

Rel 112 Syllabus, Spring, 2012. Monday-Wednesday, 10:20-11:30 AM. Instructor: Dr. Walter Wagner. Office and Campus Mailbox: Bahnson Hall. Campus e-mail: mewhw01@moravian.edu. Other email: walterwagn@gmail.com. Home telephone: 610-974-8242. Office conversations by arrangement-appointment. Office in Bahnson Hall (Moravian Theological Seminary).

SYLLABUS

HEBREW BIBLE/OLD TESTAMENT, RELIGION 112

COURSE DESCRIPTION Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Examination of how the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament was written and what its original meanings were, using the tools of historical criticism, archaeology, and religious history. The diverse religious perspectives within the text will be explored. Knowledge of the Hebrew language is not expected. (M3). *College Catalogue*

CLASS MEETS ON MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS - 10:20-11:30

COLLEGE-BASED STATEMENTS

The purposes of 100-level courses. From College Statement:

- Introduce students to basic vocabulary/concepts, methodologies, and applications of the discipline(s) relevant to the course.
- Explore the broad subject matter of a given field (generally a survey course).
- Encourage development of strategies/skills (and tools) that could be applied across disciplines (ex.: writing, computing, speaking, reading).
- Encourage critical thinking and advancing/acknowledging different ways of knowing.
- Deliberately prepare students for relevant 200 level courses in the discipline(s) relevant to the course
- Generally 100 level courses have no prerequisites.

COURSE GOALS:

1. to provide the student with a sound working knowledge of the material covered in class and the readings;
2. to acquaint the student with a range of views related to the course and the backgrounds of those views;
3. to provide the student with on-going incentives to continue the study of the questions, issues and responses raised in the course, and to be able to critique and evaluate positions that the student will encounter in the future;
4. to engage students in direct analysis and expression of materials covered; and
5. to encourage the student continually to examine and re-examine his/her own questions, nature of the issues, and developing responses.

PERSPECTIVES From Dr. Wagner (often hereinafter referred to as WW):

This course deals with history, philosophy, literary developments and interpretations. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT THE FIELD OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES IS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE.

Regardless of one's background, no one approaches Biblical literature as a "neutral observer," or without "pre-understandings." The course is not intended to indoctrinate students either for or against any religious, social, or political tradition. Students will hear me speak in different "voices," such as **instructor of basic academic "stuff,"** sometimes **defender of a position and/or theory,** and sometimes as **critic of the same position and/or theory.** When I speak **knowingly in my own voice,** I will identify that voice, offer other views, and respect the views of students. **We** will be pushed to present our own interpretations and views **in light of the basic "stuff," considered analysis, and with mutual respect.** Any question that is asked honestly is not a "foolish question." I may respond in ways intended to clarify and sharpen the questioner's inquiry.

COLLEGE ADVISABLE STATEMENTS: with slight WW modifications

1. Any student who wishes to disclose a disability and request accommodations under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) for this course first **MUST** meet with staff Concerning Academic Honesty, please consult the relevant sections in the College Catalogue and the Student Handbook.
Bottom Line: the work you do is to be your work. Essentially, by our being in the course

together, you and I are in a covenant of trust with each other. Trust me to do my best with integrity and sound scholarship, and I trust you to do the same with the work that is submitted for a grade. You may consult with one another, the internet, etc. – ☹ but woe to plagiarists and those who “lift” from the internet! **BE VERY CAREFUL ABOUT INTERNET SOURCES!!** If you have questions about a source’s accuracy/and/or integrity, please see me first.

2. While the syllabus includes a grading grid, I reserve the right to make a **one way qualitative judgment** in developing a final grade. That means, for example, if you have a disaster on a test but do super work on most other factors, I **may** go beyond the end-term numerical grade. The qualitative judgment **will not reduce** the numerical total of graded factors in composing a final grade.
3. While the syllabus is intended to be similar to a contract between the student and the professor, there may be some changes or modifications, such as shifts of dates or changes in the anticipated subjects to be taken in class. **My motto is “Let there be no surprises.”**
4. About Attendance. I intend to be on time at every class that the College is open, and I expect you to be there and on time, too. Legitimate reasons supported by credible evidence (from the Dean of Student’s Office, etc.) will be acknowledged. **MORE THAN 2 UNEXCUSED “CUTS” WILL REDUCE THE FINAL GRADE.** If a religious holy day that you really observe and on which you are not to write or will be home for the observance, please inform me **ahead of time**.
5. About “Participation.” *Participation entails being present, plus keeping awake, alert, doing the readings, being able to respond to questions, and making thoughtful contributions to class discussion. Cell/Smart phone are to be turned OFF during class. No texting, tweeting or surfing during class.*
6. About Incompletes and missed quizzes and tests: Unless disasters, epidemics, etc. that are substantiated through student services and/or the Dean’s office, the rule is not to grant Incompletes or make-ups.

GRADING GRID: Total of 100 points.

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|---------------|---|
| A = 90-100, | Excellent, way beyond expectations, extra effort |
| B = 89-80, | Very good, better than expectations, competent |
| C = 79-70, | Average |
| D = 69-60, | Below average but passing |
| F = below 60, | Inadequate grasp of the material, failure |

THIS COURSE:

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|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| First Quiz: | 20 points, Emphasis on Basic Terms. |
| First Essay Exam | 20 points, February 24 |
| Second Essay Exam | 20 points, April 11 |
| Final Exam | 30 Points. |
| Participation: | 10 points |
| <u>TOTAL:</u> | <u>100 points</u> |

ABOUT THE EXAMS:

1. **Essay-style Exams** should be learning experiences. By studying and then responding, a person makes connections and is able to express herself/himself more maturely (as well as accurately) than in “objective quizzes.”
2. I look for three factors in grading essays:
 - a. what did the student say that is expected (**accuracy**);
 - b. what did the student not say that is expected (**completeness**); and
 - c. how did the student say it (**style, spelling, grammar**).
3. **I will distribute the essay question choices (including the Final Exam Essays) ahead of time.** The **same essay** choices will be on the exams. You may engage in conversations with each other, form study groups, and/or go it alone in preparing for the exams. But when exam times come, you do your own work.

ANTICIPATED TEST DATES:

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| First Quiz: | 20 minutes. January 25 | 20 points |
| First Essay Exam: | Full Period, February 24 | 20 points |
| Second Essay Exam: | Full Period, April 11 | 20 points |
| Final Exam: | TO BE SET BY THE DEAN | 30 points |

I am willing to run review sessions for the Essay and Final Exams: time and place to be arranged.

REQUIRED TEXTS: WE WILL REALLY USE THESE!

HarperCollins Study Bible with Apocryphal/Deutero-Canonical Books, New Revised Standard Version translation. The Student Edition is in the Bookstore. This is the book we will use. Do not substitute other translations or other “Study Bibles” for our work in the course.

How to Read the Jewish Bible by Marc Zvi Brettler. Oxford University Press

An Introduction To The Old Testament. The Canon and Christian Imagination by Walter Brueggemann, Westminster/John Knox Press.

READING and EXAMS ROSTER

HANDOUTS DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS AND ON THE BLACKBOARD COURSE SITE ARE TO BE READ AS IF THEY ARE CLASS PRESENTATIONS UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

DATE READ FOR THIS CLASS

January 16: **Getting Started. No assignment yet. *Interpretation Matters***

January 18: **READ FOR THIS CLASS:**

BIBLE: xiii-xxviii, xxxi-lxviii,

Brettler: xi-28

Brueggemann: xi-xiii

January 23, 25: **READ FOR THIS WEEK**

BIBLE: IN THIS ORDER: 2 Chronicles 36:15-23; Malachi 4:1-5; Genesis 1-11

January 25: 20 MINUTE QUIZ ON INTERPRETIVE MATTERS

January 30, February 1: **READ for this week**

BIBLE: Genesis 12-50

Brettler: 29-48

Brueggemann: 15-42

February 6, 8 **READ for this week**

BIBLE: Exodus 1-20; Leviticus 16-19; Numbers 11-17; Deuteronomy 1-7, 10-14, 25-34.

Brettler: 49-94

Brueggemann: 43-100

February 13, 15: **READ for this week**

BIBLE: Joshua 1-8, 23-24. Judges 1-5, 19 and as much as possible – great accounts!

Brettler: 95-136

Brueggemann: 100-143

February 22, **READ for this week**

BIBLE: 1 Samuel; 2 Samuel 5-18, 1 Kings 1-4, 9-12, 16-22; 2 Kings 1-7

Brettler: 137-197

Brueggemann: 145-190, 209-228

FEBRUARY 24: MID TERM EXAM: FULL PERIOD

February 27, 29: **READ for this week**

BIBLE: Amos, Hosea, Nahum

Brettler: 199-218

Brueggemann: 191-208, 228-244

March 3-11 SPRING BREAK

March 12, 14: **READ for this week**

BIBLE: Isaiah 1-39, Micah, Habakkuk

Brettler: 219-241

Brueggemann: 244-291

March 19, 21: **READ for this week**

BIBLE: Jeremiah, Obadiah, Lamentations, Zephaniah

Brettler: 243-283 [END BRETTLER]

Brueggemann: 293-317, 363-402 [END BRUEGGEMANN]

March 26, 28: **READ for this week**

BIBLE: Ezekiel 1-4, 37. Isaiah 40-56, 60-66. Joel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

April 2, 4: **READ for this week**

BIBLE: Psalms 1, 8, 22, 23, 51, 107 and any 4 others of your choice. Proverbs 1-8, Job, Ecclesiastes. Song of Songs (a/k/a Song of Solomon).

April 6-9: BREAK**APRIL 11: EXAM FULL PERIOD**

April 13: **READ for this class**

BIBLE: Daniel. Judith. 1 Maccabees 1-8. 2 Maccabees 1, 6-7,

April 16, 18 **READ for this week**

BIBLE: Ezra 1, 9-10, Nehemiah 1, 8-9, 13. Esther (Hebrew), Ruth, Jonah, In the “Additions” to Daniel: Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Song of the 3 Men; “Additions to Esther.”

April 23: Sirach 1-9, Wisdom of Solomon 1-8, Baruch

APRIL 25, (LAST CLASS)

CATCH UP

FINAL EXAMINATION: DATE AND TIME SET BY THE DEAN