



## **B110—Introduction to the Old Testament (3 credits)**

Prerequisites: none

**January 5-9, 2015**

**Module C**

**Mon-Fri: 9am – 4pm**

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### **Course Description**

This course is a general introduction of the content and theology of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) in light of the ancient near east environment where it originated. Though commonly referred to as “Old,” the writings and reflections contained within the Hebrew Bible were in fact quite novel for the ancient Israelites and Judahites who first read and heard them. Accordingly, this course will seek to unpack the novelty of these texts by reading them in light of the scholarly understanding of the social, religious, and literary dynamics of the Old Testament world and highlighting relevant insights and implications for Christian life, doctrine, and ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Given the volume of the collection of material in view, we will not have time to discuss each individual book; however, emphasis will be given to a number of critical texts and general introductory matters (method, structure, author and audience, genre, etc.) that will allow the student to approach the OT with increased confidence, competence, and understanding.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Cognitive: by the end of the course students will:

- Have a thorough knowledge of the contents and basic theology of the OT
- Have a comprehensive understanding of these books in light of their place in the ancient near east
- Be able to discuss the important theological themes in selected OT books
- Be able to identify and convey the novel aspects of the OT
- Be aware of the numerous resources available for the study of the OT

Affective: by the end of the course students will:

- Gain an appreciation of the novelty of the OT
- See new dimensions of the OT previously unrealized

Conative: by the end of the course students will:

- Be able to read, understand, and discuss selected OT books in a manner that is faithful to the context in which they were written
- Be able to discuss the contemporary relevance of the OT for the practical endeavours of the church
- Be able to articulate some important implications of these texts for their own personal lives

### **Required Readings:**

Longman, Tremper and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.

Holy Bible (RSV or NRSV are good translations).

### **Course Assignments and Evaluation:**

#### **BEFORE THE MODULE:**

1. *Walk Thru the Old Testament Seminar (10%; Seminar: Friday November 14; Reflection Due: Friday January 9)*

Students are required to attend the “Walk Thru the Old Testament” seminar and submit a 1-2 page reflection on the content presented. In particular, attention should be given to the key events, people, and themes that move the biblical story forward.

In place of this assignment, should attendance at the seminar not be possible, students are to research and submit a concise OT chronology that highlights the key events, people, and moments of biblical history. As a starting point, please watch this short video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JYmvTP9kJIY>. Please note that this assignment should go well beyond simply copying a single timeline from a study Bible.

#### **DURING THE MODULE**

2. *Presentation on an Assigned OT Topic (20%; Friday January 9)*

Each student will select and research one OT topic of interest and present their findings to the class on the last day of the module. 5-7 minutes in length. A signup sheet with a list of selected topics will be posted on the first day of class.

#### **AFTER THE MODULE:**

3. *Final Exam (25%; Friday January 16)*

This is an objective-style exam designed to evaluate the depth of your basic knowledge and understanding of the Old Testament. Based on class lectures. Accessed through Populi.

4. *Required Reading (15%; Friday February 13)*

Given the volume of material covered in the course, we will not have time to discuss each individual OT book. Among the books not covered in class are: Ruth, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel, Joel, Obadiah, Zephaniah, and Malachi. Accordingly, students are required to read these sections carefully in the course textbook, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Students will then choose two of these books and concisely discuss how they fit into and contribute to the overall message of the OT. 600 words total.

5. *Major Essay (30%; Friday February 27)*

The often troubled relationship between God and Israel and the theme of “promise and fulfillment” are two important storylines that run throughout the entirety of the OT. Students are to trace, research, and discuss the development of one of these storylines. Be sure to use the same approach to essay writing learned in the English Literature course. Please conclude your essay with a brief discussion of the contemporary implications and relevance of your selected theme. 1500-2000 words.

**Course Outline:**

Day One: General Introductory Matters

Day Two: Pentateuch

Day Three: Historical Books

Day Four: Prophets

Day Five: Wisdom and Poetry

**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 the 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 or 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.

## Horizon College/University of Saskatchewan Grading System

The College employs the percentage system for marking tests and final examinations. Letter grade equivalents, according to the following scale, may be used in grading assignments. The student's final grades are given in percentages. A mark of less than 50% is a failing grade.

90-100	A+	4.0
85-89	A	4.0
80-84	A-	3.7
77-79	B+	3.3
73-76	B	3.0
70-72	B-	2.7
67-69	C+	2.3
63-66	C	2.0
60-62	C-	1.7
57-59	D+	1.3
53-56	D	1.0
50-52	D-	0.7
0-49	F	0.0

**90-100% [Exceptional]** – 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.

**80-89% [Excellent]** – 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.

**70-79% [Good]** – a good performance with evidence of:

- a substantial knowledge of the subject matter;
- a good understanding of 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.

**60-69% [Satisfactory]** – 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.

**50-59% [Minimal Pass]** – 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.

**Under 50% [Failure]** – an unacceptable performance