I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a general introduction to the theology, literature, and history of salvation as expressed in the Old Testament. It explores the major theological themes, genres, people, and events of the Old Testament with special attention to the relationship of the OT to Jesus Christ.

Our interaction with the OT is intended to not only increase knowledge, but also encourage spiritual growth and skill in understanding how the Old Testament continues to function as Scripture for us today.

This is an introductory course and so we will not have the time to cover each chapter of the Old Testament thoroughly. It is my prayer that the foundation that we establish in this course will be further solidified and built upon in other Trinity courses and throughout your life.

II. COURSE GOALS: By the end of this course students will, Lord willing:

1. Gain a working knowledge of the history, major themes, content, genre, and theology of the Old Testament. This includes a basic understanding of each book's historical background, genre, content, theological message and place in the canon of Scripture.
2. Gain a familiarity with the historical and cultural ancient Near Eastern context of the Old Testament.
3. Describe Israel's geography and the location of historical sites in the ancient Near East that are important for our understanding of the Old Testament.
4. Be better equipped to read the Old Testament as Christian Scripture with a focus on understanding how the Old Testament is a book about Christ.
5. Appreciate the relevance of the Old Testament for teaching, preaching and Christian
living.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES: In order to achieve these goals, students will:

1. Read, summarize, and evaluate one major OT theologian.
2. Develop the skill to identify major theological themes, genres, and trajectories in the Old Testament.
3. Develop the skill to identify major persons, places and events in the ANE and the Old Testament.
4. Develop the ability to communicate the richness of the Old Testament books to a diversity of people in diverse ministry settings.

IV. COURSE OUTCOMES: Because of this class, students will:

1. Be able to identify major themes, trajectories, and genres in the Old Testament.
2. Be able to identify major persons, places, and events in the ANE that are important for understanding the Old Testament.
3. Preach and teach from the Old Testament with biblical-theological sensitivity and clarity, with an emphasis on how the various portions of the Old Testament point to and find their fulfillment in the person, work, and teachings of Jesus.

The learning outcomes for Trinity School for Ministry are:

1. The student will recognise and identify the biblical theology evident in the course work.
2. The student will be able to articulate an Anglican understanding of biblical, historical, systematic, and pastoral theology.
3. The student will be able to communicate effectively the Christian message to a diversity of people in order to advance the mission of God.
4. The student will be prepared to lead effectively in a variety of Christian communities.

M.Div.: The student will be prepared to lead effectively in a variety of Christian communities.

MAR: The student will be equipped to apply scholarship to the life of the church in his or her chosen theological discipline.

This course furthers all four of these goals, but it will make a particular contribution in helping students to articulate a biblical theological understanding of the OT (1) and effectively communicate an often ignored and/or misunderstood portion of Scripture (the OT) to a diversity of people in diverse ministry settings (3,4).
Along with the objectives related to knowledge and skill that will be assessed through your written work, there are other objectives that are worth mentioning, even though your development in these areas will not be formally assessed. Seminary education is not just a matter of growing in knowledge and skill, but also in one’s relationship with God and one’s Christian character as a disciple of Jesus. I pray [I truly do] that your work in this course will promote such growth.

V. TEXTBOOKS
Our main textbook will be the Old Testament. Use a reliable English translation (not a paraphrase) of the OT such as ESV, RSV, NASB, NIV, and NKJV. We have a tremendous amount of reading to do. Familiarizing ourselves with the text of the OT is necessary if we are to develop our appreciation for the big redemptive picture that unfolds in the Bible. This in turn will help us appreciate how the OT gives Christians the bearings to understand where we come from and where we are going.

OTHER TEXTS:


Books for Book Review:

Heine, Ronald E. Reading the Old Testament with the Ancient Church: Exploring the Formation of Early Christian Thought (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007) [197 pp].

OR


OR

Wright, Christopher J.H. Knowing Jesus Through the Old Testament (Downers Grove, ILL.: IVP Academic, 1992) [252 pages].

RECOMMENDED:


INTERNET RESOURCES:

Anyone can post anything on the Internet without any sort of peer review mechanism, so – user Beware! However, here are a few websites you may find helpful:

www.bestcommentaries.com

www.biblegateway.com

www.bible.org

www.logos.com

http://tyndaletech.blogspot.com

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING SYSTEM

Class Attendance. This is the basic minimum course requirement. All students are expected to attend all classes and to have completed the assigned reading before class begins. The Student Handbook “Students who miss more than three classes in one term may forfeit credit for the class and may be in danger of failing the course. As a matter of courtesy, students who must miss any classes should notify their professors, ahead of class.”

NB: Due to the Covid-10 pandemic, weekly video lectures will be posted on Google Classroom. Students are to listen to the lectures and submit 2-3 comments, observations, and/or questions to the professor no later than Wednesday, 12:00 pm (noon) each week. We will meet in person as a class (if Covid-19 permits) each Thursday morning at 8:30 am, beginning with Morning Prayer, followed by the weekly quiz, and then a 1-hour discussion time based on the student submissions. Students are
expected to come to class having read the assigned pages, listened to the lecture, and prepared to discuss the pertinent material knowledgably. Each week both students and professors will have the option of the joining the in-class sessions remotely should health concerns be an issue. Instructions on how to do so will be given by the IT Department at a later date. If the pandemic worsens, and we are forced to shut down, we will follow the same schedule and meet on Zoom.

**Assignment One:** Choose one of the following books and write a seven-page book review. In the first three pages, write a brief summary of the author’s major points. For the last four pages write a critical analysis of particular features of his discussion that you found interesting, helpful, or troublesome (i.e. were certain topics ignored or too readily dismissed by the author?).

The Book Review format should be: double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point.

**Due: Fri, October 2, 2020. [25%].**

Heine, Ronald E. *Reading the Old Testament with the Ancient Church: Exploring the Formation of Early Christian Thought* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007) [197 pp].


Wright, Christopher J.H. *Knowing Jesus Through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, ILL.: IVP Academic, 1992) [252 pages].

**Late papers will be assessed a penalty of one full letter grade.**

NB: Please stick to the page limits. I will not read beyond page 8.


**Assignment Two:** Weekly quizzes – timeline, ANE map, Israel map, and prophets chart (25%). I will drop the lowest quiz grade before tallying your total.

**Assignment Three:** Comprehensive Final Exam based primarily on class lectures and quiz materials [Tuesday, December 15, 2020, 9-11am] (50%)
NB: The first question on the exam will be, “What percentage of the Dillard/Longman reading assignments did you complete?” [This question will be worth 10% of the final exam grade.]

Class grade will be based on:
Quizzes – 25%
Book review – 25%
Final Exam – 50%

COURSE AND SCHOOL POLICIES:

PLAGIARISM: Simply put, plagiarism is ‘literary theft’ and as such is a serious offense. It is a violation of an author’s/artist’s intellectual property rights. Please see the Academic Catalog for a full explanation of Trinity’s plagiarism guidelines and note, as stated there, that every student is expected to be fully aware of the guidelines. A student who plagiarizes will automatically receive a failing grade on the assignment and risks failing the course. If a student does not know whether they may be engaging in plagiarism, they are encouraged to speak to Leslie Thyberg, our Learning Skills Coordinator.

INCOMPLETES: Incompletes are not normally given and are granted only in the most serious of cases. They are not granted as a way to extend the semester due to incomplete work. In order to request an incomplete, student must obtain the necessary form online and bring to the professor who will list the specific assignments to be completed with due dates. The due date cannot be beyond six weeks from the last day of class. The form will be submitted to the Academic Dean for final approval.

ATS review of student work: As per The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) requirements, several samples of student work may be randomly selected and used as a class artifact as part of an on-going assessment of courses and degree programs. Students’ names will be removed from any work used for this purpose.

VII. Grading System:
Trinity School of Ministry has the following grade scale: A = 100-95; A- = 94-90; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-83; B- = 82-80; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-73; C- = 72-70; D = below 70; F = below 60. The following is offered as a guide, rather than a set of rules.

B: Work will demonstrate broad (sufficient information is covered) and deep (supporting material is offered) coverage of the material. Information will be accurate and there will be a clear and coherent structure. Coverage of the material and comments will be reasonably competent without being exceptional. B+ (89 – 87); B (86 – 83); B- (82 – 80)

C: Work will demonstrate reasonable coverage of the material but will lack breadth and depth of analysis. There will not be serious inadequacies in the information presented, but the overall structure will be characteristically unclear, narrow, and shallow and void of
imaginative and interesting analysis. C+ (79 – 77); C (76 – 73); C- (72 – 70)

D: Work will be notably defective according to the criteria outlined above. (Below 70)

F: Work will demonstrate a complete failure on the part of its author to interact with the material in accordance with criteria outlined above. (Below 60)

A: Work will demonstrate exceptional coverage of the material. What distinguishes work in this category from a “B” is the author’s ability to develop the material in breadth and depth beyond what is necessary for a good understanding of it. The author will engage with the material in a way that is often though not always marked by creativity, exceptional insight, and/or extensive research. A (95 or above); A- (94 – 90)

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SCHEDULE:

September 3:
Lecture 1: Why Study the OT?
Read: Longman and Dillard, pp.13-37
Quiz: Timeline

September 10:
Lecture 2: Revelation, Inspiration, and Canon; Overview of the Pentateuch

September 17:
Lecture 3: Genesis
Read: Longman and Dillard, 38-62
Quiz: Israel Map

September 24:
Lecture 4: Exodus and the Wilderness Wanderings; Deuteronomy: Preparing for Life in the Land
Read: Longman and Dillard, 63-119
Quiz: Israel map

October 1:
Lecture 5: Introduction to the Historical Books: Conquest and the Period of the Judges (Joshua, Judges, and Ruth)
Read: Longman and Dillard, 120-150
Quiz: Professor’s Choice

October 8:
Lecture 6: The United Monarchy: Samuel/Kings/Chronicles. Who are the Prophets? The Book of Isaiah.
Read: Longman and Dillard, 151-201; 301-20
Quiz: Prophets Chart

October 15: NO CLASS: READING WEEK

October 22:
Lecture 7: The (Divided) Monarchy, continued: The Collapse of the Northern Kingdom and the Continuation of the Southern Kingdom; Introduction to the Exilic Period: Ezekiel and Jeremiah
READ: Longman and Dillard, 321-70
Quiz: Prophets Chart
October 29:
Lecture 8: The Book of Daniel and the “Minor” Prophets
Read: 371-496
Quiz: Prophets Chart

November 5:
Lecture 9: The Post-Exilic Period and Restoration: Esther, Ezra-Nehemiah
Read: 477-502; 202-23
Quiz: Prof’s Choice

November 12:
Lecture 10: Introduction to Hebrew Poetry; Lamentations
READ: 26-30 [review]; 342-53
Quiz: Prof’s Choice

November 19:
Lecture 11: The Book of Psalms
Quiz: Prof’s Choice

November 26: NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK

December 3:
Lecture 12: Introduction to Wisdom Literature. Song of Songs and the Book of Proverbs
READ: 265-77; 289-300
Quiz: Prof’s Choice

December 10:
Lecture 13: Wisdom Literature continued: Job and Ecclesiastes [“canonical correctives” to Proverbs]
Read: Longman and Dillard, 224-36; 278-88
Quiz: Prof’s Choice