

COS 221 Syllabus
Hebrew Bible I
F14-221 Bible I Hebrew Bible I
United Theological Seminary

Instructor: Vanessa Oliver Ward

Course Description

This is an introductory course to the Old Testament. The focus will be on the first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Pentateuch) through the Books of I and II Kings. Students will learn to read closely the Word of God. Students will further be introduced to some of the literary, cultural, and historical issues that come to bear on the interpretation of these texts. Prerequisite: None

Course Objectives

1. To introduce the central story lines, historical settings and theological themes of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Pentateuch) through the Former Prophets.
2. To gain greater familiarity with a number of the great passages in the designated books.
3. To learn to employ the elements of biblical exegesis to interpret biblical texts assigned.
4. Exploration of the assigned passages as relevant for preaching, mission, and ministry by today's pastor and congregation.

Course Textbooks

NRSV Study Bible

Bandstra, Barry L. *Reading the Old Testament: Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, Fourth Edition. Belmont, CA.: Wadsworth, 2009. (BLB in Syllabus)

Gorman, Michael J. Gorman. *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers*. Rev. Ed. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2009.

Course Requirement

In-Class Instruction

1. Assigned Readings
2. Class Participation

On-Line Instruction

1. Two postings per week on the assigned texts
2. Two substantive responses per week to another person's post

Course Schedule

In Class Instruction: September 19-20

Before the first class, please read Bandstra, pp. 1-76; Gorman, pp. 9-33.

Bring to the first class: 1-2 page summary of the assigned reading in Gorman, pp. 9-33

NOTE: To facilitate discussion on the first day of class, it would be helpful to have all reading assignments for the first day completed before the first day of class.

September 19

Part 1: 2:30pm – 5:00pm Assigned Reading: Bandstra, pp. 77-114; Gorman, pp.64-68

1. Reading the Bible
2. Elements of Exegesis
3. Genesis 1-3; 6:5-7:24; 12:1-3; 25:21-34; 37:1-11

Topic: The “Genesis”: Written Text, Ancestral People, Land & Story

Part II: 6:00pm – 8:30pm Assigned Reading: Bandstra, pp. 114-183

1. Exodus 3:1-6; 12:1-13:16; 20:22-23:33; 34
2. Leviticus 16:6-10; 23:4-8;
3. Numbers 9:1-14; 12:1-9; 28:16-25
4. Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 12:2-7; 16:1-8

Topic: Deliverance, Covenant and Law

Tonight’s Assignment: Review Gorman, pp. 63-68. Re-Read Deuteronomy 12:2-7 and following the handout provided in class, outline this pericope and write an introduction to be discussed and submitted in class tomorrow.

September 20

Part I: 8:00am– 9:45am Assigned Reading: Bandstra, pp.186-238; Gorman, pp. 75-114

1. Joshua 1:1-9; 8:30-35; 11:15-23
2. Judges 2; 3
3. Elements of Exegesis: Historical & Literary Analyses

Topic: Deuteronomistic History; Conquest, Conflict and Security of Land

Part II: 10:00 – 11:15am Assigned Reading: Bandstra, pp. 239-259

1. I Samuel 4:1-7:1; 9:1-11:15; 20-24
2. II Samuel 7; 12

Topic: The Rise of Kingship

Part III: 11:30 – 12:30 pm Assigned Reading: Bandstra, pp. 260-286

1. I Kings 1-11; 12-16
2. II Kings 14-20

Topic: Kings and Prophets

Assignment: Post a comparison of the lives & careers of Saul & David. In what ways were they alike? How were they different? What influence do you think the DH writers had on these depictions? (Post your response by midnight on September 21. Respond to two (2) posts from two of your classmates by Monday at midnight (September 22). Do you agree with their depictions? Disagree?

Online Instruction: September 22- November 1

Week 1 (September 22 – 28)

Exegesis of Genesis 22:1-10

Week 2 (September 29 – October 5)

Exegesis of Exodus 3:9-15 or 19:10-20
Deuteronomy 27:1-10

Week 3 (October 6 – 12)

Exegesis of Joshua 1:1-9 or 6:1-5, 21
Judges 2:6-15

Week 4 (October 13 – 19)

Exegesis of I Samuel 10:17-27
II Samuel 22

Week 5 (October 20 -26)

Exegesis of I Kings 8:22-30

Final Assignment is due November 1, 2014 at midnight

SEMINARY STANDARDS:

A. Inclusive Language

United Theological Seminary has an official policy regarding the use of inclusive language. The policy may be found in the Seminary Catalog and further explained in the Student Handbook. If you have specific questions, please see the instructor.

B. Academic Integrity

Student integrity regarding all work assigned in this class is a basic expectation of the Seminary community. A detailed policy regarding what constitutes a violation of academic integrity can be found in the Student Handbook.

C. Online Confidentiality

One of the highlights of the online classroom is that students can draw from the experiences shared during class discussions and in written work. However, it is imperative that students do not share information that is confidential, privileged, or proprietary in nature. In addition, students are expected to honor the privacy and confidentiality of their classmates by not disclosing online conversations with those outside of the classroom.

I. USING ONLINE RESOURCES:

For information about how to access VirtualUnited and where to find help if you need it may be found on the seminary website at <http://www.united.edu>. Help guides are also in the student computer lab and in the Student Handbook.

II. EVALUATION

A. Assignments

- (2) In-Class Written Assignments
- (2) Two postings per week on the assigned texts
- (2) Two substantive responses per week to another person's post

All posts and responses are due by midnight Monday evening of the Assigned week.

B. Method of Determining Grade:

In Class Participation	10%
In-Class Written Assignment#1	5%
In-Class Written Assignment #2	10%
Weekly Posts	50%
Weekly Responses to Colleagues	25%

C. Grading Scale:

Excellent (Exceptional achievement)

A (4.00)

A- (3.67)

B+ (3.33)

Good (Extensive achievement)

B (3.00)

B- (2.67)

C+ (2.33)

Satisfactory (Acceptable achievement)

C (2.00)

Failure (Inadequate achievement)

F (0.00)

III. STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS

It is very important for students to submit a course evaluation toward the end of the semester. Instructors do not see the student evaluations at all until after the instructors have submitted the students' final official grades. Students should feel free to evaluate the course without any negative ramifications.