Course Description
This course will study the Psalms in the context of the worship life of Ancient Israel with a view to their role in the present day and also careful reflection on how the Psalms reflect the character of God.

Given that this is a directed study it is necessary to be in regular contact with the professor for the duration of the course.

Relation to Horizon’s Mission
The Psalms formed the worship life of Ancient Israel. However, their importance and communicative value does not remain locked in the past. They continue to demonstrate how one can engage with God, whether in praise or lament. The Psalms are an important guide as we seek to converse with him in covenant relationship serving him in Christian life and ministry.

Learning Outcomes
Cognitive:
- Orient the Psalms in their historical context (assignment 1)
- Explore the theology of the Psalms (assignments 1&2)
- Gain new insights into the character of God with specific attention to His revelation in the Psalms (all assignments)
- Become acquainted with the poetry of the Hebrew Bible (assignment 1 & 4)

Affective:
- Be enriched by the devotional importance of the Psalms (assignments 3 & 4)
- Engage with the manner the psalmist interacts with God (all assignments)

Conative:
- Apply the theological witness of the Psalms to contemporary issues (assignments 1 & 3)
- Articulate the importance of the Psalms within the Old Testament and present day (all assignments)

**Required Reading**

Holy Bible (good modern translation)


  “Poetry and Interpretation” (pages 29-47)
  “Trouble and Woe: Interpreting the Biblical Laments” (pages 48-63)
  “Enthroned on the Praises of Israel: Interpreting the Biblical Hymns” (pages 64-78)

  “The Gifts of Hymn and the Messiah: The Psalms” (pages 870-896)


**Course Assignments and Evaluation**

1. Three (3) exegesis research papers each of 5-6 pages (c. 1500 words) dealing with an individual Psalm (your choices should represent three different genres of Psalms). The paper should consider the Psalm in its original context and also the implications for life today, especially in your own context. The research paper should conform to the general guidelines of exegesis of Psalms as described in the assigned reading (esp. Miller, Longmann III and Brueggemann).

   **Grade:** Each – 20% / Total – 60%
   **Due:** To be determined in consultation with the professor.

2. One theology paper of 4-5 pages (c.1200 words) that considers the Psalms describes the character of God. E.g. How does the psalmist address God? What characteristics are commonly highlighted? How is God expected to engage his people and creation?

   **Grade:** 20%
   **Due:** To be determined in consultation with the professor.
3. Read through the Psalms at a pace of two per a day (one in the morning and one in the evening). Keep a reflection journal based upon your reading of the Psalms. Reflect on questions like: How does this Psalm speak to your circumstance? Or perhaps the situation of someone who know? What does the Psalm say about God? How do you feel after reading the Psalms? The journal will not be evaluated so please be completely honest in your reflections.

Taking into consider your journal write a 3-4 page (c.1000 word) reflection paper based upon your reading of the Psalms.

**Grade: 10%**

**Due: To be determined in consultation with the professor.**

4. Compose two of your own Psalms in the style of Hebrew poetry. One Psalms should be a praise Psalm and one should be a lament Psalm.

**Grade: 10%**

**Due: To be determined in consultation with the professor.**

**Evaluation for Papers**

Each paper will be considered in three categories: presentation, argumentation, and content.

**Late Policy**

Assignments are due before midnight on their due-date. Overdue assignments incur the following penalties:

- 1-3 days late 10% penalty
- 4-6 days late 20% penalty
- After 6 days: an automatic “F”

Sundays and statutory holidays are not counted in assessing penalties for late submission.

**Academic Honesty**

Horizon uses the University of Saskatchewan definition of plagiarism described as “the presentation of work or idea of another in such a way as to give others the impression that it is the work or idea of the presenter. Adequate attribution is required. What is essential is that another person have no doubt which words are research results are the student’s and which are drawn from other sources” (Office of the University Secretary, 2012). Students are expected to give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn.

**General Assignment Guidelines**

Please see the Horizon College and Seminary Format Guide (click [here](#)) for assignment submission and formatting guidelines as well as policies for late assignments, extensions, and rescheduling of exams.
Horizon College/University of Saskatchewan Assessment of Student Work

A superior performance with consistent strong evidence of

- a comprehensive, incisive grasp of the subject matter;
- an ability to make insightful critical evaluation of the material given;
- an exceptional capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- an excellent ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently.

An excellent performance with strong evidence of

- a comprehensive grasp of the subject matter;
- an ability to make sound critical evaluation of the material given;
- a very good capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- an excellent ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently.

A good performance with evidence of

- a substantial knowledge of the subject matter;
- a good understanding of the relevant issues and a good familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
- some capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- a good ability to organize, to analyze and to examine the subject material in a critical and constructive manner.

A generally satisfactory and intellectually adequate performance with evidence of

- an acceptable basic grasp of the subject material;
- a fair understanding of the relevant issues;
- a general familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
- an ability to develop solutions to moderately difficult problems related to the subject material;
- a moderate ability to examine the material in a critical and analytical manner.

A barely acceptable performance with evidence of

- a familiarity with the subject material;
- some evidence that analytical skills have been developed;
- some understanding of relevant issues;
- some familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
• attempts to solve moderately difficult problems related to the subject material and to examine the material in a critical and analytical manner which are only partially successful.

Disability Services Information
If you have specific physical or mental health conditions or learning disabilities that require accommodations, please contact the Dean of Students, Jolyn Sloan, as early as possible so that your learning and/or physical needs can be met appropriately. You will need to provide current documentation of your disability to the Dean of Students. For more information, make an appointment with Jolyn Sloan, Dean of Student Services at 306-374-6655 ext. 229 or jsloan@horizon.edu.