



## B430 Psalms

3 credits. Prerequisites: B119 Bible Study Methods & B110 Introduction to Old Testament

👤 Saskatoon Campus 'A' Livestream 📺 Video on Demand

September 15 – October 24, 2025

Term A

Mon & Wed, 9 am – 12 am SK (11am – 2pm ET)

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*Please note: This course requires students to read the entire book of Psalms within the first few days of class. Students are strongly encouraged to begin (or complete) this reading before the first day of class. (See Assignment #1)*

### Course Goals

#### Course Description

This course explores the literary genres and theology of the Psalter. While the study covers different critical methods and approaches to reading the Psalms, it also considers how the Psalms are relevant to Christian worship, faith, and discipleship.

#### Relationship to Horizon and MCS's Mission

Through this course, students will gain a greater grasp of the Psalms, its genres, and theology, with the aim to foster one's understanding of God's character and work, to deepen one's spiritual walk, and to enrich one's ministry.

#### Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes

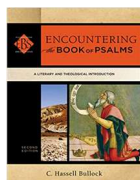


To demonstrate competency in **Biblical and Theological Literacy**, students will

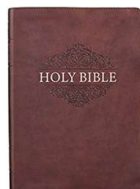
1. Interpret the book of Psalms in light of its literary and socio-historical contexts, and distinct theological perspective with the assistance of relevant secondary literature.
  - *Assessment:* Exegetical Essay; Theological Response Emails
2. Describe the key interpretive issues that are critical for understanding the Psalter.
  - *Assessment:* Exegetical Essay; Theological Response Emails
3. Identify and explain key emphases and their significance within the Psalter.
  - *Assessment:* Devotional Reflection; Exegetical Essay; Theological Response Emails
4. Explain how the theological witness of the Psalter speaks to the way we think, live, and minister today.
  - *Assessment:* Devotional Reflection; Exegetical Essay; Theological Response Emails

## Course Work

### Required Readings



*Required:* Bullock, C. Hassell. *Encountering the Book of Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018. ISBN: 9780801098307.  
<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1045619893>



*Required:* An English translation of Psalms.

*Recommended:* Whether as a hard copy or through a program such as Logos or Accordance, students are encouraged to invest in a decent commentary on Psalms. While varying in price and size, good options include those by Goldingay; Breuggemann and Bellinger Jr.; deClaissé-Walford et al; Broyles; and Longman. See the bibliography below.

\*\*While students have the benefit of accessing their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library.

### Course Assignments and Activities

#### 1. Bible Reading

Students are to read the entirety of Psalms by September 17. While no summaries or reviews are required, students will indicate that they completed the reading on Populi. The completion of the readings is required for one to pass the course. This assignment will be graded as complete or incomplete.

- Related learning outcomes: # 1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Due date:** Wednesday, September 17.

#### 2. Devotional Reflections – 20%

Students will write a series of devotional reflections on **four** of the following Psalms: 6, 7, 10, 37, 38, 100, 115, 130. The goal of this assignment is to encourage students to pray, read, and meditate on Scripture. Designed to serve as a form of devotional to be spread out over one or more weeks, this is not an assignment to be completed all at once. Students should complete no more than one devotional per day. Make sure to start this assignment by September 19 at the very latest; earlier than this is certainly encouraged. For each devotional, follow this procedure: 1) Pray; 2) Read the psalm; 3) Meditate on the psalm; and 4) Write a reflection. The reflection is to consist of two primary parts: 1) Summary; and 2) Application. For the first part of the

reflection, students should *concisely* describe the main point(s) and movement of the psalm. What is the psalm about? What is its main point? How does the writer reach/support this main point? Students are to demonstrate that they are able to pick out the main idea of the psalm. The second part of the reflection should focus on the student's response to the psalm. What could you learn from this psalm? How might it be applied to one's life? This part of the reflection can go a variety of directions as the student may find the psalm encouraging, comforting, convicting, challenging, or even troubling. The main thing I want to see in this part is that you are meaningfully engaging with the psalm, leading to your own reflections.

For this exercise, students are to use no secondary resources (that is, no commentaries, study Bible notes, or other resources). While students should certainly take into account and apply what they have learned from class lectures and course readings, this is not a research project.

- Related learning outcomes: # 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 1 page each; 4 pages in total.
- **Due date:** Friday, September 26.

### 3. *Textbook Reading*

Students will read the entirety of the course textbook by October 2. While no summaries or reviews are required, students will indicate that they completed the reading on Populi. The completion of the readings is required for one to pass the course. This assignment will be graded as complete or incomplete.

- **Due date:** Thursday, October 2.

### 4. *Exegetical Essay* – 40%

Each student will write an exegetical essay on Psalm 110. This paper should address the following points:

- Historical background
- Literary analysis: Discuss the psalm's form/genre, structure, movement, changes of voice, use of literary devices.
- Literary context: Is there significance to the psalm's position in one of the books of the Psalter or in the Psalter as a whole? Does it relate in a significant way to the larger movement/narrative of the whole?
- Significant interpretive issues
- The main point of the psalm and how the writer makes it
- Other theological points/implications
- Relation to the larger narrative of the OT/NT
- The significance of this psalm for the church today

Students are encouraged to study the psalm first by themselves before turning to secondary sources. Cite at minimum five scholarly secondary sources, including at least one scholarly journal article. Include a bibliography.

- Related learning outcomes: # 1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment Length:** 6-7 pages.
- **Due date:** Wednesday, October 8.

### 5. *Theological Response Emails* – 40%

You are a leader at a local congregation and have recently received a series of emails from members with a variety of questions about Psalms. As the final assignment, each student will write responses to hypothetical situations and questions. There are four options available, and each student will choose three to address. The emails will concern major concepts, difficulties, and questions covered throughout the course. Responses should be well written, include citations to research (five scholarly sources at minimum for the whole paper), and may be a mix of exegetical, pastoral, theological, and apologetic. The final submission should include a bibliography. I am not so much looking for tact in approaching potentially difficult situations but more of a demonstration of the student's understanding of the matter at hand. The questions will be provided through Populi.

- Related learning outcomes: #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment Length:** 6-7 pages in total (approx. 2 pages per email).
- **Due date:** Thursday, October 16.

### Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements

As indicated on the course schedule, this class is offered by VOD. Students taking the course primarily through VOD are required to indicate this during their course registration. While VOD recordings are available for any student who may miss a class, non-VOD students are expected to attend class live following the class attendance policy.

- For this course, VOD students have the same assignment due dates as in-class students.
- By Saturday at 11:59pm each week, VOD students will submit a Padlet video (2-3 min) that 1) affirms you have watched the required recording, 2) summarizes one thing you learned that will help you reach the course learning outcomes, and 3) explains at least one question you had after watching the class recording.
- In order to pass the course, VOD students must submit all of their VOD weekly submissions. These submissions are pass/fail based on whether or not they demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the lecture content and in-class activities.
- The Extensions and Late Assignments policies apply to all VOD Report submissions.

### Estimate of Time Investment (*individual time investments may vary*)

Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A
1. Bible Reading	5 hrs	Sept 17
2. Devotional Reflections	5 hrs	Sept 26
3. Textbook Reading	18 hrs	Oct 2
4. Exegetical Essay	22 hrs	Oct 8
5. Theological Response Emails	20 hrs	Oct 16
Total =		100 hrs

All assignments are due at 11:59pm **SK time**, unless otherwise indicated.

### Assessment Rubrics

Assignment rubrics can be found on Populi. Click on the name of the assignment to access each rubric.

## Course Outline / Class Schedule

*\*The following schedule is a guideline. Adjustments may occur.*

Day	Time	Topics
<b>Week One</b>	Monday	• Course Introductions, Interpreting the Psalter
	Wednesday	• The Shape of the Psalter
<b>Week Two</b>	Monday	• Psalm 1-2: The Psalter's Introduction
	Wednesday	• Psalms of Lament
<b>Week Three</b>	Monday	• Psalms of Praise and Thanksgiving
	Wednesday	• Psalms of Trust • Psalms of Imprecation
<b>Week Four</b>	Monday	• Wisdom Psalms • Torah Psalms
	Wednesday	• Royal Psalms • Kingship of Yahweh Psalms • The figure of David
<b>Week Five</b>	Monday	• Thanksgiving Monday/no class
	Wednesday	• Preaching the Psalms: Issues and Approaches • Psalms, the NT and Jesus

- Revision week is October 20-24, 2025. Your instructor may request revisions on some assignments before revision week.
- No assignments will be accepted after **Friday, October 24, 2025**.

## Academic Policies

### General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

### Extensions

To submit extension requests, students must submit the *Request Extension Form* on the [MCS](#) or [Horizon](#) website and *before the due date*. Professors reserve the right to deny extensions. Generally, the sooner that a student asks for an extension, the more willing faculty tend to be in granting extensions. Furthermore, no extensions will be granted beyond the final day of a term or semester unless approval is granted by the Associate Academic Dean (MCS) or Assistant Academic Dean (Horizon).

### Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit work by the assigned or extended due dates, as part of their development of the Leadership and Administration competency. Late submissions will be tracked across each student's program. Repeated late submissions, including late submissions of

revisions, will result in academic discipline, such as warnings, required coaching, or academic probation. Similar to standard human resource employment practices, students will receive warnings and conditions with increasing severity of academic discipline.

If an assignment is submitted more than four calendar days late, the student will receive a failing grade (0%) for that assignment until it is submitted (students must demonstrate competency by submitting and passing all assignments to pass a course). Upon submission, the assignment may not be graded until revision week. In addition, the student will receive the grade for the assignment with minimal feedback (only a brief rationale for the assignment grade) and no opportunity to submit revisions.

### Assignment Completion

Professors usually will not accept assignments that have not been completed according to the instructions given in the syllabus. If a professor informs a student that a submitted assignment is incomplete, the student will be given the opportunity to complete and resubmit the assignment quickly. If this is not possible, the assignment will be regarded as submitted late.

### Assignment Revisions

Students can generally submit up to two revisions for each assignment, although a professor may accept more revisions if the professor determines the student is addressing all of the professor's instructions and making significant progress toward achieving competency.

### Horizon and MCS's College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop their competency, not earn letter grades. Assignments are the means by which instructors evaluate development of competency by assessing learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus and each assignment rubric. Once a student's assignment has met all competency requirements, the professor will assign a grade for that assignment. Assignments that do not meet competency will receive a 0. A final course grade is not calculated until the end of the course. Students pass a course (with a B- or higher) only after they have demonstrated that they have *met or exceeded all competency requirements* for that course and, therefore, only after they have passed all assignments.

Horizon and MCS CBE Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding expectations	Student demonstrated <b>exceptional</b> achievement of the learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
		Student demonstrated <b>excellent</b> achievement of the learning outcomes.	A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting expectations	Student demonstrated <b>good</b> achievement of all learning outcomes.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72

If the student does not meet all competency requirements in a course and, therefore, does not pass all the assignments in a course, the course will not be sufficient to fulfill their program requirements at Horizon and MCS. Nevertheless, for transferability purposes, the student will receive a letter grade of C+ or below according to the scale below.

BTM	Beginning to meet expectations	Student was <b>beginning to meet</b> one or more learning outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
NYM	Not yet meeting expectations	Student made <b>insufficient progress</b> toward meeting learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
			F	0.0	0-49

### Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Horizon and MCS have a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

### Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Horizon](#) and [MCS](#) Student Handbooks.

### Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon and MCS are committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institutions, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Accessibility services personnel (at MCS, the Director of Academic Success, Wendy Holmes at [wendy.holmes@mcs.edu](mailto:wendy.holmes@mcs.edu); at Horizon, the Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at [rbekkattla@horizon.edu](mailto:rbekkattla@horizon.edu)). All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the Student Handbooks.

### **Class Attendance (On Campus or Livestreaming)**

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for, either on campus or through livestreaming with their camera on. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss the equivalent of six hours of class (e.g., one day of a module course or two three-hours classes) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

### **Livestreaming Etiquette**

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

### **Use of Technology**

Horizon and MCS encourage the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.



## Bibliography

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