

COS211 HEBREW BIBLE 1

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Required Texts:

- Bernard Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament* (5th edition)
- Terence Fretheim, *The Pentateuch*
- Michael Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis* (revised and expanded edition)
- Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David Peterson, eds., *The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary*
- Harold Attridge, ed., *HarperCollins Study Bible* (NRSV)

(The HarperCollins is not essential, but you will need a good study Bible, in the NRSV. The HarperCollins is the best of the ones with which I am familiar.)

Course Description:

This course introduces the collection of texts known as the Hebrew Bible. It includes an overview of the creation and formation of this canon, and an exploration of the three earliest periods represented in these texts: the pre-Israelite traditions, the exodus and formation of the tribal league, and the united monarchy. We will also touch on the eighth-century prophets and the beginnings of deuteronomic reform. The course offers a background in both the historical and theological interpretation of these texts, and focuses specifically on exegetical methodology and responsible Christian interpretation.

Course Objectives:

1. Formation of a historical overview of the life and faith of ancient Israel.
2. Exegesis of selected passages that illustrate crucial turning points in the history of Israel.
3. Correlation of exegesis with its utilization in preaching and other pastoral functions.
4. Reflection upon ways in which God has been at work in the lives of people in these biblical materials.
5. Ongoing development of an exegetical methodology.
6. Application of these studies to the concerns and issues of the present day.

Pre-Class Assignments (please upload all assignments to the Perkins locker system by the date indicated)

For all pre-class assignments in this course, please adhere to the following guidelines. Keep a Bible with you as you read from the textbooks. Read the biblical passages to which the textbook authors refer (even if this means skimming references that are multiple chapters in length). In all written work, use quotations very sparingly. Summarize the relevant information provided in the textbook in your own words, citing the source of your information. Your responses should be double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, with one inch margins (saved as a Microsoft Word.doc). Specific page lengths are given for each item.

Part 1 - Overview & Pre-Israelite Traditions (Due on August 9, 2013):

Read:

Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament*, pp. 1-47
Fretheim, *The Pentateuch* (the entire book)

Writing Assignment:

Identifications:

In your own words, summarize Anderson's discussion of the following topics (1 page each).

- Source Hypothesis (Documentary Hypothesis)
- "Invaders" of the Fertile Crescent (make sure to discuss the 'Apiru')
- "God of the ancestors"

Short Answer:

1. In your own words, summarize Fretheim's discussion of the three general approaches to biblical interpretation (i.e., "the world behind the text," "the world within the text," and "the world in front of the text"). What are the distinctive elements of each approach? (3 pages)
2. In your own words, summarize Fretheim's "proposal for reading the Pentateuch" (pp. 39-63). How does the Pentateuch serve as a "beginning"? As an "ending"? How does Fretheim nuance these ideas? (3 pages)

Part 2 - Exodus, Settlement, and Tribal League (Due October 4, 2013)

Read:

Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament*, pp. 48-194

Writing Assignment:

Identifications:

In your own words, summarize Anderson's discussion of the significance of the following (2 pages each):

- YHWH
- covenant
- occupation of Canaan (make sure to cover all of the theories Anderson provides)
- tribal confederacy
- "Israel's Epic Narrative"

Part 3 - The Monarchy (Due October 25, 2013)

Read:

Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament*, pp. 195-323

Short Answer:

1. In your own words, summarize Anderson’s discussion (pp. 196-227) of the establishment of a monarchy in Israel. What circumstances led to this development? What benefits did the monarchy provide? What burdens did the monarchy place on the people? Briefly discuss both the positive and negative outcomes of this monarchic development in Israel’s history. (5 pages)
2. In your own words, summarize Anderson’s discussion (pp. 228-323) of the historical circumstances in which each of the following prophets flourished: Elijah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah. (5 pages [approximately one page for each prophet])

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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Part 1 of the pre-class work for courses 211 must be submitted electronically through the Locker system (see information below) **no later than August 9, 2013 at 11:59.59 p.m.** Pre-class work submitted after August 9 will have grading penalties assessed as follows: (grades are expressed alphabetically from A to F, with F being the lowest grade)

- Submissions dated August 10 - August 16 will receive a one letter grade reduction
- Submissions dated August 17 - August 23 will receive a two letter grade reduction.
- Submissions dated August 24 or later, the student will be dropped from that course registration with no refund (of registration or fees)

A request for an extension requires the following:

- It must be submitted in writing to the director of the Course of Study School. Via e-mail, send to Jeannie Trevino-Teddle at COSSExt@smu.edu. Via regular mail, send to COSS Extension, P.O. Box 750133, Dallas, TX 75275-0133. By fax, send to 214-768-1042). **Make sure that you notify the COSS office of any transmission.**
- It must be received by August 1, 2013
- It must state valid reason(s) for needing an extension
- It must state the course name(s) and number(s) for which the extension(s) is/are requested
- It must state the amount of time being requested (not beyond August 23)

In order for an extension request to be considered, the student must be fully registered (i.e., fees paid, signatures acquired, and Course Registration forms filled out and submitted). Before a decision can be made regarding an extension, the Director will consult with the student’s district superintendent, local pastor registrar and instructor.

Electronic Submission for Pre Class Assignments

Course of Study School Lockers

The Course of Study School is using a "Locker System," Locker.SMU for the submission of pre-class assignments. This system allows Course of Study School students to submit their pre-class assignments electronically.

A Locker will be assigned to each student for each class they are taking. For example, if you are taking Hebrew Bible I (211) and Formation Discipleship (213) you will be assigned two different Lockers. The instructor for each course will then be able to log in to the Locker System and retrieve your submitted assignments for each particular class.

When your registration is received, the Course of Study School staff will be creating your private Locker and informing you via e-mail when your Locker has been successfully created. In this email, you will receive specific instructions on how to access your Locker and how to upload your assignments.

If you have not registered by July 12, 2013, you will not be guaranteed a locker. Please contact Rebecca Payan at the Course of Study office (214.768.2362 or rpayan@smu.edu) to make arrangements for receiving a locker.

The Locker System will automatically date and time stamp your submitted assignments to inform the instructor and the Course of Study School staff when the assignment was submitted.

The pre-class assignments should be submitted to the Locker System in Microsoft Word **ONLY in .doc format.**

When you are ready to submit your pre-class assignments online, but have not received an e-mail with information on how to access your private Locker, please contact the Course of Study School staff at COSS@smu.edu with the subject line: Locker Access. The Course of Study School staff will then reply with specific instructions on how to access your Locker and how to upload your assignments.

The completed pre-class work for courses 211-514 must be submitted to the Locker System **no later than August 9, 2013, at 11:59:59 p.m.** Pre-class work submitted to the Locker System after August 9th will incur grading penalties as mentioned above on the grading guidelines.

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Students should keep a printed copy of each assignment and bring a copy of each assignment to class regardless of how the assignment was submitted.

In addition, students should include a one-page autobiography for each instructor.

Each assignment should be typed, double-spaced, or legibly handwritten, with pagination numbers, and be accompanied by a completed cover sheet. A copy of the cover sheet can be found in the Course of Study School web site under Satellite School and can be photocopied, it will also appear as a preloaded file when you access your locker.

Guidelines for writing pre-class assignments and information on academic dishonesty are provided in the Course of Study School catalog, available on the website. Students are expected to understand what constitutes plagiarism. Students who are found to plagiarize are subject to grading penalties, which may include dismissal from the school.

Information on Academic Responsibility and Plagiarism can be found in the Perkins Course of Study School Catalog (pp. 14-16), which is available at the following website: <https://www.smu.edu/Perkins/PublicPrograms/COSS/Catalog>.