

HARDING UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL of RELIGION
Transforming Leaders

Summer Syllabus
Advanced Introduction to the Old Testament
Religion 5001
Summer 2009
July 13-17

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Please feel free to contact me or to come by my office if you have questions or special problems.

SCHEDULE NOTE:

We will meet an extra 30 minutes each afternoon from 1:00 to 4:15 P.M. Monday through Friday, and we will not meet on Saturday.

PURPOSE:

The purpose for this course is to help students to be aware of the major issues raised in the careful study of the Old Testament in the modern world. In order to better understand the material in the Old Testament, it is important to know the historical background, context, time period being addressed, authorship, and issues that are considered. For many of these questions, there are different points of view suggested by different scholars. It is important to know why scholars differ and to be able to explain this for our lessons or Bible studies.

TEXTS:

Here is a brief explanation of why these particular books are used and why they are important. You need to read each one carefully before the class begins. This way, you will be prepared to participate and to benefit from class discussion. If questions arise about your reading, you will be able to ask them during class time together. Please remember that just because I select a book for this class does not mean that I endorse or agree with everything in the book. We need to know what others are saying even if we do not agree with all they say. In some cases, our reading may generate discussion about alternative views or better ways of understanding this material.

Robert Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative, Basic Books, 1981.

This book is a groundbreaking study in the Narrative approach to the Old Testament. Alter was one of the first to show how reading the Bible from a literary perspective might

help to understand it in new ways. This approach has become an important area of Old Testament studies, and this book is a classic in this area.

Lawrence Boadt, Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction, Paulist Press, 1984.

Boadt gives a good combination of historical background, survey of the content, as well as consideration of the message of the material in the Old Testament. Boadt presents this material from a main line critical position, and is a good representative of this point of view. The author is currently working on a revised edition of this text.

Raymond Dillard & Tremper Longman, An Introduction to the Old Testament, Zondervan, 2nd ed. 2006

Dillard and Longman look at each book individually and give the major issues involved. They present this material from an evangelical position and are a good recent example of this perspective.

Walter Brueggemann, An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination, Westminster John Knox, 2003.

This work by one of the leading writers on Old Testament topics gives an introduction concerned with the theological message of the books of the Old Testament. This will give us an additional component to supplement our other readings.

Textbooks are available through our book services on campus. You can order them by email (bdavid@hugsr.edu), phone (901-432-7735 or 800-366-7481), or fax (901-761-1358).

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students should be able to outline and explain the major viewpoints on introductory issues of the various Old Testament books. These would include authorship, date, historical background, and message of each book.
2. Students should be able to trace the development of the different views and methods of approaching the Old Testament. How did these positions arise, and how did the various groups come to their present positions on these issues.
3. Students should be familiar with representative scholars from the various modern views toward the Old Testament. Who are the major people involved in the rise of these issues, and who are the major people today?
4. Students should be able to apply the general principles of introduction to the understanding of particular books. We do not want to leave this material in the ancient past. How is it important in ministry, in teaching, preaching and working with others today?

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Class Attendance. This is always important, but even more so in a short course where we have limited time together.
2. Reading of all assigned materials, participation in class discussion, and completing online responses as assigned (10 %)
3. A mid-term exam. (30 % of final grade)
4. A research paper due August 3, 2007. (30 % of final grade)
5. A Final Exam. (30 % of final grade)

ONLINE COMPONENT:

1. Go to www.harding.edu and log onto pipeline. On the page for this class there will be a discussion section.
2. You will need to read Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative, and post a 500-word critical evaluation of the book. Do not summarize the book, but give your response.
3. Read the other student responses and give at least two 250-word responses to other student reviews.
4. This should be completed the week before the class begins on July 13. (10 % of the grade)

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty is expected of all students at HUGSR. Any form of cheating, copying, or dishonesty is unacceptable. Plagiarism is another form of academic dishonesty that can be problematic because students are not always sure what this involves. For a brief explanation with examples, everyone should read the following webpage carefully:

www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml

LIBRARY SERVICES

If you have not taken Advanced Theological Research (5990) or took it more than a year ago, go to the HUGSR Web site (www.hugsr.edu) for information concerning library services to students. Under the “library” tab you will find a link to and instructions for searching the HUGSR online catalog (called Quest). There are also instructions for using the following databases available through the library: OCLC FirstSearch, EBSCOhost, Infotrac, and Religious and Theological Abstracts. Contact the library for passwords to these databases. Also available are the research guides distributed in 5990. These annotated bibliographies list basic tools you will find helpful in your research.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

It is the policy of Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact Dr. Steve McLeod, the Registrar, at (901) 761-1353

Old Testament Introduction Outside Reading List

The following material is required reading as a supplement to the textbooks and class lectures. You will be asked to sign a statement that you have completed this reading. This material will be covered on the final exam. All readings are available at the reserve desk in the HUGSR Library.

Rolf Rendtorff, "The Paradigm is Changing: Hopes—and Fears," Biblical Interpretation 1(1993):34-53.

Rolf Rendtorff, "What We Miss By Taking the Bible Apart," Bible Review (February 1998): 42-44.

Walter Kaiser, "The Crisis in Expository Preaching Today," Preaching (Sept/Oct. 1995): 4-12.

John Rogerson, "Biblical Criticism and the Churches: A Plus or a Minus?" Expository Times 113(2002):255-258.

The following Bibliography is not required reading. These are additional references that you may find helpful on some of the topics covered in the class. In addition so recent works, I have included some older works that are still important resources.

Gleason Archer, (revised by Dillon Burroughs) A Survey of Old Testament Introduction, 2007.

Brevard S. Childs, Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture, 1979.

Walter Brueggemann, An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination. 2003.

Ronald E. Clements, A Century of Old Testament Interpretation 1975.

John J. Collins, Introduction to the Hebrew Bible, 2004.

Michael D. Coogan, The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures, 2005.

Richard Coggins, Introducing the Old Testament, 2nd. Ed. 2001.

Peter C. Craigie, The Old Testament: Its Background, Growth, and Content, 1986.

James L. Crenshaw, Old Testament: Story and Faith : A Literary and Theological Introduction, 1992.

Raymond B. Dillard, & Tremper Longman, An Introduction to the Old Testament, 2nd. Ed. 2006.

Samuel R. Driver, Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, 1897.

Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, 1965.

George Fohrer, Introduction to the Old Testament, 1968.

Gottwald, Norman K. The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction, 1985.

Stephen Harris and Robert Platzner, The Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible, 2007.

R. K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament, 2004.

John Hayes, An Introduction to Old Testament Study, 1979.

Emil G. Kraeling, The Old Testament Since the Reformation, 1955.

Leo G. Perdue, ed., The Blackwell Companion to the Hebrew Bible, 2001.

Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, 1948.

Rolf Rendtorff, The Old Testament: An Introduction, 1985.

John Rogerson, John Parton, David J.A. Clines, Paul Joyce, Beginning Old Testament Study, Chalice Press, 1998.

H. H. Rowley, The Growth of the Old Testament, 1954.

J. Alberto Soggin, Introduction to the Old Testament, 1989.

W. H. Schmidt, Matthew J. O'Connell, David J. Reimer Introduction to the Old Testament, 1999.

A. S. Van Der Woude, The World of the Old Testament, 1989.

Edward J. Young, An Introduction to the Old Testament, 1949.