



Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

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: Wednesday 9-11

Instructor Information

Instructor: Marion Taylor m.taylor@utoronto.ca
 Teaching Assistant: TBA
 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 Wednesdays 9-11 beginning September 13. The class will include lectures, discussion groups, readings, and assignments listed below.

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)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the content, structure, and themes of the books of Genesis through 2 Kings 	Discussion board responses; inductive studies on Genesis and Judges; final the final assignment or exam	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

The textbooks for this course are available through the U of T Bookstore's website, which offers shipping or in-store pickup for physical texts. Enter your UTORid into the Bookstore's textbook tool at https://uoftbookstore.com/buy_textbooks.asp to get a personalized list of all the textbooks for the courses you're enrolled in.

The textbook is also available as an ebook.

- 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*.

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> .

Class Schedule

Week 1 (September 13) Introduction: History of the Study of the OT in the Church.

Week 2 (September 20) History of the Study of the OT in the Church (continued). Read Amanda Benckhuysen's posted chapter on the Gospel of Eve 7-22.

Week 3 (September 27) Genesis. Read Genesis and Hess's *The Old Testament, TOT* chap 1; **Inductive study on Genesis due before class today.** Read Sloan for a great treatment of Genesis 1-3.

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

Week 5 (October 11) Leviticus. Second post to the Discussion Board on Quercus on Leviticus, and *TOT*, chap. 3; seminar reading on Comparative Ancient Texts- Corporal Punishment in the ancient world posted on Quercus.

Week 6 (October 18) Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Ritual Law. Third post to the Discussion Board on Quercus on Numbers, Deuteronomy, and *TOT*, chaps. 4, 5. Read about 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 in preparation for dramatic presentations. Drama option.

Week 7 (October 25) Reading Week.

Week 8 (November 1) Deuteronomy, The Theology of the Pentateuch. **Inductive study on Judges due by class time today.**

Week 9 (November 8) Joshua. Fourth post to the Discussion Board on Quercus on Deuteronomy and Joshua, and *TOT* chap. 6.

Week 10 (November 15) Ruth. Fifth post to the Discussion Board on Quercus on Ruth and *TOT* chap. 8.

Week 11 (November 22) Judges. Sixth 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 12 (November 29) 1 and 2 Samuel. Seventh post to the Discussion Board on Quercus on 1-2 Samuel and *TOT*, chap. 9.

Week 13 (December 6) 1 and 2 Kings. Eighth post to the Discussion Board on Quercus on 1 and 2 Kings and *TOT*, chap. 10. Seminar on Canonical Criticism. Come to class having read 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> Check out also "Canonical Criticism" in *Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation*, edited by Corrine L. Carvalho. Oxford Biblical Studies Online, which you can access through the University of Toronto library [electronic resource].

Week 14 (December 13) Final Paper or Exam due by class time today.

Evaluation

Requirements

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 Tuesday at 12:00 pm 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 Wednesday 9 am.

All written assignments are due at the beginning of the class hour and submitted on quercus. Plagiarism is a serious offense. If you borrow ideas or distinctive phrases, you must acknowledge your source(s) properly. See policy on plagiarism below:

The breakdown of the assignments for the fall semester is as follows:

1) Discussion Board Posts	20%
2) Inductive Study on Genesis (due September 27)	25%
3) Inductive Study on Judges (due Nov 1)	25%
4) Final Exam or Thematic Paper (December 13)	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 2 points 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	entirely relevant to the topic with clear evidence of reading and engagement with the biblical text	somewhat relevant to the topic with some evidence of reading and engagement with the biblical text	largely irrelevant to the topic with little or no evidence of reading or engagement with the biblical text
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

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 (5%)

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.

Essentials to remember:

1. Grammar, spelling, and style will account for 5% of your grade. Be sure to proof-read your paper carefully before handing it in!
2. **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.
3. 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.

Thematic Paper Option Instead of Exam

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).

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Here is my standard policy for late papers: if it is not submitted when due (typically before class begins on the due date unless otherwise stated), you lose 1/3 of a letter grade. If it is not in by 5:00 p.m. that same day, you lose another 1/3 of a letter grade. After that, for each day (or portion thereof) the paper is late, the grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade. After 1 week, late papers need not be handed in, and will receive a "0." As indicated, some assignments will not be accepted late for any reason. The absolute deadline for the course is 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.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

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. 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/>

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.