

OT5307 Psalms

3 credits. Prerequisites: none.

 On Campus, Saskatoon  Livestream  Video on Demand



December 1-5, 2025

Module

Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm SK

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Please note: This course includes reading and assignments before and during the module.

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's Mission

In this course, students will gain a better understanding of the Psalms, including their genres and theology. The aim is to deepen their comprehension of God's character and work, enhance their spiritual journey, and enrich their ministry.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

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

1. Interpret the book of Psalms considering its literary and socio-historical contexts, along with its distinct theological perspective, supported by relevant secondary literature.
 - *Assessment:* Reading and Class Preparation; Presentation; Exegetical Essay; Theological Reflection Essays.
2. Describe the key interpretive issues that are critical for understanding the Psalter.
 - *Assessment:* Reading and Class Preparation; Presentation; Exegetical Essay; Theological Reflection Essays.
3. Identify and explain key theological emphases and their significance within the Psalter.
 - *Assessment:* Reading and Class Preparation; Presentation; Exegetical Essay; Theological Reflection Essays.

To demonstrate competency in *Spiritual Maturity*, students will

4. Demonstrate how insights from the Psalter inform the way we think, live, and minister today.

- *Assessment:* Reading and Class Preparation; Presentation; Exegetical Paper; Theological Reflection Essays.

Course Work

Required Readings

Mays, James Luther. *Psalms*. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Preaching and Teaching. Louisville, KY: WJK Press, 1994. ISBN: 978-0804231152.

DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1127948897>

Martin, Lee Roy. *The Spirit of the Psalms: Rhetorical Analysis, Affectivity, and Pentecostal Spirituality*. Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2018. ISBN: 978-1935931706.

DTL: TBD.

****While students have the benefit of accessing many of 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

Pre-Module and During the Module

1. Reading and Class Preparation – 15%

Please note: You will work on this assignment at the same time as Assignment #3.

The purpose of the assigned biblical readings is to equip students with a solid understanding of the material in the book of Psalms. This knowledge will provide significant insights that will undoubtedly enhance the quality of their reflection papers and final research paper.

The required textbook readings will prepare students to engage meaningfully with class lectures and will offer additional examples and details that may not be covered in class. For in-class discussions, students should focus on the readings from the two textbooks that correspond to the psalms listed under the “Topics” column of the Course Outline below.

To prepare students for the course, students will read the entire book of Psalms and the “Introduction” of each textbook before the first day of class. Come to class each day prepared with at least five critical questions or observations from the biblical text or the textbook(s) to contribute to an engaging and meaningful conversation (see “Topics” in the Course Outline below for where to focus each day). While all course readings must be completed by December 19, students are expected to keep pace with the course schedule and avoid postponing readings until the end. To prepare for daily discussions, aim to read from at least one textbook each day, in addition to the assigned psalms (then, by December 19, complete any outstanding readings).

When the psalms listed in the course schedule correspond with readings from Martin's monograph, please be sure to prioritize Martin's book as one of your assigned readings.

Please confirm you have done all the required reading by posting a note on Populi under the assignment "Reading and Class Preparation" by December 1 and December 19. You must also upload your 5 questions daily under this assignment.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** No more than one page, daily (for critical questions or observations).
- **Due dates:**
 - Psalter & Introductions: due December 1 at 9am
 - Critical Questions or Observations: due daily during Module Week
 - Full Reading Assignment: due December 19. This will allow students time to review the material in its entirety.

2. *Presentation* – 15%

Each student will teach a psalm to the class. The presentation should:

1. Address the most relevant historical, literary, and theological aspects of the psalm.
2. Describe key interpretive issues that are critical for understanding the psalm within the context of the Psalter as a whole. In other words, what type of psalm is it? (lament, praise, thanksgiving, imprecatory, etc.). How does its form or structure contribute to its meaning? (parallelism, stanzas, refrains, chiasms, etc.). What are the psalm's literary features? (poetic devices, shift in voices, etc.).
3. Identify and explain key theological emphases in the psalm and discuss their significance within the Psalter.
4. Reflect on how the psalm speaks to contemporary life, including how it shapes the way we think, live, and minister today.

Students are expected to consult at least four scholarly sources and include proper citations and a bibliography in their written presentation notes. The presentation should be between 10 and 15 minutes in length and will be followed by a question-and-answer session. Teaching aids, such as PowerPoint presentations, handouts, or other resources, are optional. Students may choose the method that best supports their teaching.

Presentation notes (a minimum of two pages; format may vary), along with any handouts, must be submitted no later than the final day of the module week (December 5). These notes will contribute to the final presentation grade and will assist the instructor in evaluation. Each student should contact the professor in advance to select a psalm and confirm their presentation date.

VOD Students should record their presentation, upload it to a content-hosting site like YouTube, and submit the link on Populi to the professor.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** Written notes must be at least two pages. The presentation should be between 10 and 15 minutes.

- **Due date:** Presentation – during Module Week; Notes – by December 5.

During the Module & After the Module

3. *Theological Reflection Papers* – 30%.

Please note: You will work on this assignment at the same time as Assignment #1.

The purpose of Theological Reflection Papers is to evaluate students' capacity to theologically reflect, identify important interpretive challenges that are crucial for understanding the text, and demonstrate their aptitude for conveying the biblical message to contemporary audiences. This assignment also gives students the opportunity to engage Scripture through both the mind and heart. It invites students to integrate their beliefs and practices.

Students should write a short Reflection/Response paper (400-500 words) for all 11 units according to the instructions below. Two people may work together on these papers.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION PAPERS

1. Select a chapter from the biblical book that corresponds with your chosen unit for reflection that is listed in the Course Outline below. For example, if you are writing a reflection paper for unit one, choose any Psalm between 1 and 11 as your focus.
2. Each paper should include the following 4 elements:
 - a. **Discuss how the biblical text informs your theology** as it relates to one (and only one) of the following topics (This section should be 200-300 words):
 - i. The nature and character of God
 - ii. The plan and purpose of God
 - iii. One of these doctrines: salvation, sanctification, Holy Spirit, sin, healing, eschatology, ecclesiology, and anthropology.
 - iv. The nature of revelation and/or doctrine of the Holy Scripture.
 - v. Epistemology (the nature of truth and means to acquiring knowledge).
 - b. **Identify one aspect of this passage that may create tension in our theology or practice**, something that tends to make us feel uncomfortable, or that requires discernment. How does this tension and struggle with the text contribute to our spiritual growth? This topic can relate to the same theological area as part one above (50-100 words).
 - c. **Explore how this text forms and shapes our affections and desires.** That is, how does the text transform the heart? Describe any affections/emotions that are provoked and brought to the surface by the text. Does the text generate gratitude, love, compassion, courage, hope, joy, or a combination of these? (50-100 words)
 - d. **Describe one way that the text contributes to your spirituality.** Explain how the text relates to one of the following topics (50-100 words):
 - i. One of the spiritual disciplines (prayer, fasting, witnessing, testimony, giving, study, etc.)
 - ii. Worship
 - iii. The community of faith
 - iv. The divine-human relationship

- v. Spiritual formation
- vi. Ministry formation
- vii. The sacraments

See Populi for an example of a Theological Reflection Paper.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 400-500 words each.
- **Due date:**

Assignment	Due Dates
Theological Reflection Paper 1	December 5
Theological Reflection Paper 2	December 8
Theological Reflection Paper 3	December 8
Theological Reflection Paper 4	December 10
Theological Reflection Paper 5	December 10
Theological Reflection Paper 6	December 12
Theological Reflection Paper 7	December 12
Theological Reflection Paper 8	December 15
Theological Reflection Paper 9	December 15
Theological Reflection Paper 10	December 17
Theological Reflection Paper 11	December 19

4. *Exegetical Research Paper and Sermon Outline* – 40%

The term paper is designed primarily to evaluate students' ability to do quality research and writing, to think critically, to approach the text theologically, and to communicate effectively. The term paper should be the culmination of your work, demonstrating your ability to do constructive biblical scholarship.

Students must write a 10-12-page (3500-5000 words), typewritten (double-spaced) term paper conforming to the instructions given below. The paper will be written following the Horizon & MCS writing format guidelines. See the pertinent section in the syllabus Bibliography for numerous sources for this assignment.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXEGETICAL RESEARCH PAPER: FORM

1. Follow the [Horizon & MCS Format Guide](#) consistently.

2. The bibliography **must** include at least three Old Testament introductions, ten commentaries (your textbook by Mays may serve as one of the commentaries), five journal articles, and five monographs (A monograph is a book that focuses on a particular subject of Psalms. Your textbook by Martin may serve as a monograph). These categories must be listed separately, with headings, in the bibliography.
3. Footnotes must be placed at the bottom of the page. You must adhere to the guidelines given below as regards footnoting and quoting. Furthermore, due to the concise nature of this paper, direct quotes should be used sparingly. In following a source, **you should rely primarily upon summary and paraphrasing.**
4. Use Times New Roman font, 12-point type, one-inch margins, and double-spaced lines.
5. The finished paper must include the following parts:
 - Title Page
 - Table of Contents
 - Body of the Paper
 - Bibliography
 - Sermon Outline (The sermon outline is separate from the body of the paper)
6. The body of the paper should be 10-12 pages (3500-5000 words; does not include the sermon outline).
7. Upload your final paper to Populi.
8. Please arrange a backup for your computer files, either in the cloud or on a flash drive, to avoid losing your paper entirely.

CONTENT

- I. Choose a Psalm. For this assignment, you will conduct a detailed, verse-by-verse analysis of a single psalm. Because of the depth of analysis required, you should select a psalm that is manageable in length. Ideally, choose one that contains between 6 and 20 verses. This will allow you to explore the text thoroughly without becoming overwhelmed. Avoid very short psalms that may not offer enough material for analysis, as well as very long ones that could go beyond the intended scope of the paper.

- II. The body of the paper should include the following five sections:

A. Introduction

The introduction of any exegetical paper helps to introduce your reader to your research. The introduction draws your reader's attention and contextualizes the breadth and focus of your paper's topic. Your introduction should contain a thesis statement. You may use the following thesis statement: "This paper uses exegesis to explore the significance of Hannah's song to the book of Samuel." (100-200 words).

B. Exegesis

The bulk of your paper should include an exegesis of a specific passage in the Psalter (5-7 pp). The structure of your discussion may vary, depending on the Psalm. You should pay attention to structure, literary features, ancient context, theological function, and implications for theology in your ministry context (For examples of implications for Pentecostal theology, see my articles on Hagar, Lee Roy Martin's article on Psalm 1, the Exodus theme in Judges, and the articles by Rickie Moore.) These examples will be

uploaded to Populi. Students will include some theological reflections based upon their own Church context.

When analyzing the passage, consider the following questions: What is the outline, that is the apparent divisions and subdivisions of the passage? What distinguishes these parts? What holds them together? What are the prominent themes, words, repetitions, contrasts, or symbolisms, etc., and how do they function in the passage? What is the perspective, style, mood, etc.? What is the progression, development, climax, focal point, etc.? How does the passage reflect, respond, or relate to the surrounding verses and chapters? To the book as a whole? To the surrounding historical and sociological situations? To the themes, patterns, and traditions found elsewhere in the Old Testament or in the ancient world? What audience is being addressed? What response is being called for? How might this passage be speaking beyond its own day even unto our own? In light of the foregoing considerations, how is your faith and practice informed, formed, or transformed by this passage? How does your faith impact your interpretation of this passage, and how does the passage speak to your particular tradition?

C. Conclusion

Highlight the significant results of your exegesis, reiterate your thesis statement, and offer a summary of your research. Lastly, emphasize how your exegetical essay has fulfilled your thesis statement. (100-200 words).

Sermon Outline

Purpose of the Sermon Outline: One of the Learning Outcomes for this course calls for the student to be able to communicate the message of the Bible. Your writing of the paper demonstrates your ability to read and interpret the biblical text well and to communicate to the academic audience, and your preaching / teaching outline should demonstrate your ability to communicate to the local church audience.

- a. Method: The preaching/teaching outline should embody a practical approach that exemplifies your own vision for communicating the message of the passage you have studied.
- b. Structure: The preaching/teaching outline should include the following elements:
 - i. Title, Scripture Reference, Introductory statement (1 or 2 sentences),
 - ii. Thesis statement,
 - iii. Main points (and sub-points if desired) accompanied by concise sentences that encapsulate each point,
 - iv. Concluding statement (1 or 2 sentences),
 - v. Statement of Desired Outcome (what you hope your hearers will do in response to your preaching).

- **Length of Sermon Outline: 1-2 pages**

Step-by-Step Guide for Exegesis:

- a. Analyze the sections of the text that are relevant to the main themes you are developing or that support your thesis statement.
- b. Examine the immediate literary context and larger context of your text.

- c. Identify the genre of the text or passage. It could be speech, hymn, song, psalm, prophecy, dialogue, genealogy, parable, poetry, or narrative.
- d. Note any literary features such as chiasms, repetitions, parallels, etc., as well as the outline of the structure.
- e. Recognize the unique vocabulary, play words, allusions, accents, rhetoric, rhythm, etc.
- f. Explore the main theological insights and issues raised or solved through the text. Also, locate the application and relevance of the text. The commentaries will help you gain a theological perspective of the text. As you write your exegesis, you must integrate your insight with that of biblical scholarship.
- g. Cite, Cite, Cite! You must document your sources appropriately.

See Populi for an example of an Exegetical Paper.

- **Related learning outcome(s):** #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 10-12 pp (2500-3500 words) + 1–2-page outline.
- **Due date:** February 6, 2026.

Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements

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

- For this course, VOD students have *some different* assignment due dates than in-class students.
 - Reading and Class Preparation:
 - Psalter reading and textbook Introductions: due Dec 1.
 - 5 critical questions per day: due Dec 6, 13, 20; Jan 10, 17
 - Readings: due Jan 19
 - Presentation: due Dec 20
 - Day 1 Lectures and Report: due Dec 6
 - Theological Reflection Papers #1-3: due Dec 10
 - Day 2 Lectures and Report: due Dec 13
 - Theological Reflection Papers #4-6: due Dec 17
 - Day 3 Lectures and Report: due Dec 20
 - Theological Reflection Papers #7-9: due Jan 7
 - Day 4 Lectures and Report: due Jan 10
 - Theological Reflection Papers #10-11: due Jan 14
 - Day 5 Lectures and Report: due Jan 17
 - Exegetical Paper and Sermon Outline: due Feb 6
- According to the schedule above, VOD students will submit a 2–3-minute video report on Padlet 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 marked as pass/fail based on whether or not they demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the lecture content and in-class activities.
- The Late Assignment and Extension policy applies to all VOD Report submissions.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	Assignment Weighting
1. Reading & Class Preparation	30 hrs	Dec 1; Mod Week; Dec 19	15%
2. Presentation	10 hrs	Module Week	15%
3. Theological Reflection Papers	23 hrs	See the schedule above	30%
4. Exegetical Paper and Sermon Outline	37 hrs	Feb 6	40%
Total =		130 hrs	

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

Course Outline & Class & Reading Schedule

Date	Topics
Monday 1 st December Unit 1: Psalms 1-11 Unit 2: Psalms 12-23	• Syllabus; Introduction to the Psalms; Types of Psalms; Literary Genres • Psalms 1, 2, 8 • Psalms 13, 19, 22
Tuesday 2 nd December Unit 3: Psalms 24-49 Unit 4: Psalms 50-69	• Psalms 24, 40, 49 • Psalms 51, 63 & 69
Wednesday 3 rd December Unit 5: Psalms 70-88 Unit 6: Psalms 89-99 Unit 7: Psalms 100-106	• Psalms 72, 73 & 88 • Psalms 89, 90 & 91 • Psalms 100, 105 & 106
Thursday 4 th December Unit 8: Psalms 107-121 Unit 9: Read Psalms 122-135	• Psalms 107, 113 & 121 • Psalms 127, 130 & 133
Friday 5 th December Unit 10: Read Psalms 136-140 Unit 11: Read Psalms 141-150	• Psalms 136, 137 & 139 • Psalms 143, 146 & 150

- Assignments will not be accepted after *February 9, 2026*.

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.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. No extensions will be granted beyond the end of the course unless approval is granted by Horizon's Assistant Academic Dean.

A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Grading

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Descriptor
A+	97-100%	4	Exceptional
A	93-96%	4	Excellent
A-	90-92%	3.7	Excellent
B+	87-89%	3.3	Good
B	83-86%	3.0	Good
B-	80-82%	2.7	Good
C+	77-79%	2.3	Satisfactory
C	73-76%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70-72%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	67-69%	1.3	Minimal Pass
D	63-66%	1.0	Minimal Pass
D-	60-62%	0.7	Minimal Pass
F	<60%	0	Failure

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 has 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 [Student Handbook](#).

Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon is committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institution, 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 Horizon's Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu. All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the [Student Handbook](#).

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 full 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 encourages 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 Horizon College and Seminary 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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