



B423 Old Testament Wisdom Literature

3 credits. Prerequisites: B110 Intro to Old Testament & B112 Interpreting the Bible

Mississauga Campus Livestream Video on Demand

September 7-11, 2026

Module A

Monday-Friday, 10 am – 5 pm ET (8 am – 3 pm SK)

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

Course Goals

Course Description

This course explores the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament. While the study explores historical, literary, and theological issues related to these texts, emphasis will also rest upon how ancient Israelite wisdom speaks to the everyday issues of human life, work, suffering, and loss. The course focuses on a particular portion of Wisdom Literature, which includes Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, along with select psalms and prophetic writings.

Relationship to Horizon and MCS's Missions

This course contributes to the missions by developing students' competency in interpreting the Old Testament Wisdom Literature and applying its theological and practical insights to preaching, teaching, pastoral care, discipleship, and personal spiritual formation.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in *biblical and theological literacy*, students will

1. Interpret the OT wisdom literature in light of its literary and socio-historical contexts and distinct theological perspective with the assistance of relevant secondary literature.
 - *Assessment:* Theological Reflections; PowerPoint Presentation
2. Describe key interpretive issues that are critical for understanding the Old Testament Wisdom Books.
 - *Assessment:* Scripture Reading Questions; Theological Reflections

3. Identify and explain key emphases and their significance within the OT Wisdom Literature.
 - *Assessment:* Theological Reflections; PowerPoint Presentation; Wisdom & Contemporary Life Essay
4. Explain how the theological witness of the OT Wisdom Literature speaks to the way we think, live, and minister today.
 - *Assessment:* Theological Reflections; PowerPoint Presentation; Wisdom & Contemporary Life Essay

Course Work

Required Readings

Lucas, Ernest. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Psalms and Wisdom Literature*. Vol. 3 of *Exploring the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003. ISBN: 978-0830853113.

[DTL](#)

**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

Before and During Module Assignments

1. Scripture Reading Assignment.

Before and throughout the module week, students are expected to read the books of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes according to the course schedule. These readings are essential for meaningful participation in lectures, discussions, and class activities.

Reading Schedule:

- Job – Complete before the first day of class (Monday)
- Proverbs – Complete before Wednesday's class session
- Ecclesiastes – Complete before Thursday's class session

Although the reading assignment and accompanying questions will be submitted together after the module, students are expected to stay current with the reading schedule so they are prepared for each day's classroom interaction.

- **Due date:** September 7 at 10am ET, September 9 at 10am ET, September 10 at 10am ET

2. Scripture Reading Questions – 15%

As you complete each assigned biblical book, develop a list of thoughtful questions that arise from your reading. These questions should demonstrate careful engagement with the text and may address issues such as literary features, historical background, theological themes, interpretive challenges, or aspects of the text that require further study.

Prepare at least one typed page of questions for each biblical book (Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes). Number each question and format the document with:

- Times New Roman, 12-point font
- One-inch margins
- Single-spaced text

These questions are intended to cultivate careful observation and critical reflection, serving as a starting point for class discussion and deeper interpretation during the intensive.

Upload the assignment to Populi by the assigned due date following the intensive.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2.
- **Assignment length:** 3 pages minimum (single-spaced).
- **Due date:** Friday, September 11.

Post-Module Assignments & Reading

3. Textbook Reading

Post-module week, students will continue reading the course textbook in order to support and strengthen their understanding of Old Testament Wisdom Literature and to assist them in completing their remaining assignments.

Students are expected to read the following chapters in their textbook:

- Wisdom and Wisdom Literature
- Proverbs
- Job
- Ecclesiastes

This reading is not tied to a separate written assignment or percentage grade. Instead, it is required preparation that will directly support your assignments. Students should complete this reading gradually over the weeks following the module and ensure it is finished before submitting their final course assignments.

Engaging these chapters carefully is essential for successful completion of the course requirements and for deeper understanding of the biblical wisdom books.

4. Theological Reflections on Wisdom Literature – 25%

The purpose of these reflection papers (3 reflections; 400-500 words each) is to help students engage the Old Testament Wisdom Literature academically, personally, and spiritually. Each reflection encourages careful interpretation of Scripture, thoughtful theological reflection, and practical application for Christian life and ministry.

Students will write **three** reflection papers (400–500 words each), one for each of the following books:

- Job: chapters 38-42

- Proverbs: chapters 1-9
- Ecclesiastes: chapter 12

Each reflection should include the following four sections:

1. What does this passage teach about God? (200–250 words)

Choose **one** major theological truth from the passage and explain it. Support your discussion with examples from the biblical text. Consider questions such as:

- What does this passage reveal about God's character?
- What does it teach about God's purposes?
- What does it teach about humanity or the Christian life?

2. What is challenging or difficult about this passage? (50–100 words)

Identify **one** question, tension, or interpretive challenge in the passage. Briefly explain why this issue is significant. Examples might include:

- A difficult teaching
- An unexpected statement
- A theological question
- Something that requires careful interpretation

3. How does this passage shape your heart? (50–100 words)

Reflect on how the passage speaks to your attitudes, desires, or emotions. For example:

- Does it encourage hope?
- Does it inspire worship?
- Does it challenge pride?
- Does it deepen trust in God?
- Does it call for repentance or wisdom?

4. Living Wisely Today (100–150 words)

Explain **one** practical way this passage can influence Christian life or ministry today.

Consider how it applies to areas such as:

- personal spiritual growth
- relationships
- decision-making
- leadership
- discipleship
- counseling
- preaching or teaching
- ministry in the church

Conclude with one specific application you intend to practice or teach.

If you use any outside sources in your assignments (books, articles, websites, or lecture notes beyond course materials), you must properly cite them and include a bibliography. Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines.

- Related learning outcomes: #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 400-500 words (double-spaced).

- **Due date:** Reflection 1: September 14; Reflection 2: September 17; Reflection 3: September 21.

5. Wisdom Book Overview PowerPoint Presentation – 30%

Students will choose **one** Old Testament Wisdom Book (Proverbs, Job, or Ecclesiastes) and create an illustrated PowerPoint presentation (8–10 slides total) that introduces the book to a general Christian audience.

The purpose of this assignment is to help students clearly summarize the message of a wisdom book and communicate it in a simple, visual, and organized way.

Your presentation must include the following slides:

1. **Title Slide**
Include the book you chose, your name, course number, and date.
2. **Introduction to the Book**
Briefly explain what the book is about and why it is important.
3. **Historical Background**
Who wrote it (if known), when it was written, and its general setting.
4. **Major Themes** (2 slides minimum)
Identify and explain 2–4 key themes in the book.
5. **Key Teaching About God**
What does this book teach about God's character or actions?
6. **Wisdom in the Old Testament**
What does this book teach us about wisdom? How does it help us understand what biblical wisdom looks like in Proverbs, Job, or Ecclesiastes?
7. **Modern Application**
How does this book speak to life today in the church or Christian living?
8. **Conclusion Slide**
Summarize the main message of the book in 2–3 sentences.

Students must include charts, maps, or graphics.

Students must properly cite 2-3 scholarly sources and include a bibliography. Please see the Horizon & MCS Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines.

- Related learning outcomes: #1, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 8-10 slides.
- **Due date:** October 7.

6. Wisdom and Contemporary Life Essay – 30%

In this assignment, students will explore how the Old Testament Wisdom Literature speaks to real-life issues today. The goal is to connect biblical wisdom with contemporary Christian living in a thoughtful and practical way.

Students will select one contemporary issue from the list below (or another approved topic):

- anxiety
- money and finances

- social media
- leadership
- marriage and relationships
- sexuality
- justice
- suffering
- work and vocation
- friendship
- technology
- identity

Students will then write a 5–7-page essay that explains how the wisdom books of the Old Testament (Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes) speak to that issue.

Your essay should include:

- 1. Explanation of the Issue**
Clearly define the modern issue you are discussing and explain why it is important today.
- 2. Biblical Wisdom Teaching**
Identify and discuss relevant passages from Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes that speak to this issue.
- 3. Theological Insight**
Explain what these passages teach about God, humanity, and the nature of wisdom.
- 4. Christian Application Today**
Discuss how the biblical teaching should shape the way Christians think, live, and respond to this issue today.

Use clear references to Scripture. Organize the paper with headings if helpful. Support your ideas with 3-5 scholarly resources and specific biblical passages.

Students must properly cite their sources and include a bibliography. Please see the Horizon & MCS Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines.

- Related learning outcomes: #3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 5-7 pages (double-spaced).
- **Due date:** October 16.

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 *the same and different* course assignments but different due dates as in-class students.
 - Scripture Reading Assignments –September 7, 9, 10
 - Scripture Reading Reflections – September 11
 - Theological Reflection 1 – September 22
 - Theological Reflection 2 – September 29
 - Theological Reflection 3 – October 5

- Wisdom Book Overview PowerPoint Presentation – October 13
- Wisdom and Contemporary Life Essay – October 16.
- According to the schedule below, VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities. VOD students will submit a 2–3-minute video report 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.
 - Day 1 Lectures and Report due Saturday, September 12 at 11:59 pm EST
 - Day 2 Lectures and Report due Saturday, September 19 at 11:59 pm EST
 - Day 3 Lectures and Report due Saturday, September 26 at 11:59 pm EST
 - Day 4 Lectures and Report due Saturday, October 3 at 11:59 pm EST
 - Day 5 Lectures and Report due Saturday, October 10 at 11:59 pm EST
- Students registered to attend by VOD will fulfill the course attendance requirements through their video report submissions. They must submit their VOD reports on time to be registered as present for class.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

1. Scripture Reading Assignment	7 hrs	Sept 7, 9, 10	Assignment
Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	Weighting
2. Scripture Reading Questions	4 hrs	September 11	15%
3. Textbook Reading	See Assignment 5 & 6	N/A	N/A
4. Theological Reflections (x 3)	10 hrs	Sept. 14; 17; 21	25%
5. PowerPoint Presentation	20 hrs (PPT) +	October 7	30%
6. Essay	4 hrs (reading)		
	20 hrs (essay) +	October 16	30%
	5 hrs (reading)		
Total =	100 hrs		

All assignments are due at 8pm **ET**, unless otherwise indicated.

Course Outline

Monday	Introductions & Syllabus
	Introduction to Wisdom Literature
	Introduction to Job
	Job: The Shape of Suffering
Tuesday	Job: Voices of Wisdom
	Introduction to Proverbs
Wednesday *Chapel, 12:15pm – 1:30pm ET (10:15am – 11:30am SK)	Proverbs: The Two Ways of Life
	Proverbs: Hearing the Voice of Wisdom
Thursday	Proverbs: Wisdom in Speech and Action
	Introduction to Ecclesiastes
Friday	Ecclesiastes: The Hevel of Life

	Ecclesiastes: Fear God and Keep His Command
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Pre-Module Reading Schedule:

- Job – Complete before the first day of class (Monday)
- Proverbs – Complete before Wednesday’s class session
- Ecclesiastes – Complete before Thursday’s class session

Post-Module Reading Schedule:

Students are expected to read the following chapters in their textbook:

- Wisdom and Wisdom Literature
- Proverbs
- Job
- Ecclesiastes
- Revision week is October 19-23. Students are encouraged to submit revised assignments soon after they receive their marked assignments.
- No assignments will be accepted after the course end date: October 23, 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.

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. A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 calendar days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 calendar days late, penalty of 20%; after 6 calendar days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0 and no opportunity for revision. Any late penalty incurred on a first submission will be applied regardless of if the student chooses to continue learning through the revision process.

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.

Competency Assignment Revisions

After each assignment has been marked, students have the opportunity to continue learning in response to feedback they receive on assignments. Students can submit one revision 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 demonstrating competency. Revised assignments may be submitted up to the course end date, although students are encouraged to submit them soon after they receive their marked assignments. Assignments submitted later than one week before the course end date are ineligible for revisions.

Horizon and MCS's College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop their competency, rather than solely 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. Once a student's assignment has met all assignment completion requirements, the professor will assign a grade for that assignment. The opportunity for revisions exists according to the "Assignment Revisions" policy.

Horizon and MCS Competency Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding expectations	Student demonstrated exceptional achievement of the learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
		Student demonstrated excellent achievement of the learning outcomes.	A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting expectations	Student demonstrated good achievement of the learning outcomes.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72
BTM	Beginning to meet expectations	Student demonstrated satisfactory progress in achieving the learning outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
		Student demonstrated minimal progress in achieving the learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
NYM	Not yet meeting expectations	Student made insufficient progress toward meeting learning outcomes.	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; at Horizon, the Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu). All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the Student Handbooks. Students with documented accommodations on file pertaining to accessing course readings in alternate formats are encouraged to contact the librarian for assistance with as much advanced notice as possible.

Class Attendance

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. Students registered to attend on-campus or via livestream must be present for the full duration of a class period to be marked as present for the class. Students registered to attend by VOD must submit their VOD reports on time to be marked as present for class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss up to twenty percent of the total class time (e.g., one day of a module course, two 3-hour classes, etc.) 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 (potentially including future online video courses) 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.

Library Support and Research Assistance

Library staff are available to meet with students (online or in person) who need assistance with

- citing sources and identifying credible resources;
- developing research and information literacy skills;
- searching DTL and other library resources.

Bibliography

Wisdom Literature (General)

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Proverbs

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Job

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