

ALLIANCE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Department of Old Testament
Spring 2021

COURSE: Wisdom Literature
OT 640. NA. English Text
OT 740. NA. Hebrew Text
Thursdays 6:15 - 9:10 PM: Zoom

PROFESSOR: Cleotha Robertson, Ph.D., D.Min.
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OFFICE HOURS: Monday 5:00 – 6:00 PM ; 9:15 - 10:30
Tuesday 5:00 – 5:30 PM ; 9:15 - 10:30
Thursday By Appointment Only

TEXTS: Required (English and Hebrew)

1. Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Book and Psalms*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005.
2. Kidner, Derek. *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes: An Introduction to Wisdom Literature*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 1985.
3. Longman, Tremper III. *How to Read the Proverbs*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 2002.
4. Lucas, Ernest C. *Exploring the Old Testament: Volume 3: A Guide to the The Psalms and Wisdom Literature*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 2003.

Required (Hebrew)

1. A modern translation of the Bible (NET, NASB, NIV, NJPS, NRSV or RSV). The NET Bible offers extensive textual notes and is available for use online or as a free download from www.bible.org.
2. A Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon. Acceptable lexicons include those by, F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, (Oxford or Hendrickson) or William L. Holladay (Eerdmans). Available from Christian Book Distributors (www.christianbook.com).
3. Elliger, Karl, and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Minor ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1984.

4. Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS: Critical Apparatus. Masora, Accents, Unusual Letters & Other Markings*. Third Edition. N. Richland Hills, TX. Bibal Press, 1995.

Recommended Textbooks and Additional Resources

1. Soulen, Richard N. and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. Fourth Edition: Westminster John Knox, 2011.
2. Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Terms Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing and Publishing, ed. John Grossman and Alice Bennett 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.
3. Vyhmeister, Nancy J. *Quality Research papers for students of Religion and Theology: Your Indispensable Guide to Writing*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.
4. Walton, John H. *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to be an exegetical study of the books and themes of Wisdom Literature. In this course, particular attention will be given to the exegesis of Wisdom Literature. The student will be exposed to the basic exegetical skills, issues of interpretation, current issues of Old Testament interpretation and broader biblical world with its influence on the study of Wisdom Literature.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: (Hebrew and English)

1. Class Preparation and participation constitutes 10% of your final grade. Pre-class preparation includes review of class of material and completion of assigned readings (according to the class schedule). Class attendance is an important component of this class and the seminary experience. Learning occurs in the context of classroom instruction and small group exercises. If this time is lost, it cannot be reduplicated. Therefore, absence will negatively impact the goals of this class. Each student will submit a reading log that will include all the required reading assignments for the course.

2. Each class is 3 hours in length. The middle portion of the class will be devoted to work in small groups. Small group discussions will be based on assigned readings and exercises given by the instructor. Students are expected to have completed the small group assigned readings before coming to class.

3. A Midterm Examination will be given during Session 6. This examination will cover topics covered in the assigned reading, classroom discussions and lectures. The format of the examination will include the identification of terms and essay questions. The examination will constitute 30% of your final grade. The Final Examination will be during April 25. The format will be identical to that of the Midterm Examination.

4. Book Chapter Review. A three page paper will be due on Session 8. Instruction will be distributed in Class. You will receive a handout that will help you format and write your paper. Your paper can contain a bibliography, footnotes or endnotes.

5 Hebrew Students Only:

i. There will be 4 exercises that will involve parsing and examination portions of the Hebrew text of the Psalms.

Exercise 1: Session 3: Due Session 5
Exercise 2: Session 5: Due Session 7
Exercise 3: Session 7: Due Session 9
Exercise 4: Session 9: Due Session 11

ii.. Exegesis Paper. An 5-8 page paper (due Session 12) on a passage of the student's choice from the Hebrew text of the Psalms. Students should follow the steps found in the "Short Guide for Sermon Exegesis" given in, Stuart, Douglas. Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors. 3rd ed. Louisville, KY; London: Westminster/John Knox, 2001. Students are advised to select and begin work on their passage as early as possible in the semester. Students should meet with the professor early on in the semester to discuss their choice of passage and available resources. Evaluation will be based on written clarity and organization, ability to follow assignment instructions, argumentation, degree of insight, and judicious use of primary and secondary sources. Your paper must contain a bibliography, footnotes or endnotes. Your paper must be submitted both in paper and electronic form. The exegesis paper is due on Session 13.

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS:

All the goals below are to be carried out in an atmosphere of the highest scholarly standards of conduct.

Student Learning Goals. The Student will:	Student Learning Goals. The Student will:	Student Learning Goals. The Student will:	Student Learning Goals . The Student will:
(critical thinking)	To acquire an understanding of the content and themes of Psalms as well as of the historical background necessary for understanding the book.	Academically Excellent	Quizzes 1-4; Exegesis Paper; Reflection Paper
(written communication)	To introduce the student to some of the guidelines for using prophetic literature in the church today.	Academically Excellent	Quizzes 1-4; Midterm and Final Examinations
(critical thinking)	To cultivate an ongoing love for the Hebrew Scriptures.	Intentionally Diverse & Globally Engaged	Quizzes 1-4; Midterm and Final Examinations
(critical thinking)	To acquire an awareness of the history of interpretation of Psalms, including current issues in scholarship.	Academically Excellent	Quizzes 1-4; Midterm and Final Examinations
(written communication)	To expose the student the basics of Hebrew poetry.	Personally Transformed	Quizzes 1-4; Midterm and Final Examinations;
(written communication) (oral communication)	To gain experience in the analysis and reading of Hebrew poetry.	Academically Excellent	Quizzes 1-4; Exegesis Paper; Reflection Paper
(information literacy)	To expose the student to the resources necessary for the exegesis of the Old Testament	Academically Excellent	Exegesis Paper; Reflection Paper

CLASS POLICIES:

1. Attendance: You are permitted one hour of absence for each hour the course meets during the week; however, you must contact the professor via email or voice mail before the end of class. All assignments are due on the date designated.
2. Late assignment: No late assignments accepted without prior arrangements and discussion with the professor. Late assignments will be assessed a grade penalty for lateness.
3. Style Guide for written work: Your papers must be on white paper and black ink. Fonts must be 12 point and double-spaced. The style for citations must be in Turabian format. All papers must contain either footnotes or endnotes for your resources. All papers using footnotes and endnotes must have a bibliography.
4. Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: In a Christian college academic integrity is particularly important. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing (the unacknowledged use of other people's words or ideas as though they were your own) will be subject to the penalties as described in the plagiarism policy in the college catalog and student handbook.
5. Reasonable Accommodation: Any student eligible for and requesting academic accommodations due to a disability is required to provide a letter of accommodation from the Office of Disabilities Support Services within the first six weeks of the beginning of classes.
6. Electronic Devices: It is expected that ALL electronic devices be MUTED during class time. Do not answer phone calls or text messages during class.
7. Academic Quality: Remember that grades for assignments are based not only on the completion of the assignment but the quality of work produced. The higher the quality of skills and abilities demonstrated, in areas such as expression and depth of thought, organization, writing, research, reporting, and observation, the higher the grade given to the assignment. All written assignments will be completed using the Turabian style guide.
8. Communication with Instructor: Nyack College email will be the primary mode of communication with students, unless specified otherwise. Please check your email regularly.
9. Writing Center: All Nyack College students seeking assistance with pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing their written assignments are encouraged to use the resources available through the Writing Center. Sites are available at the Rockland graduate and undergraduate campuses, the Manhattan campus, and phone consultation is available for off-campus graduate students.

GRADING SCALE:

Grades for this class are calculated on a total point's basis for each category of grading. Each category is assigned a percentage of the total grade. All grades are calculated based on the following scale of

Letter Grade\Percentile Equivalents:

A	=	100% - 94%	C	=	77% - 73%
A-	=	93% - 90%	C-	=	72% - 70%
B+	=	89% - 88%	D+	=	69% - 68%
B	=	87% - 83%	D	=	67% - 63%
B-	=	82% - 80%	D-	=	62% - 60%
C+	=	79% - 78%	F	=	59% - 0%

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:

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Class Session	Date	Class Topic and Requirements
Session 1	Jan 21	Introduction to the Course and Course Requirements
Session 2	Jan 28	The Book of Proverbs: Overall Structure and Major Themes Reading: Lucas, 79-89; Kidner 18-36; Longman chs. 1-3; Estes 213-269
Session 3	Feb 4	The Book of Proverbs: Examination of Language and Theology Reading: Lucas 91-114; Kidner 37-55; Longman chs. 4,5.
Session 4	Feb 11	Job: The Structure of the Book of Job and Issues of Historicity Reading: Lucas 117-129; Kidner 56-74; Longman chs. 6,7; Estes 11-79
Session 5	Feb 18	The Book of Job: Continued Reading: Lucas 130-143; Kidner 75-89; Longman chs. 8, 9; Estes 80-139
Session 6	Feb 25	Midterm Examination
Session 7	March 4	The Book of Ecclesiastes: Overall Structure and Themes Reading: Lucas 145-156; Kidner 90-104, Longman chs.10,11; Estes 271-333

Class Session	Date	Class Topic and Requirements
Session 8	March 11	The Book of Ecclesiastes: Authorship and Date Reading: Lucas 157-171; Kidner 105-124;125-157; Estes 334-392
Session 9	March 18	Song of Solomon: Structure and Examination of Content Reading: Lucas 175-188, Longman chs. Longman chs.12; Estes 393-438
Session 10	March 28	Song of Solomon: Continued Reading: Lucas 189-199 , Longman 155-163
Session 11	April 8	Psalms: Wisdom Themes in the Psalter; Jesus and the Psalms Reading: Lucas 28-64; Estes 141-177
Session 12	April 15	The Use, Importance and Characteristics of Biblical Poetry Reading: Lucas 1-27; 65-78; Estes 178-199
Session 13	April 22	Final Examination
Session 14	April 29	Course Review and Major Themes

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1) Old Testament Introductions

Arnold, Bill T. and Bryan E. Beyer. *Encountering the Old Testament: A Christian Survey*. Grand Rapids. Baker Books: 1999.

Childs, Brevard S. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1979.

Craigie, Peter C. *The Old Testament: Its Background, Growth, and Content*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1986.

Dillard, Raymond., and Tremper Longman. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994.

Driver, S.R. *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*. International Theological Library. 8th edition. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons 1898.

Gottwald, Norman K. *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1985.

Harrison, Roland K. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969.

Hill, Andrew E., and John Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. 3rd Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009.

LaSor, William Sanford et al. *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: 1996.

Pfeiffer, Robert H. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Revised ed. New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1948

Rendtorff, Rolf. *The Old Testament: An Introduction*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1986.

Unger, Merrill F. *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1961.

2) Commentary Guides

Childs, Brevard S. *Old Testament Books for Pastor and Teacher*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1977.

Goldingay, John. *Old Testament Commentary Survey*. 1991 Edition. RTSF Booklets, 12. Leicester: Religious & Theological Studies Fellowship, 1991.

Longman, Tremper, III. *Old Testament Commentary Survey*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007.

Stuart, Douglas. *A Guide to Selecting and Using Biblical Commentaries*. Dallas, TX: Word, 1990.

3) Old Testament Resources

Bauer, David R. *An Annotated Guide to Biblical Resources for Ministry*. Hendricksons Publishers. Peabody, Massachusetts: 2003

Beale, G.K., ed. *Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New: The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts*. Grand Rapids. Baker Books, 1994.

Danker, Frederick. W. *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study*. Revised & Expanded Edition. Minneapolis. Fortress Press, 1993.

Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. Grand Rapids.

Zondervan, 2001.

Greidvanus, Sidney. *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature*. Grand Rapids. Eerdmans, 1988.

Hamilton, John H., Victor Matthews and Mark W. Chavalas. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Downers Grove, Illinois. InterVarsity Press: 2000.

Kaiser, Walter C. *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*. Chicago. Moody Press, 1985.

_____. *A History of Israel. From the Bronze Age Through the Jewish Wars*. Nashville. Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998.

_____. *Hard Sayings of the Old Testament*. Downers Grove, Illinois. InterVarsity Press, 1988.

Soulen, Richard N. and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 3rd Edition, Revised and Expanded. Louisville. Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Traina, Robert A. *Methodical Bible Study. A New Approach to Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids. Zondervan, 1980.

Wood, Leon J. *A Survey of Israel's History*. Revised by David O'Brien. Grand Rapids. Zondervan, 1986.