



Texas A&M
UNIVERSITY
Central Texas

RELS 5389
Hebrew Scriptures
Fall 2018

Class Location: WH 312
Class Hours: R 6-9
Instructor: Floyd Berry, PhD
Office: FH 217G
Office Hours: MTWR 2-5 (please make an appointment)
Email: (prefer Canvas message) fberry@tamuct.edu

1.0 Course Description

Overview of translated, canonical Hebrew scriptures in light of present-day scholarship. Examines and evaluates sources, historical and cultural milieus, and forms of modern criticism.

2.0 Accessing Canvas

This is a lecture course with online components in Canvas. The student accesses Canvas at <https://tamuct.onecampus.com/>.

3.0 Course Objectives

1. Students will be able to discuss similarities between biblical accounts of creation and the flood with ancient Near Eastern texts.
2. Students will be able to discuss the various sources for the Torah and TANAKH.
3. Students will submit a prose reaction to class discussions. This reaction may be cognitive, emotional, or indifferent.
4. Students will submit acceptable essays for mid-term and final exams. To be accepted, the student shall discuss all aspects of an essay question, using standard English prose and grammatical construction.
5. Students will submit an annotated bibliography based on peer-reviewed articles.

4.0 Textbook

4.1 Required for Course

Coogan, M. D. (2013). *A reader of ancient near eastern texts: Sources for the study of the Old Testament*. New York: Oxford.

Coogan, M. D., & Chapman, C. R. (2018). *The Old Testament: A historical and literary introduction to the Hebrew scriptures* (4th ed.). New York: Oxford.

Jewish Publication Society. (2014). *The Jewish study bible* (2nd ed.). Edited by A. Berlin & M. Z. Brettler. Oxford: Oxford.

4.2 Recommended but Not Required

- American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. NOTE: *This work will be referred to as the APA manual in this syllabus and in the course.*
- Armstrong, K. (1993). *A history of God: The 4,000-year quest of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. New York: Ballantine.
- Armstrong, K. (2007). *The Bible: A biography*. New York: Grove.
- Charlesworth, J. H. (Ed.)(1983). *The Old Testament pseudepigrapha, volume one: Apocalyptic literature and testaments*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.
- Charlesworth, J. H. (Ed.)(1983). *The Old Testament pseudepigrapha, volume two: Expansion of the "Old Testament" and legends, wisdom and philosophical literature, prayers, psalms, and odes, fragments of lost Judeo-Hellenistic works*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.
- Dalglish, E. R. (1977). *The great deliverance: A concise exposition of the book of Exodus*. Nashville: Broadman.
- Friedman, R. E. (1987). *Who wrote the Bible?* New York: Harper Collins.
- Gunkel, H. (1964/1901). *The legends of Genesis: The Biblical saga and history* (W. H. Carruth, Trans.). New York: Schocken.
- Hackett, J. A. (2010). *A basic introduction to biblical Hebrew*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.
- Hoffman, J. M. (2004). *In the beginning: A short history of the Hebrew language*. New York: New York University.
- Johnson, P. (1987). *A history of the Jews*. New York: Harper.
- Koren Publishers Jerusalem. (2008). *The Koren large type Torah: Hebrew five books of Moses*. N.P.: Toby Press. 9789653010598.
- Niditch, S. (1997). *Ancient Israelite religion*. New York: Oxford.
- Oxford University Press (2018). *The new Oxford annotated bible with Apocrypha* (5th ed.). Edited by M. D. Coogan. Oxford: Author.
- Pritchard, J. B. (Ed.). (1969). *Ancient near eastern texts relating to the Old Testament* (3rd ed.). Princeton: Princeton.
- Sáenz-Badillos, A. (1993). *A history of the Hebrew language* (J. Wolde, Trans.). New York: Cambridge.
- Schama, S. (2013). *The story of the Jews: Finding the words, 1000 BC-1492 AD*. New York: Harper.
- Schniedewind, W. M. (2004). *How the Bible became a book*. Cambridge: Cambridge.
- Speiser, E. A. *The Anchor Bible: Genesis*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Toorn, K. van der. (2007). *Scribal culture and the making of the Hebrew Bible*. Cambridge: MA: Harvard.
- Wise, M., Abegg, M., & Cook, E. (2005). *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A new translation* (2nd ed.). New York: Harper.

5.0 Course Requirements

5.1 Exams (400 pts)

The student will take two exams, a mid-term and a final. The exams are essays, written in a blue book. **Work not done in a blue book will not be graded.** Blue

books are available from the bookstore. Each exam is valued at 200 points. The student has a maximum of two hours to take the exam, given immediately after roll call. The exam window closes, however, when two hours have elapsed. The mid-term exam will receive comments from the instructor and will be returned to the student. Any use of books, notes, or internet (through cell phones) is forbidden during these two exams. Students are encouraged to review their work before submission. The following rubric will guide the instructor:

Qualities & Criteria	Poor	Good	Excellent
Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of topics to be addressed • Information is correct • Coherency <p><i>(Weight: 70%)</i></p>	Not objective and poorly addresses the issues. Information is unnecessary or insufficient to discuss the issues. <p>(0-109 pts)</p>	Mostly objective and addresses most of the issues. Information is mostly necessary and sufficient to discuss the issues. <p>(110-131 pts)</p>	Objective and addresses all the issues. Information is necessary and sufficient to discuss the issues. <p>(132-140 pts)</p>
Quality of Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity • Grammar and English usage • Organization and coherence <p><i>(Weight: 30%)</i></p>	Poorly written and contains flagrant spelling and grammatical errors. Poorly organized, lacks clarity, and is incoherent. <p>(0-40 pts)</p>	Mostly well-written, without egregious spelling or grammatical errors. Organized, clear, and ideas are presented in coherent ways. <p>(41-55 pts)</p>	Well-written, without egregious spelling or grammatical errors. Well organized, clear, and ideas are presented in coherent ways. <p>(56-60 pts)</p>

A week before each exam, the instructor will provide students with two exam questions. This practice provides the student with a week's worth of preparation. It is highly recommended that students compose some outline of how they will write their essays and commit that outline to memory. After beginning the exam, students may wish to write their memorized outlines on the blank exam questions page, given to students before they begin their exams. This practice provides coherency and organization for one's essay.

NOTE: Graduate students are expected to have adequate knowledge of the essentials of grammar, writing style, and paper organization in accordance with the APA manual or other writing manuals. If the student does *not* have adequate knowledge in these areas, then the purchase and use of additional books are recommended. Failure to provide written work in accordance with the essentials of acceptable, English writing style and APA guidelines will result in poor grades. Examples of non-standard English usage include, among other things, sentence fragments, run-ons, dangling modifiers, lack of agreement between pronouns and their antecedents or subjects and verbs, bulleted items, flagrant misuse of

punctuation, slang or abbreviated expressions, and excessive use of metaphorical language.

5.2 Class Participation (300 pts)

Students are expected to participate in class discussions, indicating an understanding of the reading material and how to apply it. Students earn a point for full attendance on a specific day (appears on time and does not leave early). Students earn an additional point for participating in class discussion. (No points are awarded on exam days, however.) Thus, the student earns 0-2 points on each class day (total of 12 days), which corresponds to the following grade:

Points	Grade	Points	Grade
24	300	13	132
23	286	12	118
22	272	11	104
21	258	10	90
20	244	9	76
19	216	8	62
18	202	7	48
17	188	6	34
16	174	5	20
15	160	0-4	0
14	146		

NOTE: If students are tardy (appears in class after roll is called), it is their responsibility to notify the instructor at the conclusion of class (before leaving the classroom that evening), that they arrived in class and would like to receive some credit for class participation. Failure to notify the instructor *may* result in an absence for that day. **Also, the graduate student is allowed one absence without major deduction of points (based on Class Participation rubric). A second absence, however, results in a lowering of final course grade (e.g., A becomes B, B becomes C).**

Cell phone use is forbidden during class, and such behavior is not awarded class participation points.

5.3 Academic Integrity Document

During the first week of class, the student is to read the section in the syllabus on Academic Integrity (section 8.0) and the link provided in that section regarding plagiarism. The student must sign the document (also in Canvas, under Modules) pertaining to Academic Integrity and return it to the instructor. **NOTE: Students will not be allowed to continue in the course without notifying the**

instructor of their comprehension of this material (by signing the document and submitting it to the instructor).

5.4 Annotated Bibliography (300 pts)

The student will submit an annotated bibliography of ten sources from the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* pertaining to topics related to Hebrew Scriptures or the Old Testament. The student accesses the Journal through the online University Library. The student clicks on Academic Search Complete and then in the search box enters Journal of the American Academy of Religion as a "Journal Name." The student should get hundreds or thousands of articles to browse through. The annotated bibliography shall consist of ten pages, one for each source.

In the header, students shall identify themselves by name. In the text, students provide the reference information in APA style at the top of each page. Below the reference entry, students shall summarize the findings of the author(s). The student shall use Times New Roman 12 typeface, double-spaced, and normal margins. A half to a full page of notes is sufficient. All notes shall be confined to one page for each source.

Each source is worth 30 points, for a total of 300 points for the assignment.

6.0 Grading Matrix and Conversion

6.1 Matrix

	Points
Exams (2 @ 200)	400
Class Participation	300
Annotated Bibliography	300
Academic Integrity Document	-----
Total:	1000

6.2 Conversion to Course Letter Grade

Points	%	Grade
900 – 1000	90 – 100	A
800 – 899	80 – 89	B
700 – 799	70 – 79	C
600 – 699	60 – 69	D
0 – 599	0 – 59	F

7.0 Course Calendar¹

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
8/30/18	Syllabus Academic Integrity Religious Studies	Syllabus Academic Integrity/plagiarism readings (sect. 8.0 of syllabus) Power Point Discussion	
9/6/18	Introduction Torah, Pentateuch, Books of the Bible, Abbreviations Writing Systems	C, chs 1-2 JSB, "Torah," pp 1-6 JSB, pp xx-xxv ANET, pp 1-7	Academic integrity document due before 6 pm (hard copy)
9/13/18	Creation stories, Enuma Elish The Fall	C, ch 3 JSB, "Genesis," pp 7-10 Gen 1-3 ANET, pp 1-15	
9/20/18	Formation of the Pentateuch The Flood Gilgamesh Epic	C, chs 4-5 Gen 6-9:19 ANET, ch 2	
9/27/18	Patriarchs	C, ch 6 Gen 12-50	
10/4/18	Exodus Theophany at Sinai, Decalogue Covenant	C, chs 7-8 Ex 1-15, 19-20	
10/11/18	Law and Ritual Ark of the Covenant Review for Exam	C, ch 9 Ex 25: 10-22	
10/18/18	Mid-term Exam		Blue Book!
10/25/18 (cont)	Kingship United Kingdom Saul, David, and Solomon	C, chs 15-17	

11/1/18	Israel and Judah Prophecy Fall of Samaria	C, chs 18-19	
11/8/18	Hezekiah Josiah Fall of Jerusalem	C, chs 20-22	
11/15/18	Exile	C, ch 23	
11/22/18	No class		
11/29/18	Post-exilic Judah	C, chs 24-26	Annotated Bibliography (hard copy) due at 6 pm
12/6/18	Final Exam		

¹ Events are subject to minor revision

² C = Coogan & Chapman, *The Old Testament* (4th ed.); ANET = Coogan, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, JSB = *The Jewish Study Bible* (2nd ed.). ch = chapter, chs = chapters, p = page, pp = pages

8.0 Academic Integrity

TAMUCT expects all students to maintain high standards of personal and scholarly conduct. Students guilty of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, self-plagiarism (“recycling”), or collusion. The instructor shall initiate action for each case of academic dishonesty and report it to the Associate Director of Student Conduct. Zero points are assigned for any course product that violates academic honesty. The student should access this link for more information: <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>.

9.0 Disability Support

If students believe that this course may present barriers to learning due to a disability, they must contact Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831 in Warrior Hall, Ste. 212. For more information, students may visit their website at <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html>. Any information that the student provides is private and confidential and will be treated as such. The instructor cannot accommodate students’ disabilities unless they first communicate with Access and Inclusion.

10.0 Diversity in the Classroom

Respect for cultural and human biological diversity are core concepts within the social sciences. In this course, each voice in the classroom has value in contributing to class discussion. The student should respect the different experiences, beliefs, and values expressed by one’s fellow students and instructor, and refrain from derogatory comments about other individuals, cultures, groups, or viewpoints. In this course we welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, citizenships, disabilities, education, ethnicities, family statuses, genders, gender identities, geographical locations, languages, military experiences, political views, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences.

11.0 Writing Center

The University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University-Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students. The UWC is located in Warrior Hall, Rm 416. One may contact Dr. Bruce Bowles at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu for more information.

12.0 Late Work

As a rule, make-up work for the two exams will not be accepted. In some cases, however, the mid-term exam may be accepted late, but with a 20-point deduction for each day late. *In no instance will a make-up exam be offered for the final exam, and in no instance will a make-up for the mid-term exam be given after two weeks from the original exam date.* To be considered as a prospect for making up the mid-term exam, the student must contact the instructor within 24 hours of having missed the exam for purposes of making it up. The final course grade will be posted within a few days of the final exam; therefore, *no incompletes will be awarded for this course.* If students foresee that they will be unable to complete the course, then they should either drop the course or accept the posted grade.

13.0 Modification of the Syllabus

This syllabus may be revised in minor ways at the discretion of the instructor. The student is responsible for noting any changes in the syllabus. More than likely, a change in the syllabus will pertain to events in the course calendar (sect. 7.0). If modified, the revised course calendar will be posted on Canvas and will replace section 7.0 of the syllabus.

14.0 Contact with the Instructor

The student should contact the instructor via the message feature of Canvas about any topic or issue that pertains to the course.

15.0 Announcements

The student is responsible for checking Canvas on a near-daily basis for ongoing announcements or messages pertaining to the course.

