

RELG 313: Introduction To The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)

The Rev. Dale C. Hathaway, Instructor

Fall 2014, August 25 – December 8, 2014

CRN: 12542, Section:001
Winthrop University
Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies
Classroom: West Center 214
MW 9:30-10:45 a.m.
3 Credit Hours

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Office Hours: MW 11:00-12:00

1 Course Description

The following syllabus is subject to change. Any modifications will be communicated clearly to the students and posted on /Blackboard.

As an introduction this course will provide a variety of tools to enable the student to appreciate and to read with insight the Hebrew Scriptures. As it is about the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) it will emphasize the reading of the text through a variety of lenses that will include but not be limited to the more familiar Christian (New Testament) lens. A major goal of the course is simply to read large sections of the text because this is one of the best ways to become familiar with an original text. The course intends to help the students gain a general familiarity with the contents of the Hebrew Scriptures which span an enormous time frame and include a wide variety of different genre. The course will provide basic tools for interpreting the text and a framework for developing more sophisticated abilities in interpretation.

2 Course Goals

2.1 Student Learning Outcomes and Course Goals

The successful student in RELG 313 will:

- will be able to investigate the historical-cultural context of the text.
- will be able to tell the basic narrative of the people of Israel, knowing key elements up to the time of the New Testament
- will be able to give an explanation of the meaning of a passage of scripture from at least 3 different perspectives
- understand that there are a variety of methods for interpreting the Bible.
- Understand and differentiate literary themes and forms in the Old Testament text.
- understand that the interpretation of an ancient text requires relating the ancient context to its contemporary meaning
- will be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of essential biblical interpretation methods.

2.2 GNED Requirements - University Level Competencies

RELG 313 fulfills the GNED requirements of Historical Perspectives and Humanities and Arts. The following goals will be met by this course:

RELG 313 helps students make progress toward the following University Level Competencies whereby Winthrop graduates :

think critically and solve problems by applying various methods of interpretation, the students will gain skills in critical problem solving.

are personally and socially responsible as students wrestle with the deeper questions raised by reading a sacred text, the students will reflect on their own approach to personal and social responsibility.

understand the interconnected nature of the world and the time in which they live as the students learn to relate the meaning of an ancient text to their own contemporary lives.

communicate effectively week by week in individual presentations and periodically through writing and exam assignments the students will expand their ability to communicate effectively.

3 Texts

Corrine L. Carvalho. *Encountering Ancient Voices: A Guide to Reading the Old Testament*. 2nd Ed. Saint Paul, Minnesota: University of Saint Thomas, 2010. (ISBN: 9781599820507) Required

The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003. (ISBN: 9780687278329) Recommended

4 Course Requirements – Assignments:

4.1 Presentations (4)

Each student will give four presentations to the class based on the detailed readings found in Carvalho. There will be sign up sheets available in shared Google Drive documents. Details of the assignment and the grading rubrics will be provided.

4.2 Weekly reading logs

Each week the student will submit a basic response to the assigned readings through a form on Google Docs. These will be due by noon on Sunday. Students will be able to review their peers responses through a shared document.

4.3 Written Assignment

Each student will write an interpretive paper of 2,000-3,000 words on a passage from the Hebrew Scriptures not specifically covered in Carvalho's text. The paper will require outside research and the application of one or more of the hermeneutical methods introduced in the class. Details of the assignment and the grading rubrics will be provided.

4.4 Examinations (3 including the final)

The three exams will cover the readings, and the topics covered in class.

4.5 Quizzes

Brief quizzes will be given unannounced in class from time to time. They will cover the reading material assigned up to that point. They will be no makeups given.

4.6 Grading Formula

%	Weight of assessments
10	Class Participation
5	Weekly reading log
5	Quizzes
30	Presentations (4)
20	Exams (2)
15	Paper
15	Final Exam
100	

4.7 Grading Scale:

A = 93-100

A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89

B = 83-86

B- = 80-82

C+ = 77-79

C = 73-76

C- = 70-72

D+ = 67-69

D = 63-66

D- = 60-62

4.8 Academic Success Center

Winthrop's Academic Success Center is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students achieve academic excellence, such as tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), group and individual study spaces, and academic coaching. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. Please contact the ASC at 803-323-3929 or success@winthrop.edu. For more information on ASC services, please visit www.winthrop.edu/success. Note that these services are not just remedial or for students who are failing. Good students become even better by becoming more focused on what makes them successful.

4.9 Students With Disabilities

Winthrop University is dedicated to providing access to education. If you have a disability and require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 323-3290. Once you have your official notice of accommodations from Services for Students with Disabilities, please inform me as early as possible in the semester.

4.10 Office of Nationally Competitive Awards

Winthrop's *Office of Nationally Competitive Awards* (ONCA) identifies and assists highly motivated and talented students to apply for nationally and internationally competitive awards, scholarships, fellowships, and unique opportunities both at home and abroad. ONCA gathers and disseminates award information and deadlines across the campus community, and serves as a resource for students, faculty, and staff throughout the nationally competitive award nomination and application process. ONCA is located in Dinkins 222. Please fill out an online information form at the bottom of the ONCA webpage www.winthrop.edu/onca and email onca@winthrop.edu for more information.

4.11 Student Code Of Conduct

- Class attendance is required. I will take attendance on a regular basis.
- University policy is that you will not receive credit for the course if you miss more than 25% of the class. Instead you will receive a grade of N (if you withdraw from the course) or an F or U in accord with the University policy. Please note that there are no automatically excused absences. "Cuts" are built in to provide for sickness, emergencies, sports travel and other engagements that require your absence – don't abuse them. If you have a difficulty that might lead to excessive absence, please contact me about it.
- There will be no makeup for the occasional quizzes.
- Arriving late for class is rude and disruptive. Please don't do it. You may be counted absent.
- Regardless of absence or lateness, you are responsible for all course material and requirements.
- Reading assignments are meant to be completed before class so that you can effectively participate in discussion. You will be quizzed on your reading.
- Each student will be expected to arrive in class each day prepared to discuss the assigned reading. Participation includes not only class preparation and involvement but attentive attendance.

- Academic misconduct: As noted in the Student Conduct Code: “Responsibility for good conduct rests with students as adult individuals.” The policy on student academic misconduct is outlined in the “Student Conduct Code Academic Misconduct Policy” in the online Student Handbook which can be accessed at <http://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/studentconduct/StudentHandbook.pdf>. Dishonesty is a serious offense in all its forms, whether lying about reasons for an absence or missed assignment or cheating on a test or misrepresenting borrowed material as your own. It can result in a failing grade on a test, assignment, or the course, or even dismissal from the university.
- I can see no reason for the use of cell phones during this class. My policy follows that of the division of Arts and Sciences found at <http://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/artscience/PolicyForHandHeldTech-April2014.pdf>.
- Laptops and tablets, on the other hand, will certainly be useful and sometimes essential in this class. There is clearly a temptation to be doing something other than course related browsing. My expectation is that you will only use your computer for course work. To do otherwise is to show disrespect for both teachers and students in the class and such disrespect will reduce your participation grade.
- You should be familiar with the full policy on this technology in the classroom for the College of Arts & Sciences.

4.12 Important Dates:

September 24: Exam 1

October 3: Interpretive Exercise Due

October 17-20: Fall Break

October 22: Course Withdrawal Deadline

October 27: Exam 2

November 26 - November 30: Thanksgiving Holiday

December 16: Final Exam, 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM

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Note		Theme	Reading: Carvalho	Reading: Bible	Assignments
<i>First day of class</i>	Wed, Aug 27, 2014	Introductions	pp. 5-26		
<i>Labor Day</i>	Mon, Sep 1, 2014				
	Wed, Sep 3, 2014		27-40, 65-66	Genesis 11:27-35:29	
	Mon, Sep 8, 2014	Patriarchs			
	Wed, Sep 10, 2014				Presentations
	Mon, Sep 15, 2014	Exodus	67-75, 86-87	Exodus 1-14	
	Wed, Sep 17, 2014				Presentations
	Mon, Sep 22, 2014	Covenant	88-97, 119-126	Lev 9-19, Deut 4-7, 31-34	
	Wed, Sep 24, 2014				Exam
	Mon, Sep 29, 2014	Conquest	127-135, 149-151	Josh 1-12, Judg 6-8, 13-16	Presentations
	Wed, Oct 1, 2014				Presentations
<i>Interim grades due</i>	Mon, Oct 6, 2014	Monarchy	152-160, 188-190, 191-203, 215-217	1 Sam 1-5: 8-10; 16-21	
	Wed, Oct 8, 2014			1 Sam 31-2 Sam 11	Presentations
	Mon, Oct 13, 2014				
	Wed, Oct 15, 2014				Presentations
<i>Fall break?</i>	Mon, Oct 20, 2014				
	Wed, Oct 22, 2014	Poetry - Stories	218-227, 240-241, 402-410, 418-419	Psalms: Books 1 and 2 and Psalms 120-150	
<i>Course withdrawal deadline</i>	Fri, Oct 24, 2014				
	Mon, Oct 27, 2014			Job 1-7, 38-42	Exam
	Wed, Oct 29, 2014				Presentations
	Mon, Nov 3, 2014	Prophets - Disaster	242-267	Amos, Hosea	
	Wed, Nov 5, 2014				Presentations
	Mon, Nov 10, 2014		268-273, 297-298	Isaiah 1-11, 40-49, 60-66	
	Wed, Nov 12, 2014				Presentations

	Mon, Nov 17, 2014	Exile	299-303, 336-337, 344-352, 368-371		
	Wed, Nov 19, 2014			Jeremiah 1-10, 37-45	Presentations
	Mon, Nov 24, 2014				
<i>Thanksgiving break</i>	Wed, Nov 26, 2014				
	Mon, Dec 1, 2014	Wisdom - Beyond	372-383, 400-401, 420-427, 435-437, 442-443	Gen 1-11, Dan 10-12	Presentations
	Wed, Dec 3, 2014				Paper Due
<i>Last day of class</i>	Mon, Dec 8, 2014				
<i>Study day</i>	Tue, Dec 9, 2014				
<i>Final @ 11:30</i>	Tue, Dec 16, 2014				Exam