

Brescia University College

Religious Studies 1026/2226F (Fall 2013)

Introduction to the Old Testament: Religious Themes

Time: Tuesday: 1:30 - 2:30
Thursday: 12:30 - 2:30

Location: Room 153 (MRW)

Course Director: Dr. Theresa O'Donovan
Phone Number: 432-8353 (ext: 28243)
e-mail: todonova@uwo.ca

Office: 177
Office Hours: Mon. 3:20-4:20;
Tues. 3:20-4:20; Wed.. 2:20-3:20
(or by appointment)

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the collection of texts which have become the Hebrew Bible. We will consider in particular the historic-cultural context in which these texts arose and the various genres of literature (legal, prophetic, wisdom and liturgical) represented. The great themes of the Old Testament (the covenant, fidelity, justice and liberation) and their contemporary relevance will be highlighted.

3 hours, 0.5 course

Antirequisites for 1026: The former Religious Studies 010E and all 1020 level Religious Studies courses except Religious Studies 1028F/G and Religious Studies 1029.

Antirequisites for 2226: Religious Studies 1026F/G and 2201F/G.

Course Requirements - 1026:

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|------------------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Article Review | 15% | Mid Term Test | 25% |
| Presentation and Paper | 25% | Final Exam | 35% |

Course Requirements - 2226:

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|------------------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Two Article Reviews | 20% | Mid Term Test | 20% |
| Presentation and Paper | 25% | Final Exam | 35% |

Required Texts:

- Stephen Harris and Robert Platzner. *The Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. McGraw-Hill, 2008.
- Any recent scholarly edition of the bible such as The New American Bible, The New English Bible, The New Revised Standard Version, The New Jerusalem Bible. Paraphrases of the Hebrew scriptures are not acceptable. A link to an on-line New Revised Standard Version can be found on OWL.

Description of Requirements:

Article Review (15%) – RS 1026 Only

Due Date: Nov. 14th

This task requires that you find, read and review a recent article (2006-2013) relating to some aspect of Old Testament studies from the list of scholarly journals below. Spend some time skimming through the journals until you find an article of interest to you, and read the article.

Once you have read and understood the article, prepare your review, 4-5 pages in length.

- 1. Provide a brief summary of the article.** This section should be no more than about one half of your entire review.
- 2. Analyse the article.** For example, is it a survey article or argumentative (on one or another side of a question)? What is new in this article? What is its contribution to understanding the Old Testament?

For additional guidance you might consider some of the following questions, as applicable:

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|---------------------|--|
| <i>Objectives</i> | What does the article set out to do? |
| <i>Concepts</i> | What are the central concepts? Are they clearly defined? |
| <i>Argument</i> | What is the central argument? Are there specific hypotheses? |
| <i>Evidence</i> | Is evidence provided? How adequate is it? |
| <i>Values</i> | Are value positions clear or are they implicit? |
| <i>Contribution</i> | How well does the work advance our knowledge of the subject? |
| <i>Style</i> | How clear is the author's language/style/expression? |
| <i>Conclusion</i> | A brief overall assessment. |

3. What is your response to the article? You may want to comment on what you learned or how your own thinking was challenged. What new way of thinking about the topic in question opened up to you as a result of your reading? Were the questions or concerns which led you to choose this article answered? What questions remain?

Pass in a photocopy of your article along with your review. This copy should include the front page of the journal so that the name of the journal, volume number, date of publication, etc., are obvious.

Journals: The Bible Today. Issues of this journal can be found in the Brescia Library, and there is a link to it on OWL. Articles in this journal tend to be accessible to a general readership. For more challenging articles, consider **Biblical Interpretation**, **Biblical Research** or the **Journal of Biblical Literature**. These three have full-text articles available on-line through the ATLA database.

Reviews of articles from sources other than these will not be accepted.

Two Article Reviews (20%) – RS 2226 Only Due Dates: Oct. 3rd; Nov. 14th

A choice of articles will be made available for each 5-7 page review. See OWL.

1. Provide a *summary* of the article. This section should be no more than about one half of your entire review.

2. Analyse the article considering the following questions, as applicable:

- ◆ *Objectives* What does the article set out to do?
- ◆ *Concepts* What are the central concepts? Are they clearly defined?
- ◆ *Argument* What is the central argument? Are there specific hypotheses?
- ◆ *Evidence* Is evidence provided? How adequate is it?
- ◆ *Values* Are value positions clear or are they implicit?
- ◆ *Contribution* How well does the work advance our knowledge of the subject?
- ◆ *Style* How clear is the author's language/style/expression?
- ◆ *Conclusion* A brief overall assessment.

3. What is *your response to the article*? You may want to comment on what you learned or how your own thinking was challenged. What new way of thinking about the topic in question opened up to you as a result of your reading?

Presentation and Paper (25%)

This task asks you, individually or in small groups, to select from a list of topics representing some aspect of the course, research that topic and present it to the class. Presentation dates and groups should be established within the first two weeks of the course. Your 15-25 minute presentation should be informative, interesting and interactive. It is your chance to engage the class in some dynamic way. This precludes simply reading! Use your creativity and imagination to prepare a presentation that will be memorable and academically oriented.

Each student will submit his/her own 6-8 page formal essay on the subject of the presentation (typewritten, double-spaced, one-inch margins). Your research should encompass a minimum of three (3) academically oriented print and/or Internet sources, in addition to your text book.

As part of your paper, please include *at least* a one page *personal* reflection on the importance of the topic and/or what you learned from your research. Include in both your presentation and paper the relevance of your topic to the great themes of the Old Testament and the significance of your topic to an overall understanding of the Scriptures.

This paper is due within a week of your presentation, with the exception of those who present in the first month of the course. Those students are to submit their paper within two weeks of their presentation. See General Expectations, number 1, below.

Be sure to document your paper carefully. I recommend MLA style (see point three (3) below). You must document your sources for any idea or content you take from any source, and not only that which you quote directly. Failure to document your sources constitutes plagiarism – see point two (2) below.



For students registered in RS 1026, the length of the paper is 6-8 pages. For those registered in 2226, the length is 7-10 pages.

Mid Term Test (1026: 25%; 2226: 20%) and Final Exam (35%)

Definitions, short answers and essays. The use of electronic devices is not permitted during exams.

Mid-Term Test: October 17th ; Final Exam: December exam period.

Instructional Objectives: *Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:*

- ◆ Define key terms relating to Hebrew Bible study
- ◆ Identify key people, events and themes in the history of Israel
- ◆ Assess the interrelationship between text and history
- ◆ Describe the various literary genres found in the Hebrew Scriptures, their purpose and function
- ◆ Appraise the contemporary relevance of biblical texts
- ◆ Apply various scholarly approaches for understanding the Hebrew Bible
- ◆ Critique some of the social, economic, literary and cultural origins of the Hebrew Bible
- ◆ Display critical thinking skills through close reading of the texts and in dialogue with others in the learning community.

General Expectations:

1. Deadlines: Deadlines are firm, and must be met. Absence from class on the day work is due does not constitute an extension. Any extension must be negotiated with the instructor prior to the due date. Any work submitted after the due date for which you have not followed this procedure may be penalized at five (5) percent per day.

It is particularly important that presentation dates are honoured. Failure to present on the specified date will be penalized by not less than 35%.

A medical accommodation for work valued at less than 10% of your total grade can be established with your instructor. For all other cases, please refer to Western's policy regarding "Medical Accommodation Policy," available at <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>.

2. Academic Integrity: One operative assumption of this course, as with all university courses, is that all work you submit for marking will be **your** work. You must **properly cite all the sources** from which you gather your ideas and phrasing, and not only the directly quoted material.

Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Plagiarism may be penalized with a failing grade in the assignment and an offence record that will be held in the Dean's office.

3) Academic Style: There are a number of acceptable styles of documentation: Chicago, MLA and APA. The MLA (Modern Language Association) style is preferred for this course.

The MLA recommends a Name-Page method. A link to an on-line document guide can be found on OWL.

4) Inclusive Language: Use non-sexist, non-discriminatory language in your writing. Language that reinforces sexism (or racism, ethnic bias, homophobia, or other forms of prejudice and discrimination) should not be used. Some general points: In English, there is a tradition of using male terms to refer to the whole human population: "man," "mankind," "he," and "his" are often employed in the generic sense. Since these terms refer also to exclusively male populations, using the same term for the two different meanings is ambiguous. Be specific: if you mean all people, males and females, say so. Instead of man/mankind – use humanity, human beings, human race, people, person(s), individual(s), men and women, women and men.

5) A Respectful Learning Environment: A respectful learning environment is a collective responsibility. We will listen to each other with openness and consideration, respecting individual differences and honouring each person's right to hold her or his own beliefs. This does not preclude discussion and/or disagreement, but does call for a considerate sharing of opinions and ideas.

6) University-wide grading scales:

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| A+ | 90-100 | One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level |
| A | 80-89 | Superior work which is clearly above average |
| B | 70-79 | Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory |
| C | 60-69 | Competent work, meeting requirements |
| D | 50-59 | Fair work, minimally acceptable |
| F | below 50 | Fail |

<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2013/pg104.html>

BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are not grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded under the Medical Documentation heading of the following website: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>. If it is not possible to have an SMC completed by the attending physician/nurse practitioner, the student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation. All documentation is to be submitted to an Academic Advisor.

Whenever possible, requests for academic accommodation should be initiated in advance of due dates, examination dates, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and Academic Advisor in a timely manner.

The full statement of University policy regarding extensions of deadlines or makeup exams can be found at <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2013/pg117.html>

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds may not be considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult an Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping

one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, www.registrar.uwo.ca, for official dates). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

The Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory.

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate.

4. POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Misconduct in the Western Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Student Services Centre, or the Registrar. A claim that “you didn't know it was wrong” is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal signed by the student must be sent to the Department Chair. If the response of the department is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a signed, written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office, or you can consult an Academic Advisor. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar.

6. PREREQUISITES AND ANTIREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Similarly, you will also be deleted from a class list if you have previously taken an antirequisite course unless this has the approval of the Dean. These decisions may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course because you have taken an antirequisite course.

7. SUPPORT SERVICES

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at http://www.brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar_services/index.html. The Western Registrar's website is at <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/index.html>. The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is at <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health @ Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.

September

| Tues. | | | Thurs. | | |
|----------|--|----------------------------|----------|---|--|
| | Topic and Readings | Presentation Possibilities | | Topic and Readings | Presentation Possibilities |
| Sept. 10 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Introduction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course overview and requirements | | Sept. 12 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Overview of Hebrew Scriptures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 1 & Ch.2, 32-37 | |
| Sept. 17 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Overview of Hebrew Scriptures</i> (Continued)</p> | | Sept. 19 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Biblical World</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Hammurabi & Mosaic Code |
| Sept. 24 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Torah</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapters 6 & 7 | | Sept. 26 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Torah</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Torah in Contemporary Jewish Synagogues <p>See for example: http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/judaism/texts/torah.shtml</p> |

October

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|---------|---|---|---------|--|---|
| Oct. 1 | <p><i>An Epic Narrative: The Book of Genesis</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 8 • Genesis 1-11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noah and the Flood: Contemporary Scholarship and Theories | Oct.3 | <p><i>The Book of Genesis</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genesis 17; 25:19-34; 27; 37 <p><u>RS 2226: Article Review Due</u></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah and Hagar: Duelling Mothers |
| Oct. 8 | <p><i>A People Formed: Exodus and Covenant</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 9 • Exodus 1-12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Golden Calf: Covenant Broken and Renewed | Oct. 10 | <p><i>Exodus and Covenant</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exodus 19-24 | |
| Oct. 15 | <p><i>Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapters 10 & 11 • Leviticus 17-21 • Deuteronomy 1-4 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Review</i></p> | | Oct. 17 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Mid-Term Test</u></p> | |
| Oct. 22 | <p><i>The Promised Land</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapters 12 & 13 • Joshua 1-6; 24 | | Oct. 24 | <p><i>The Promised Land</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 14 • Judges 1-3:6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deborah the Judge <u>or</u> • Samson & Delilah |
| Oct. 29 | <p><i>The Birth of Monarchy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 15 • 1 Samuel 1-12 • 2 Samuel 11-12:25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David and Uriah, a story of betrayal and judgement. (2 Samuel 11:1-12:25) | Oct. 31 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Fall Study Break</i></p> | |

November / December

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|---------|--|---|---------|---|---|
| Nov. 5 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>A Time of Kings</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 16 • 1 Kings 1-3 • 2 Kings 2; 2 Kings 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Company of Kings: The Queen of Sheba and Jezebel | Nov. 7 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Of Kings and Prophets</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapters 17 & 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Prophet Hosea |
| Nov. 12 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Exile and Return</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapters 19 & 20 – pp.266-271 • Isaiah 1; 6; 11 • Jeremiah 1-3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Prophet Jeremiah | Nov. 14 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Exile and Return</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 21 <p style="text-align: center;"><u>RS 1026/2226: Article Review Due</u></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Book of Jonah |
| Nov. 19 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Introduction to the Writings</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 23 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Book of Psalms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 25 • Psalms 8; 22; 23; 95; 98; 139 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psalms of Lament | Nov. 21 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Wisdom Literature</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 26 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Book of Proverbs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proverbs 1-9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images of Women in the Book of Proverbs |
| Nov. 26 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Wisdom Literature</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Book of Job | Nov. 28 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Festival Scrolls</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris & Platzner, Chapter 27 • The Book of Ruth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Book of Ruth |
| Dec. 3 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Festival Scrolls</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Song of Songs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esther and the Festival of Purim | Dec. 5 | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Ongoing Questions & Controversies</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Review</i></p> | |

Schedule Subject to Change