



Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

Course Identification

Course Number: WYB1008HF
Course Name: Introduction to the Old Testament I
Campus: St. George
Course Format: In-class and Limited Remote Access
Time: Tuesday 7-9 PM

Instructor Information

Instructor: Marion Taylor m.taylor@utoronto.ca
Teaching Assistants: Yoontack Han yoontack.han@mail.utoronto.ca
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Classroom: West Lecture Room Wycliffe College
Office Hours: By appointment: Wycliffe College, Room 227

Course Prerequisites or Requisites

None.

Course Description

Introduction to Old Testament literature and history, with emphasis on application within the church. Focused on the Primary History (Genesis-Kings), the course traces the text's storyline and attends to difficult questions raised by its subject matter, social and historical location, and presentation.

Course Methodology

This class will be delivered in person Tuesday 7-9 PM beginning September 10. The class will include lectures, discussion groups, readings, and assignments listed below. Please find TEAMS link in the announcements on Quercus or email the professor.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

- Richard S. Hess, *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016. ISBN 9780801037146
- A modern translation of the Old Testament is also required, e.g. the *New Revised Standard Version*, *Tanakh: The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text*.

Hess is available as an ebook and for purchase as a hard copy through the U of T Bookstore's website <https://www.uoftbookstore.com/adoption-search-results?ccid=5263666&itemid=40226>. Digital items listed are available for purchase exclusively through our website and are automatically fulfilled. Any physical texts on your list can be ordered online for delivery or store pickup, or purchased in person.

The materials for this course are stocked at the U of T Faculty of Law Bookstore, located at 78 Queen's Park Cres., Level One, Room P125. If you are entering the building through any Jackman Law Building entrance, to the staircase in the atrium, identifiable via a large art piece of a dragonfly. Head down the stairs and turn left. The Bookstore is at the end of the hall. This hall faces the elevators on level 1.

We carry a variety of theological texts, as well as stationary products and merchandise for (Wycliffe/Emmanuel) College. Come and check out our selection!

Our hours are as listed below.

August 19th-30th: 11am - 5pm Mon-Fri

September 3rd-6th: 10am - 6pm Tues-Fri

September 9th – 20th: 11am - 5pm Mon-Fri

September 23rd onward: 11:30am – 2:30pm Mon-Thurs, 2-5pm Fri

Recommended Books and Resources

- I encourage you to download the audio Bible app <http://www.bible.is/apps>. You can download chapters or whole books to listen to when you're not connected to Wi-Fi.
- <https://thebibleproject.com/> This is a fabulous crowd-funded project that has very help summaries of each biblical book as well as many other helpful topics. I recommend you watch the video of each biblical book before you read it and the textbook.
- For help in building your OT library see <http://bestcommentaries.com/>. Great guides to classic commentaries include two older works: Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Books for Pastor and Teachers* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977) and Charles Spurgeon's *Commenting and Commentaries: A Reference Guide to Book Buying for Pastors, Students, and Christian Workers* (reprint ed.; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1988).
- Check out another great resource www.bibleodyssey.org

Course Website: Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the U of T Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> . Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should contact the registrar's office for further help.

Course Outcomes

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students will	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)
• identify the content, structure, and themes of the books of books of Genesis through 2 Kings	Discussion board responses; inductive studies on Genesis and Judges; final the final assignment	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1

• identify various ways Old Testament texts have been interpreted throughout history, including current issues in Old Testament scholarship	Discussion board responses	MTS: 1.2, 1.4, 1.5 MDiv: 1.2, 1.4, 1.5
• read and analyze a biblical book and suggest ideas for its application for the church today;	inductive studies on Genesis and Judges	MTS: 1.2, 1.3 MDiv: 1.2, 1.3

Class Schedule

Week 1 (September 10) Introduction: History of the Study of the OT in the Church Part 1.

Week 2 (September 17) History of the Study of the OT in the Church continued and what about Genesis 1?

Listen to the posted audio links and check the posted articles under modules

Week 3 (September 24) Inductive study on Genesis due before class today.

History of the Study of the OT and Genesis 2-3

Read Amanda Benckhuysen's posted chapter on the Gospel of Eve pp. 7-22

Read Sloan for a great treatment of Genesis 1-3

Week 4 (October 1) Genesis continued and Exodus. **First post to the Discussion Board on Quercus** on Genesis, Exodus, and *TOT* chaps. 1 and 2.

Week 5 (October 8) Leviticus. **Second post to the Discussion Board on Quercus** on Leviticus, and *TOT*, chap. 3.

Read Bill Webb on Corporal Punishment in the ancient world posted on Quercus.

Week 6 (October 15) Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Ritual Law. **Third post to the Discussion Board on Quercus** on the killing of the Canaanites *TOT*, chaps. 4, 5.

Drama option suggested topics: the suspected adulteress in Num 5:11–31, the rite of the spurned widow in Deut 25:5–10 and sacrifice in Lev 1–3.

Week 7 (October 21-25) Deuteronomy, The Theology of the Pentateuch. **Inductive study on Judges due by class time today.**

Week 8 (October 29) Reading Week.

Week 9 (November 5) Joshua. **Fourth post to the Discussion Board on Quercus** on *TOT* chap. 6.

Week 10 (November 12) Judges. **Fifth post to the Discussion Board on Quercus** on Judges and *TOT* chap. 7. Seminar on Texts of Terror: Judges 19–21. Come to class having read the short piece by nineteenth-century Anglican on Judges 19, Josephine Butler, "A Typical Tragedy: Dead Hands upon the Threshold;" and the fascinating article by Black American scholar Koala Jones-Warsaw, "Toward a Womanist Hermeneutic: a Reading of Judges 19–21," *A Feminist Companion to Judges*, 172–86; if you have time, read the following excellent piece John Thompson, "Reading Sex and Violence," in *Reading the Bible with the Dead*, 185–214.

Week 11 (November 19) 1 and 2 Samuel. **Sixth post to the Discussion Board on Quercus** on 1-2 Samuel and *TOT*, chap. 9.

Week 12 (November 26) Ruth. **Seventh post to the Discussion Board on Quercus** on Ruth and *TOT* chap. 8.

Week 13 (December 3) 1 and 2 Kings and discussion on Canonical criticism. **Eighth post to the Discussion Board on Quercus** on 1 and 2 Kings and *TOT*, chap. 10.

See posted articles on canonical criticism. Come to class having read Denise Olson, "A practical guide to Brevard Childs' Canonical approach to theological exegesis," and Brevard Childs, "The Old Testament as Scripture of the Church," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 43 (1972) 709–22;

For a great lecture on Childs' life and legacy given by Robert Wilson his colleague at Yale see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QXiWTK6SRI&t=13s>

Week 14 (December 10) *Final Paper due by class time today.*

Evaluation

Requirements

1. Participation and Discussion Boards 20%

Attendance is mandatory. Preparation for each class is expected and will enrich class discussions and your experiences as well as the experiences of others in the class. You will engage with the assigned biblical readings and the textbook using the **discussion board** on Quercus beginning week four and every week following except the two weeks when the inductive studies are due.

After you do the readings, prepare a thoughtful answer of approximately 200-300 words to one or more of the posted questions by **Monday at 12:00 noon** at the latest so that others can respond to your post. After you and others have posted their answers, start engaging one another in ongoing conversation about their posts and other issues raised in the chapter and readings. Here, further engagement and reference to the class materials will be an important part of these conversations. As you reflect together, you are encouraged to ask questions to take the conversation deeper, voice disagreement and suggest alternate understandings or possibilities, and respectfully listen to and engage others' comments and perspectives. At the least, you must engage at least one other student's post, and complete this by class time **Tuesday 7 pm. See Discussion Board posts: guidelines and rubrics below.**

2. Inductive Study on Genesis (due September 24) 25%

3. Inductive Study on Judges (due October 22) 25%

4. Thematic Paper (December 10) 30%

Discussion Board Posts: Guidelines and Rubrics

Initial Post

The rubrics below establish the requirements necessary for our posts to become a rewarding part of the learning experience. They also indicate how contributions to the discussion boards will be graded. In each discussion board there are 4 points available for each initial post, and 1 point for the subsequent responses.

Please note that the discussion boards are primarily intended to take us further in understanding the texts and their ancient contexts. It is important that in your initial posts especially you back up the points you make by drawing on evidence from the Bible and/or Hess.

Please also note that in the category 'Relevance' the reference to reading does NOT mean that all initial posts must include quotation. It means rather that you must display a level of knowledge of the topic consistent with having done the required reading. Quotation may sometimes help you to make a point well, but in short writing assignments it is often just as helpful to indicate when a point made is based upon the work of a particular scholar by inserting a reference within brackets, e.g., "(Hess, 127)".

CATEGORY	Exceeds Standards (4)	Meets Standards (3)	Approaches Standards (2)	Below Standards (1)
Relevance	entirely relevant to the topic with superior use both of reading and of evidence drawn from the biblical text and/or Hess	entirely relevant to the topic with clear evidence of reading and engagement with the biblical text and/or Hess	somewhat relevant to the topic with some evidence of reading and engagement with the biblical text and/or Hess	largely irrelevant to the topic with little or no evidence of reading or engagement with the biblical text and/or Hess
Coherence	entirely coherent and easy to follow	entirely coherent and easy to follow	largely coherent and possible to follow	significantly incoherent and difficult to follow
Presentation	appropriate length, written in complete sentences with proper use of words, and a good standard of spelling and punctuation, commentary bibliography included	appropriate length, written in complete sentences with proper use of words, and a good standard of spelling and punctuation, commentary bibliography included	only occasional failures to meet the standards	frequent failures to meet the standards

Response Posts

The rubrics below establish the requirements for response posts. In each discussion board, students are expected to respond to at least one post by other students, although I hope that the discussion will be sufficiently engaging that you may want to do more and especially that authors of initial posts will want to reply to the responses they receive.

Responses are intended to be short (a few sentences each) and should further the discussion. Response posts that are unclear, irrelevant, or simply repeat points already made by other students will be deemed not to further the discussion.

Productive responses will usually fall into two categories: (i) "curiosity" questions/comments, i.e., the response seeks clarification or expansion from the author of the initial post, or (ii) "persuasive" questions/comments, i.e., the response seeks to prompt the author of the initial post to deeper reflection in some way.

Response posts should meet the standards set out above for initial posts in the categories of "Coherence" and "Presentation." In addition, response posts should also meet the following standards:

CATEGORY	Meets/Exceeds Standards (2)	Approaches Standards (1)	Below Standards (0)
General	the whole reply furthers the discussion or clarifies it	parts of the reply further the discussion or clarify it	the reply fails to further the discussion or clarify it
Questions	all questions asked are succinct, relevant, and courteous	most questions asked are succinct and relevant; all are courteous	most questions asked are either not succinct or not relevant; some fail to be courteous

Inductive Study. Follow These Instructions Exactly

Use the following headings to organise your paper. Be sure that the amount of space devoted to each section reflects its value. That is, if you state the theme of the book in only two sentences, you will not receive the full 25 marks.

1. Table of contents with captions (10%)

I am looking for appropriateness, conciseness and – to a lesser extent- creativity. (N.B. Don't be constrained by the traditional chapter divisions; remember that they are a late addition to the text and may not always be helpful in outlining the structure of a biblical book).

2. Analysis of the book's structure (35%)

Expand and justify your table of contents. How did you come up with your structure? What are the major sections of the book? How are these sections subdivided? Are the sections of a different literary style (poetry, biographical or sermonic material)? Be sure to defend your assessment of the book's structure.

3. Theme of the book (25%)

What is the one central message or theme of the book? How is this theme developed? Be sure that you don't confuse the theme of the book with sub-themes or motifs. Be sure to support your assessment of the theme with evidence from the biblical text.

4. General observations and theological insights (20%)

What are some of the more prominent theological emphases of the book? How are they developed? How do these emphases relate to other books in the Bible?

5. Ideas for preaching or teaching: questions for further study (10%)

How would you preach or teach this book? Provide a brief outline (be specific) and be sure to indicate your intended audience (adult congregation, Sunday school, etc). Also include a list of questions for further study that emerge from your paper.

Be sure to proof-read your paper carefully before handing it in!

Essentials to remember!

1. **Do not use secondary resources** (textbook, annotated Bible, commentaries etc.) You may use an Atlas or Dictionary for place names or puzzling terms, but make sure to cite them properly.
2. Papers should be typewritten and not more than 7 pages (not including the title page and bibliography), Papers should be double spaced with margins of no less than 1 inch; use a 12 pt font. Ideally, you would use Word.

Thematic Paper Instructions (30%)

Option A: In this assignment I want you to discuss how the call of Abram in Gen 12:1-3 is pivotal to Genesis-2 Kings. Your paper should consist of four sections. In the first section discuss Genesis 12:1-3 and outline the Lord's promises to Abram. In the second section discuss how the passage relates to the rest of Genesis (both before and after the passage). In the third section, discuss how the passage relates to Exodus-Deuteronomy. In the fourth section, discuss how the passage relates to Joshua-2 Kings. The primary purpose of this assignment is to ensure that you have a grasp on Genesis-2 Kings as a whole. You obviously cannot include everything in this paper; look for examples that are typical or especially pertinent. As with the inductive studies, **you are not permitted to consult secondary literature**. The paper is to be between eight and ten pages double-spaced.

Option B: In this assignment I want you to discuss God's concern for the outsider (the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the marginalized) in Genesis -2 Kings. Your paper should consist of three sections. In the first section discuss the theme of the marginalized or outsider in Genesis. In the second section discuss the theme of the marginalized or outsider in the law. In the third section, the theme of the marginalized in Joshua-2 Kings. The primary purpose of this assignment is to ensure that you have a grasp on Genesis-2 Kings as a whole and the importance of the theme of God's care for outsiders. As with the inductive studies, **you are not permitted to consult secondary literature**. You obviously cannot include everything in this paper; look for examples that are typical or especially pertinent. The paper is to be between eight and ten pages double-spaced.

Option C: In this assignment I want you to discuss the theme of land and landlessness in Genesis to 2 Kings. Your paper should consist of three sections. In the first section discuss the theme of the land in Genesis. In the second section discuss the theme of the land in Exodus to Deuteronomy. In the third section, the theme of land in Joshua-2 Kings. The primary purpose of this assignment is to ensure that you have a grasp on Genesis-2 Kings as a whole and the importance of the theme of land in this material. You obviously cannot include everything in this paper; look for examples that are typical or especially pertinent. As with the inductive studies, **you are not permitted to consult secondary literature**. The paper is to be between eight and ten pages double-spaced.

Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Policy on Assignment and Course Extensions

Assignment Extension (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Under exceptional circumstances a student may request a short extension to be determined with the instructor. Instructors are not obliged to approve a request for an extension or accept papers that are late where no extension has been requested. If the instructor chooses to accept an assignment, where an extension has **not** been requested and approved before the due date, then **for that assignment one percentage point per late day will be deducted.** The final deadline for the submission of assignments is the date set by the instructor in the syllabus, the examination day scheduled for the course, or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner. If the student fails to submit the assignment by the agreed deadline a mark of zero will be calculated for the assignment.

Policy on Course Extension (BD) Students with documented medical difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) who are unable to submit their work by the end of the term must talk with their instructor and request a course extension. The deadline for obtaining a course extension is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. The course extension, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline, with an absolute deadline of the last day of the examination week within the twelfth month following the end of the course. (The course extension must also be approved by the Basic Degree Director and confirmed by the Registrar.) Under extraordinary situations a student may request an extension on the initial extension. To do this, students must complete a second course extension form, include sufficient documentation (e.g. a doctor's letter) and receive the approval of both the instructor and the BD director.

An approved course extension will appear on the student's record as an SDF. If the student completes coursework before the new deadline approved by the professor and the student's college, the grade SDF will be changed to a letter and number grade. If the student does not complete the work by the deadline set by the professor and no further extension is granted, the professor will assign a zero for the unsubmitted work and submit a final grade (numerical or letter, including FZ) or, if the student successfully petitions for one, a permanent incomplete (INC). For late papers (with or without a course extension) students will receive a grade but minimal comments.

The link for the course extension form is at <https://www.wycliffecollege.ca/basic-degree-request-extension-pdf>

Late work (Graduate). The prima facie deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered.

The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or college deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student's college Graduate Director, not the instructor of the course. Nevertheless, the instructor's signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college Graduate Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST on its website. See Section 7.11 of the Conjoint Graduate Degree Handbook.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to

ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as> The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges: <https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/>

Use of AI. Students are not to submit work generated by AI chatbots such as ChatGPT. If students are found to have done so, they will receive a mark of 'zero' for the assignment concerned.

Recording Policy. Students may not create audio or video recordings of classes with the exception of those students requiring an accommodation for a disability (as identified by the Accessibility Services). These students should speak to the instructor in advance of the class.

If a course is to be recorded (either by a student or the instructor), the following guidelines apply:

- Students must be given notice that lectures or a lecture will be recorded, preferably well before the recorded class. Consent forms are available from the Registrar's office.
- Students must be given the option to opt out of recorded classes without penalty. Students who wish to remain anonymous in a recorded lecture will not be penalized for this choice – if, for example, participation is a required component of the course, students will be given another option to earn participation credit that will not be recorded.

Students creating unauthorized audio and/or video recording of lectures violate an instructor's intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.