B110 Introduction to the Old Testament

3 credits. Prerequisites: *None.*
For Horizon students, this course is transferable to the University of Saskatchewan.

🎞 Online Video

January 11 – April 16, 2027
Winter 2027

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The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. —Exodus 34:6

Course Goals

Course Description

This course is a general introduction to the content and theology of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. It will survey key portions according to the ancient near eastern cultural, social, religious, and literary environment and highlight the theological importance of the Old Testament, including the nature of God revealed, for Christian life and ministry in the present-day.

Relationship to Horizon and MCS's Missions

The Old Testament is a collection of documents that narrate and comment on God's plan to dwell with his people and bless all nations through them. For Christians, the Old Testament is the first part of a story that finds its climax in Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, who completes the narrative arc that began in Genesis. Understanding the Old Testament provides ministry leaders with a holistic perspective on the God who desires to make his home with his people, experienced through the indwelling presence and empowerment of the Spirit of Christ.

Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes

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

1. Interpret the Old Testament in reference to the ancient Near Eastern context.
   - *Assessment:* Research and Reflection Paper; Reading and Response
2. Explain the character of God as revealed in the Old Testament.
   - *Assessment:* Research and Reflection Paper; Reading and Response
3. Use the entry-level resources necessary for researching the Old Testament.
   - *Assessment:* Glossary Quizzes; Research and Reflection Paper

4. Explain or identify key terms in Old Testament studies.
   - *Assessment*: Glossary Quizzes; Research and Reflection Paper
5. Apply the theological witness of the Old Testament to contemporary issues.
   - *Assessment*: Research and Reflection Paper; Reading and Response
6. Articulate the narrative structure of the Old Testament including how it anticipates New Testament developments.
   - *Assessment*: Biblical Narrative; Research and Reflection Paper

Course Work

Required Readings

Hill, Andrew E. and John H. Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. 4th Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2023. ISBN: 9780310119562 DTL

* Note that not all chapters of the text are required reading. See the Reading and Response assignment below for details.

Selected chapters from the Old Testament. Students may use a modern translation of their choice (e.g., NRSV, NIV, NLT, ESV, etc.) but *not* a paraphrase (e.g., Passion, Message). Note that the professor will use the NRSV in class.

Optional Readings

Matheny, Jennifer M. *Ḥesed, the Seed of the Biblical Story: New Life for Old Testament Theology*. Baker Academic, 2026. ISBN: 9781540966681

**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

1. *Lectures and Padlet Reports.*

Students can access the lecture videos through Populi under the "Syllabus" tab, in the "Links" section.

Students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities as outlined in the schedule below. Students will also submit a 2–3-minute video report each week 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.

- Days 1 and 2 Lectures and Report due Monday, January 25 by 11:59pm ET
- Days 3 and 4 Lectures and Report due Monday, February 1 by 11:59pm ET
- Days 5, 6, and 7 Lectures and Report due Monday, February 8 by 11:59pm ET
- Days 8, 9, and 10 Lectures and Report due Friday, March 12 by 11:59pm ET

Students fulfill the course attendance requirements through these Padlet Report submissions. These reports must be submitted on time in order to be registered as "present" for "class."

- **Assignment length**: 30 hours.
- **Due dates**: January 25; February 1, 8; March 12

2. Reading & Response – 25%

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the Old Testament and its contemporary relevance by recording a video response to the three following questions associated with the major divisions of the Hebrew Bible.

> *Question 1 (Law)*: The books of the law focus on one main character: Moses. Describe how Moses' life is shaped by his encounters with Yahweh throughout his life. Be sure to include episodes from Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. What specific quality of Moses' life most inspires you, and why?
>
> *Question 2 (Prophets)*: God reveals himself through the day-to-day events of history. Using examples from both the Former and Latter Prophets, show how God reveals his heart differently in various situations. How does this encourage you?
>
> *Question 3 (Writings)*: The writings are full of poetry that use metaphor to describe God. Choose 2 different metaphors for God, each from a different book of the Writings, explain what it would have meant to the original hearers, and why you value it today.

Answers should draw substantially on material from the assigned readings:

> *Old Testament*: Students will *listen* to passages from the Old Testament as assigned in the Class & Listening Schedule below. This can be accomplished by listening to the chapters from a Bible website or app or by gathering as a group and taking turns reading out loud. Links to the required passages of scripture are also provided in the "Lessons" tab in Populi. All Old Testament passages must be *heard* prior to watching the lectures videos for that particular day.
>
> *Textbook*: Students will read selected chapters from the textbook as assigned in the Class & Listening Schedule. These readings must be completed prior to answering each of the questions in this assignment. Read the chapters assigned in the Law Unit prior to answering Question 1, the Prophets Unit prior to answering Question 2, and the Writings Unit before answering Question 3.

This assignment will enable students to increase their competency in biblical and theological literacy by introducing them to a representative sample of Old Testament scripture and prompting them to engage in critical evaluation. For this assignment to be considered complete, the following points must be observed:

- Video responses should be 3–5 minutes long each.
- Responses must demonstrate engagement with the text through the use of at least three specific quotations (including page numbers).

- Responses must include specific reference to relevant passages of Scripture from the relevant division of the Old Testament (Law, Prophets, or Writings).
- The video should be uploaded to a cloud service of the student's choice (e.g., OneDrive, Dropbox, Loom, YouTube, etc.) and the link to the completed video submitted on Populi as a comment on the assignment. There is no need to share this video publicly.

- Related learning outcomes: #1, 2, 5.
- **Assignment length:** Three 3–5-minute videos.
- **Due dates:**
    - Question 1 (Law): Thursday, February 4 by 8pm ET.
    - Question 2 (Prophets): Friday, February 19 by 8pm ET.
    - Question 3 (Writings): Thursday, March 18 by 8pm ET.

3. Glossary Quizzes – 20%

Study of the Old Testament will introduce students to unfamiliar terminology. New vocabulary will be introduced in the classroom sessions and reinforced by the textbook. Students' understanding of these terms will be evaluated in two quizzes where they will match the term to its definition. The first quiz covers classes 1–5, and the second covers classes 6–10. Students are encouraged to make note of unfamiliar terms as they encounter them while watching the lecture videos. Since this is a closed-book quiz and viewing the questions gives the student an advantage, there will be no opportunity for revision.

This assignment will enable students to increase their competency in biblical and theological literacy by improving their vocabulary and enabling them to read Old Testament scholarship with increased understanding. For this assignment to be considered complete, the following points must be observed:

- The quizzes are closed-book; students will close all study aids before beginning each quiz.
- Students may complete the quiz any time before the due date (after watching the corresponding classes listed above).

- Related learning outcomes: #3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 2 x 30-minute quizzes.
- **Due dates:**
    - Quiz 1: Friday, February 12 by 8pm ET.
    - Quiz 2: Wednesday, March 24 by 8pm ET.

4. Research & Reflection Paper – 35%

Students will write a research and reflection paper centered on an attribute of God. The research portion of the paper will explore this attribute by drawing on material from the Law, Prophets, and Writings as well as scholarly sources. The reflection portion of this paper will explore how the chosen attribute of God can speak to a specific contemporary situation.

This assignment will enable students to increase their competency in biblical and theological literacy by gaining a deeper understanding of God's character as revealed throughout the Old

Testament and exploring how that can inform daily life. For this assignment to be considered complete, the following points must be observed:

- The student will choose one characteristic of God as listed in ch. 45 of the textbook:
    - Creator
    - Wise
    - Only God
    - Holy
    - Transcendence
    - Righteous and Just
    - Compassionate and Gracious
    - Covenant-Making God
    - Loyal
    - Redeemer
- The character of God should be supported with three well-researched scripture passages from each part of the Old Testament: Law, Prophets, and Writings.
- Scripture passages should be understood within their historical-cultural and narrative context.
- Key terms related to the study of the chosen passages should be used accurately.
- Sources:
    - Students are expected to use a minimum of four academic sources, not including the Bible, notes from a Study Bible, and textbook. Sources should include biblical commentaries to aid in understanding the chosen passages in context and at least one article from a Bible Dictionary.
    - Sources should be current. Publication dates should be at least post 1990 and ideally post 2000.
    - Sources should be scholarly. Websites and online commentaries (e.g., Enduring Word, Got Questions, etc.) are not acceptable. The online Digital Theological Library should be your first stop for research material.
- The submission should include a title page, paper, and bibliography as specified in the Horizon & MCS Format Guide. The paper should include:
    - A brief introductory paragraph that sparks interest in the theme
    - A clear thesis statement
    - Two headings: Research and Reflection
    - A brief conclusion that summarizes the paper and points forward
- The reflection portion of the paper should describe a *specific* situation (personal, or church-related) faced by the student and explore how God's character as researched in the first section relates to the situation. This section should be 300–400 words.
- The assignment should be submitted to Populi by the date specified as a Word Document (.docx or .rtf).

- Related learning outcome(s): #1–6.
- **Assignment length:** 2,000 words, excluding footnotes and bibliography.
- **Due date:** Thursday, April 1 by 8pm ET.

5. Biblical Narrative: Quiz and Video – 20%

The Old Testament tells a complex story that spans centuries. In order to understand where the details of the Old Testament fit into the bigger picture, students will complete this two-part assignment.

> *Part One—Populi Quiz* (10%): Students will complete a 30-minute closed-book quiz on Populi where they will be required to place 40 events and literature from the Old

Testament into chronological order. Since this is a closed-book quiz and viewing the questions gives the student an advantage, there will be no opportunity for revision.

Part Two—Video Report (10%): Students will follow up the quiz by recording a video report where they explain three ways that the narrative themes of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the New Testament. To benefit from this assignment, students must think through these connections without assistance from AI search results commonly found at the top of each search result. Using AI to brainstorm this assignment is not allowed. Instead, students are encouraged to note connections between the Old and New Testaments as they come up during class time.

This assignment will enable students to increase their competency in biblical and theological literacy by assessing their capacity to see the big picture of the Old Testament and understand how the details fit into the broader story. For this assignment to be considered complete, the following points must be observed:

- Populi Quiz:
  - The quiz is closed-book: students will close all study aids before beginning the quiz.
  - The quiz will be available at the end of module week. Students may complete the quiz any time before the due date.
- Video Report:
  - The video must include 5–7 minutes of content.
  - Upload your video to OneDrive (instructions here) and then submit the link to your professor on Populi. Do not upload a video file directly on Populi.
  - Students should choose three distinct narrative themes from the Old Testament and explain how they are fulfilled in the New Testament.
  - Students should quote appropriate Old Testament and New Testament scripture references for each of the three chosen themes.

- Related learning outcome: #6.
- **Assignment length:** 30-minute quiz, 5–7-minute video.
- **Quiz due date:** Wednesday, April 7 by 8pm ET.
- **Video due date:** Friday, April 9 by 8pm ET.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Classroom time	30 hrs	Jan 25; Feb 1, 8; Mar 12	N/A
1. Reading and Response	35 hrs		25%
a. Question 1 (Law)		Feb 4	
b. Question 2 (Prophets)		Feb 19	
c. Question 3 (Writings)		Mar 18	
2. Glossary Quizzes	5 hrs		20%
a. Quiz 1		Feb 12	
b. Quiz 2		Mar 24	
3. Research and Reflection Paper	20 hrs	Apr 1	35%
4. Biblical Narrative: Quiz and Video	5 hrs		20%
a. Quiz		Apr 7	

b. Video		Apr 9	
Total = 95 hrs			

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

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

Class & Listening Schedule

Unit	Class	Topic	Listening	Textbook	Assignments
Intro	Class 1	• Getting to know each other • Why the Old Testament?	• Psalm 78, 135, 150	• Ch. 1	
Law	Class 2	• The Tanakh • Introduction to the Torah • Genesis	• Gen 1–4, 12:1–8, 50:15–26	• Ch. 4	• Days 1 and 2 Lectures and Report due Jan 25
	Class 3	• Exodus • Leviticus–Deuteronomy	• Exod 3, 20, 34 • Deut 6	• Chs. 5–8	
Prophets	Class 4	• Introduction to the Former Prophets • Joshua • Judges	• Josh 3–4 • Judg 13–16	• Chs. 11, 12	• Days 3 and 4 Lectures and Report due Feb 1
	Class 5	• Samuel • Kings	• 1 Sam 8 • 2 Sam 7 • 1 Kgs 11–12 • 2 Kgs 25	• Chs. 14, 15	• Question 1 (Law) due Feb 4
	Class 6	• Introduction to the Latter Prophets • Isaiah	• Isaiah 6–7, 40, 53, 61	• Chs. 27–28	
	Class 7	• Jeremiah • Ezekiel • The Twelve	• Jer 20 • Ezek 36 • Joel 2 • Mal 4	• Chs. 29, 31 • Choose one of chs. 33–44	• Days 5, 6, 7 Lectures and Report due Feb 8 • Quiz 1 (Days 1-5) due Feb 12 • Question 2 (Prophets) due Feb 19
Writings	Class 8	• Introduction to the Writings	• Psalm 1–2, 13	• Chs. 22, 23	

		• Psalms • Proverbs	• Prov 1, 8, 10		
	Class 9	• Job • The Megillot	• Job 1–2, 38, 42 • Ruth 1–4	• Ch. 21 • Choose two of chs. 13, 18, 24, 25, 30	
	Class 10	• Chronicles • Ezra-Nehemiah • Daniel • Conclusions	• 1 Chr 16 • Ezra 1, 9–10 • Daniel 7	• Chs. 16, 17, 32	• Days 8, 9, 10 Lectures and Report due Mar 12
					• Question 3 (Writings) due Mar 18 • Quiz 2 (Days 6-10) due Mar 24 • Research and Reflection Paper due Apr 1 • Biblical Narrative Quiz due Apr 7 • Biblical Narrative Video due Apr 9

- Revision week is April 12-16. Students are encouraged to submit revised assignments soon after they receive their marked assignments.
- No assignments will be accepted after the course end date: April 16, 2027.

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.

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General Old Testament

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