (see Library Resources below) and some of it also can be downloaded from various academic websites. Any additional materials (e.g., articles, etc.) may be found in your course in Moodle.

#### WARNING CONCERNING COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproduction of copyrighted material.

Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research. If electronic transmission of reserve materials is used for purposes in excess of what constitutes "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

#### LIBRARY RESOURCES

NYTS students at the Masters and Doctorate levels have access to all Columbia libraries with the exception of the Law Library and Teacher's College Library. In order to use these libraries, first acquire a Columbia library ID at the Butler Library on the main campus of Columbia University at 116th and Broadway. The card is provided free of charge to all students who have a NYTS ID with a current semester stamp and is valid for one year. For further information on the Columbia Library and access to the online CLIO library catalog, visit the web site at [www.columbia.edu/cu/web](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/web).

NYTS students living in the New York City area may also want to make use of the NY Public Library, which provides research training for free. Also students should explore what library services are available in their local area. College or community college libraries near the students are also good options. It is best to know early in the semester how much access these libraries can provide for the students.

**Anyone who resides, works, goes to school, or pays taxes in New York State is eligible for a New York Public Library (NYPL) card.**

Students may either register for a card online or get one at any branch or Research Library in Manhattan, the Bronx or Staten Island

1. For Online Registration, visit [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).
  - a. Fill out the online registration form
  - b. Students who meet the requirements for a card, but who do not reside in New York State, will need to send a copy of his/her NYTS student identification along with another valid ID; (see <http://www.nypl.org/help/library-card/terms-conditions>)
2. Physical Registration
  - a. Go to any Manhattan, Bronx, or Staten Island branch or research library
    - i. The closest branch to the seminary offices is at Broadway and 113th Street
    - ii. Hours are listed on the nypl.org web site.
  - b. At the front desk, fill out a library card form
  - c. Present a valid form of identification; (see <http://www.nypl.org/help/library-card/terms-conditions>). Students who live outside of New York state must present their NYTS ID card as well as an identification showing the place of residence.

Lastly, students also have the option of purchasing books that can be useful for their research and later academic pursuits at low cost at some of the discount book wholesalers or electronic libraries.

**Accessing online databases from the New York Public Library:**

1. Goto [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org)
2. At the top of the screen select **Find Books, DVDs, and More**
3. On the left side of the screen select **Articles and Databases**
4. At Database Title/description, type **ebscobase** and press **Enter**
5. From the list of databases select **EBSCOhost**
6. Enter the **14 digit number** located on the back of your NYPL library card and select **Enter**.
7. Scroll down and select the database(s) that you wish to search in, such as ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials and then Continue
8. To find only documents that are available online, select the **Full Text** box
9. Enter your search criteria and select **Search**

For more information on how to use the library systems or to have a training session on how to perform database research, feel free to contact Jerry Reisig at [jreisig@nyts.edu](mailto:jreisig@nyts.edu).

**COURSE PROCEDURES**

Participation (10%)

Bible Content Exams (10%)  
Weekly Online Sessions (20%)  
Exegetical Papers (20 %)  
Annotated Map (20%)  
Final Exam (20%)

Each assignment is graded in the scale of 100 points, unless announced otherwise.

1. Faithful attendance and participation is essential (10%). Everyone is required to process all class activities including reading assignments, lectures, small group discussion, and online work. Please be advised that your group leader is recording your performance and that the teaching team keeps track of the class jointly.
2. There will be **two** Bible content exams (each 5%; total 10%). For this exam, you may use only the textbooks listed in this course, which includes the Bible (NRSV). You will earn full points for completing these exams *on time*. Look for announcements and the deadline posted on Moodle. A late participation will receive no points.
3. At least **twice** a week (on two different calendar days), you must log in to Moodle (20%). Be sure to check announcements from the instructor. Process online forums and other online activities. Review upcoming due dates of future assignments. The online sessions may have additional reading assignments. Each of your weekly online work is graded in the scale of 100 points. You are expected to complete all online assignments in a timely fashion. Pay attention to word limits posted for each session, for late participation will be marked down.
4. You will choose **two** of the passages listed for the group sessions in the course schedule and write an exegetical paper on each passage (each 10%; total 20%). Each paper should be three pages (double-spaced) in length. The exegetical paper should demonstrate that you grappled with the text on your own. Before you submit the paper, go over each line to make sure that every part of the paper is substantiated by the text. The group leader will make sure that there is at least one student who writes the paper on the passage in any given session. The paper must be submitted prior to the beginning of the scheduled group session for which the passage is assigned. No paper may be accepted once the discussion on passage starts in small groups or online forums, whether the student is present or absent from the group session.
5. Draw a map of the United Monarchy during the height of David's reign (20%). Use *Oxford Bible Atlas* along with other textbooks. You must indicate the topographical layout of the land, using color pencils. Mark at least twenty (20) important place names on the map. Select five (5) major places and prepare annotations (three pages, double-spaced), paying attention to *sociopolitical* significance the places had for the growth and stability of David's empire (e.g., Jerusalem as the capital city). You do not need to include footnotes/endnotes or bibliography, and, if included, they must be on a separate page (in addition to the three pages of annotations). The map must be hand-drawn, and no other form of reproduction (including scanning, xeroxing, and tracing) is acceptable. You may not insert any general comments that are not directly related to the assignment. Be sure to write down your name on every page of

the map assignment before you staple them. It is due on **Oct. 2**, and a late submission will receive no points.

6. There will be a final exam on the last day of class (20%). The exam covers the entire sweep of the course. A guide to the exam will be provided on Moodle after the mid-point of the semester.

### **Guidelines for the Assignments**

All written assignments must be submitted in hard copy to your group leader, unless directed otherwise. Group leaders will assist the instructor in grading the papers. In the event that you do not agree with the assessment you received, first consult with your group leader for clarification. If that does not resolve the issue, make a copy of your paper that contains the comments you have received along with the grade, and submit it to the instructor as one package. Please note that the instructor can only begin the process when you send him the complete set of required documents. The instructor's decision is final in this course. You may consult the rest of the process of appeal provided in the Student Handbook.

Pay attention to deadlines. A late submission will result in loss of points. Assignments performed and turned in after the last session of the course will receive no credit, unless an extension is duly filed and approved.

If you have disabilities that require academic accommodations, communicate your circumstance to the Academic Dean's Office along with proper documentation (e.g., the physician's note or the supervising pastor's letter). Ordinarily, the necessary documentation must be filed before the first day of the term.

All written assignments must be typed on letter-size pages with the margin of one inch all sides, unless directed otherwise, Times Roman 12 pt or its equivalent. They should be ordinarily double-spaced, unless instructed otherwise. For all written assignments, be sure to include on every page your name, the course number, and the date of submission. A cover page is strongly discouraged for the stewardship of the nature that God created.

You will want to keep a hard copy of all written assignments that you submit. A backup copy of all assignments submitted electronically must be kept, as well.

The class is conducted in English, and all assignments are to be prepared in English. You are not required to demonstrate knowledge of any other language.

All written assignments must use inclusive language.

Grammatical errors may affect the final grade, for you are expected to prepare your assignments in accordance with the standard of graduate schools (e.g., clarity of the central thesis; coherent argument; well-planned structure, etc.). Students who do not meet these standards may be asked to withdraw from the course or be enrolled in a remedial course.



## **An Addendum for the Online Group**

Students in the online group in this course (those students who are authorized by the Academic Dean to take this course in a modified online format at the time of registration based solely on their technological aptitude) must follow additional instructions they will receive online through Moodle. There is no separate syllabus for the online group. The word limits for online students are generally higher than those for others in this class. **In general, students in the online group should expect to write at least 500 words for each original post, and at least 100 words of response (each time) to at least two of posts by classmates.** Students in the online group are expected to transmit written assignments as Microsoft Word documents or PDF files. All works must be conducted through Moodle. The map assignment may be scanned and uploaded to Moodle. No assignments may be sent via emails, unless directed otherwise.

*In addition, keep the following course requirements in mind:*

**Turn off your cell phone!!!** You are not allowed to answer phone calls, text, web surf, or use your cell phone in any way during class.

**No visitors or unregistered guests** are allowed to attend this class on a regular basis or a single session without prior written consent of the professor. The professor reserves the right to deny a student's petition to bring a guest to class.

**All written material** must follow the guidelines in Jerry Reisig's *Formatting Guide* and *Access: Unlocking the Power of Research* (at the front desk of NYTS—if you haven't purchased it already). As stated in these two manuals **all footnotes and bibliographies** should be formatted according to the 7th edition of Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (ISBN-10: 0226823377 or ISBN-13: 978-0226823379). Turabian's manual is available in most bookstores. A shorter version of it can be found on-line at [http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian\\_citationguide.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html). Questions about formatting papers and Turabian should be directed to Dr. Jerry Reisig, email [jreisig@nyts.edu](mailto:jreisig@nyts.edu), phone 212 870-1213.

You must write in **grammatically correct English**. Papers that are poorly written will be turned back to be redone, and will need to be resubmitted within two weeks of having received it with corrections. There may be no third submissions allowed.

NYTS is committed to an *inclusive* theological agenda. The use of inclusive language is a *requirement* for *all* written work, and encouraged in all other written or oral communications. Students are urged to develop greater sensitivity in their written work to issues of inclusion in all forms, but especially regarding humankind. Terms such as "mankind" or "sons of God" are not inclusive of women. Instead, students could say humanity and children of God. Students will be urged in classes to consider more inclusive ways of speaking about God as well.



## RUBRICS

<b>Rubric for Bible Courses (100 possible points)</b>				
	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Theoretical Content in the areas of bible</b>	The document demonstrates mastery of hermeneutical and exegetical engagement.	The document demonstrates competence of much of the expected hermeneutical and exegetical engagement.	The document demonstrates a minimal engagement of hermeneutics and exegesis.	The document does not demonstrate an adequate hermeneutical and exegetical engagement.
<b>The content and Context of ancient sources</b>	The document relates its arguments to the content of ancient sources and the context in which they were written.	The document competently relates its arguments to the content of ancient sources and the context in which they were written.	The document relates its arguments to the content of ancient sources and the context in which they were written. but is not fully effective.	The document does not address the content of ancient sources or the context in which they were written.
<b>Critical analysis &amp; support from relevant sources</b>	The document contains arguments that are clearly articulated, critically insightful; the arguments are persuasively supported by skillful referencing and interpretation of appropriate sources (i.e. peer review journals, biblical texts, and primary sources).	The document contains arguments that are reasonably clear, insightful; the arguments are adequately supported by appropriate sources (i.e. peer review journals, biblical texts, and primary sources).	The document contains problematic arguments; it references appropriate sources (i.e. peer review journals, biblical texts, and primary sources), but the references do not adequately support the arguments.	The document does not contain clear arguments; the document does not draw support from appropriate sources (i.e. peer review journals, biblical texts, and primary sources).
<b>Writing</b>	The document is creative and displays mastery of the art of scholarly writing.	The document is creative and displays competence in the arts of scholarly writing.	The document is creative but displays notable deficiencies in some aspects of scholarly writing.	The document lacks creativity and displays serious deficiencies in scholarly writing.

## **ATTENDANCE OR PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Though class absences are sometimes necessary for extenuating professional or personal situations, each student's participation is beneficial for the whole class. It is critical for students to attend all their classes and submit all assignments to accomplish the learning outcomes.

Three tardes will be equivalent to an unexcused absence. Three (3) unexcused absences in a course will result in the student receiving a No Credit (NC) for the course. In extraordinary circumstances, and at the sole discretion of the professor and/or Academic Dean, a student with three (3) unexcused absences may be allowed to continue (and obtain a passing grade) in the course, on condition of no further absences in the course (whether excused or unexcused), the completion of all missed course assignments, and the performance of additional work (if any) assigned by the faculty member.

Upon three (3) unexcused absences a student may petition to withdraw and receive a "W" instead of a "NC". The granting or denial of any such petition is within the discretion of the dean and the professor. In neither case will a withdrawn student (W) receive a tuition refund.

Absences (excused or unexcused) may result in the reduction of percentage points (10%) from the student's final grade. The professor may at her or his discretion offer a student an opportunity to gain back the lost percentage points through whatever means are appropriate to the situation. Any additional assignment given to the student as an option for replacing missed work must be completed within seven (7) days after the professor determines the work may be replaced.

The criteria for excused absences are:

- family emergency or a serious personal illness
- an unavoidable and non-reoccurring work conflict
- non-reoccurring technical problem with either Moodle or the student's personal computer that has not been previously identified or that is beyond the student's control (cannot be habitual)

Contact the faculty member before the absence or up to four (4) days after the absence if the reason for the absence prevented communication with the faculty member). The professor is not responsible to contact a student to inform him/her of a missed assignment.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE (rain or shine)**

The schedule below includes the due dates for all assignments. It is recommended that you place this Course Schedule in a convenient place and refer to it periodically, at least twice a week during the term. At least twenty hours of homework a week is assumed for a four-credit hour class.

Come prepared for each class session. This course will require an informed class interaction and the timely completion of all assignments. You may assume about twenty hours of preparation for

a four-credit hour class. Your personal schedule must allow you to keep up with the due dates for the readings and other assignments.

It is recommended that you place this Course Schedule in a convenient place and refer to it each week of the course. Follow it closely as late assignments may be subject to a grade reduction. Also be sure you can complete this course in the scheduled period. Incompletes will only be granted for true emergency situations, not for poor planning (see the NYTS Incomplete Grades Policy below).

*Plenary sessions may be recorded for personal use only, as long as the recorder agrees to make sure that the recordings be deleted before the last day of class of this term. Recordings shall not be transmitted in any electronic means, unless approved by the instructor via email. Students should not assume that recorded lectures alone will help them to excel in this class.*

1. Sept. 4

Plenary: Orientation; Primeval History

Review Reading: *HBS*, ch. 1; *Atlas*, pp. 3-36.

Group: Genesis 1 and 2

Online Forum: “Why do many scholars say that there are at least two sources for Gen 1-2? In what way(s) does that observation help or hinder your understanding of the Bible?”

2. Sept. 11

Plenary: Patriarchal History

Read Genesis; *HBS*, pp. 81-103; *ANE*, pp. 1-72 (esp. 11-14, 25-72); *Atlas*, pp. 65-76.

Group: Genesis 28

Online Forum: “What are the distinctive features of the faith of the mothers and fathers of Israel? What is the basis of our understanding of patriarchal religion?”

3. Sept. 18

Plenary: Exodus and Sinai

Read Exodus and Leviticus; *HBS*, pp. 105-129; *ANE*, pp. 82-83, 150-204 (esp. 155-182), 205-245 (esp. 205-225), 328-329, 413-414; *Atlas*, pp. 77-82.

Group: Ten Commandments (Exod 20:1-17 and Deut 5:6-21)

Online Forum: “What are the main components of the suzerain-vassal treaties? How do these treaties help us to understand the laws in the Old Testament?”

4. Sept. 25

Plenary: Settlement in the Land

Read Numbers; Joshua and Judges; *HBS*, pp. 131-164; *ANE*, pp. 429-443; *Atlas*, pp. 83-90.

Group: Joshua 6:1-27

Online Forum: “What are the major proposals for the settlement of Israel in the land of Canaan? Describe strengths and weaknesses of each of the proposals.”

5. Oct. 2

Plenary: The Monarchy

Read 1 and 2 Samuel; 1 Kings 1-12; *HBS*, ch. 167-191; *ANE*, pp. 14-21, 134-149, 294-296, 443-453; *Atlas*, pp. 91-102.

Group: 2 Samuel 7:1-16

Online Forum: “What does the Bible say about kings? Is the monarchy a blessing or a burden? What are the qualities that make good kings or bad kings?”

N. B. The annotated map of David's domain is due.

6. Oct. 9

Plenary: Prophets and Kings

Read 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 25; *HBS*, pp. 193-208; *ANE*, pp. 246-269; *Atlas*, pp. 103-108.

Group: 1 Kings 21:1-15

Online Forum: “What does Elijah do as a prophet? (What he does as a prophet virtually defines what a prophet is supposed to do after him.”

7. Oct. 16

Plenary: Major Themes in the Prophetic Movement

Read Amos and Hosea; *ANE*, pp. 72-134, 384-402; *Atlas*, pp. 109-113.

Group: Hosea 1

Online Forum: “Based on the reading assignments of Sessions 6 and 7, prepare a job description for a prophet.”

8. Oct. 23

Plenary: Jerusalem

Read Isaiah 1-39; Jeremiah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah; *HBS*, pp. 209-231; *ANE*, pp. 269-275.

Group: Jeremiah 20:7-13

Online Forum: “Choose two of the pre-exilic prophets and compare/contrast their perspective on God's involvement in the future course of events. What role do they expect humans to play in that history?”

9. Oct. 30

Plenary: Josiah and Deuteronomistic Reform

Read 2 Kings 21-25; 2 Chronicles 33-36; Deuteronomy 12-26; *Atlas*, pp. 114-121.

Group: Deuteronomy 12

Online Forum: “Compare 2 Kings 22-23 and 2 Chronicles 34-35. Offer a succinct explanation for any discrepancy between the two accounts of Josiah's reign.)

*Call for Participation: The upcoming session on Psalms needs volunteers who would share how their tradition has used the psalms. We need musicians including classic pianists, reggae singers, and instrumentalists. Any contribution related to the psalms is welcomed.*

10. Nov. 6

Plenary: Exile and Restoration

Read Exodus 25-40; Ezekiel; Isaiah 40-66; Ezra-Nehemiah; *HBS*, pp. 235-295; *ANE*, pp. 275-293; *Atlas*, pp. 122-130 .

Group: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Online Forum: “List at least five major proposals of restoration reflected in the Hebrew Bible. Compare two of them, assessing their contributions to the community of Israel.”

*Call for Participation: The next week’s session on Psalms needs volunteers who would share how their tradition has used the psalms. We need musicians including classic pianists, reggae singers, and instrumentalists. Any contribution related to the psalms is welcomed.*

11. Nov. 13

Plenary: Psalms through the Centuries

Read Psalms 1-19, 46-89, 104, 137-150. Skim through the rest of the Psalms; *HBS*, pp. 297-319; *ANE*, pp. 324-342 (esp. 324-328), 403-412.

Group: Psalm 89

Online Forum: “How is God’s kingship portrayed in the book of Psalms? How is it different from or similar to other depictions of God in the Old Testament?”

12. Nov. 20

Plenary: Wisdom

Read Job 1-14, 38-42, Proverbs 1-9, Ecclesiastes; *HBS*, pp. 319-328; *ANE*, pp. 343-383.

Group: Job 42:7-17

Online Forum: “Is wisdom useful or hurtful?” (For this forum, you may be asked to form a pair and collaboratively prepare a one-page single-spaced script of conversation concerning the utility or futility of wisdom.)

Nov. 27 Thanksgiving

13. Dec. 4

Plenary: Daniel and Apocalyptic

Read: Daniel; *HBS*, pp. 328-335; *ANE*, pp. 134-149.

Group: Daniel 7

Online Forum: “Which do you think describes Daniel better, a sage or a prophet? What examples can you offer from the biblical and extrabiblical sources to support your contention?”

14. Dec. 11

Final Exam

*Merry Christmas/Happy Chanukkah!*

## **GRADING: PERCENTAGES**

### **GRADING SYSTEM**

94-100%	A		
90-93%	A-	77-79%	C+
		74-76%	C
87-89%	B+	70-73%	C-
84-86%	B		
80-83%	B-	68-69%	D+

64-67%

D

63 and below

NC

***NYTS Grade Definitions:***

A: Conspicuous excellence, showing a thorough mastery of the material, critical use of sources, exceptional creativity, constructive imagination, outstanding oral and written expression and organization.

A-: Exceptional graduate-level attainment, with conspicuous excellence in most respects, but not uniformly so.

B+: Superior level of attainment, marked by consistently good work, advanced understanding of the material, clear logic, circumspect judgment, originality and clear communication.

B: Good work, with general indication of constructive ability in application.

B-: Satisfactory achievement, with assignments completed accurately and on time, but without significant evidence of excellence or distinction.

C+: Satisfactory understanding of course contents, with significant limitations in analysis, communication, integration, or class participation.

C: Minimal understanding of course content, with significant limitations in several of the following: analysis, communication, integration, and class participation.

C-: Minimum understanding of course content, with significant limitations in all of the following: analysis, communications, integration, and class participation. (NOTE: A grade of C- or higher must be received in order for a required course to be considered successfully completed.)

D: Faithful participation and effort, but inability to grasp the most important essentials of the course

NC: Work is unacceptable and fails to meet requirements.

Any student who receives an NC for a required course in the curriculum will be required to repeat the course in order to graduate. When a student has repeated such a course, both the original grade of NC and the subsequent grade will be recorded on the transcript and will be factored into the overall student GPA. Students repeating a course must pay full tuition.

F: Failure due to Plagiarism.

I: An "Incomplete" may be given when a student is unable to complete all assigned work within the particular semester. Incompletes are only granted at the discretion of the Professor, for any period of time up to 90 days, and must be reported on the appropriate form that is available from the Registrar's office. After 90 days, an Incomplete will automatically be converted to an NC.

X: Final materials presented to the Professor; but final grade not yet submitted.

P: Pass; automatically given for a small number of courses that are so designated in the curriculum. Students may so designate additional elective courses, with permission of the Professor. A "P" has no effect on a student's GPA.

### **NYTS INCOMPLETE GRADES POLICY**

Individual professors at their discretion may grant a student an extension for any course for up to 90 days following the last session of that course. The exact amount of time allowed for the extension is to be set at the time when it is granted. The student is expected to complete all outstanding work for the course within this period. A student seeking an extension must fill out entirely the appropriate Extension Form found in the Office of the Registrar or online in Moodle, and must have it signed and dated by the course professor prior to the end of the semester. Any student who has been granted an extension receives an "Incomplete" on his or her transcript until such time as the work is completed and the faculty member turns in the regular grade. Extensions are granted strictly at the discretion of the professor and are not to be considered automatic by students.

At the conclusion of the extension period that is identified on the completed Extension Form, all outstanding work is to be submitted and a grade turned in by the appropriate professor to the Office of the Registrar. Extensions beyond 90 days can only be granted by the Academic Dean with the approval of the professor of the course, and only on the basis of extenuating circumstances. A new Extension Form must be completed with the Dean's signature and with an identified expected date of completion. If no grade is turned in either at the end of the 90-day period or at the end of the additional Extension (when granted), the professor for the course must turn in a new grade to replace the "Incomplete" on the student's transcript. If sufficient work has not been completed for a passing grade, the student will receive No Credit for the course. If the course is required in the curriculum, the student must repeat it. A grade of No Credit will not be removed from a transcript at a later date, even if the course is repeated and a passing grade for the repeated course is earned.

### **NYTS ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY (Plagiarism)**

One of the primary learning objectives of the Seminary is to help students acquire the gift of discernment—the ability to think critically and ethically. Essential to this task is the requirement that students learn how to investigate the thoughts of others, to organize these thoughts in a fresh way, and, in combination with one's own thoughts and experiences, to communicate one's findings.

It is with this conviction that the Seminary does *NOT* permit the presentation of someone else's thoughts as one's own. Books, articles and other materials used in the presentation of assignments must be credited properly in the footnotes/endnotes and the bibliography. Sentences and a paragraph cannot be copied without proper attribution, copying more than one paragraph is strongly discouraged, and entire pages is not allowed. A student may not turn in a paper written in part or entirely by another, claiming it to be solely his or her own work. It is the Faculty's



view that plagiarism is not only personally dishonest, but also a violation of the integrity of the practice of ministry.

Plagiarism, in those instances where the original source cannot be located, may be determined by three members of the Faculty, who report their judgment of plagiarism to the full Faculty, and have their judgement of plagiarism confirmed by the majority vote of the full Faculty. Plagiarism may result in automatic course failure and/or dismissal from the Seminary.

Copies of the full Seminary policy on plagiarism are available upon request from the Office of the Academic Dean.

## **TECHNOLOGY NEEDED**

All students should own or have access to a computer in order to take this course. Students can have difficulty accessing and using course materials and communicating with faculty and staff if their equipment does not meet the following minimum standards.

### **MAC OS X**

*Processor:* G4 or greater

*Memory:* 512 or greater

Wifi, LAN Card

*Modem:* 56 Kbps minimum

### **PC**

Windows 98 or Better

*Processor:* Pentium 4 or higher

*Memory (RAM):* 512 MB or higher

Wifi, LAN Card

*Modem:* 56 Kbps minimum

### **Software**

*Web Browser:* Mozilla Firefox 3.0 for best experience on Moodle

*E-mail:* Must be able to handle attachments. **Note: We do not recommend the use of AOL.**

*Microsoft Office Products:* MS Word 2002 (or above)

### **Bible Software (not required, but useful):**

<http://www.logos.com> and <http://www.bibleworks.com>

### **Internet Media Software (required)**

Adobe Reader: free download:

(Enables students to view and print .pdf files.)

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

Pdf maker: free download:

[www.pdf24.org](http://www.pdf24.org)

## **Internet Media Software (not required, but useful)**

QuickTime: (media player) - free download:

<http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>

RealPlayer: (media player) - free download:

<http://www.real.com/player/>

Windows Media Player - free download:

<http://www.microsoft.com>

Macromedia Flash Player: free download:

<http://www.macromedia.com/downloads/>

## **Internet Service Providers (ISP)**

A reliable Internet connection, which includes direct access to the worldwide web is needed.

## **STUDENT COURSE EVALUATION**

Students have the opportunity to provide feedback throughout the course through e-mail, telephone, and on-campus appointments. Near the end of the course, students will complete an anonymous online course evaluation form. Since the results contribute to improving course design and presentation, it is important that students be honest, specific, and constructive in their evaluations. Please take time to provide this input. Students can access the online evaluation in the course in Moodle (click on link).

## **RELEVANT JOURNALS**

*Bible Review*

*Biblica*

*Biblical Theology Bulletin*

*The Bible Translator*

*Biblical Archaeology Review*

*Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research*

*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

*Expository Times*

*Harvard Theological Review*

*Interpretation*

*Israel Exploration Journal*

*Journal of Biblical Literature*

*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*

*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*

*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*

*Journal of Semitic Studies*

*Literature and Theology*  
*Semeia*  
*Vetus Testamentum*  
*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Rogers 1926 *Cuneiform Parallels to the OT*  
Sandmel 1963 *The Hebrew Scriptures*  
Sasson 1995 *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*  
Soggin 1976 *Introduction to the Old Testament*  
Soulen 1981 *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*  
Von Soden 1994 *The Ancient Orient*  
Whybray 1995 *Introduction to the Pentateuch*

*From time to time, the professor may be dealing in greater depth with particular concerns or issues that emerge during the course of the semester, and adjusting items in the syllabus whenever necessary. The instructor will keep you informed of any changes.*