



## Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

### ***Instructor Information***

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### ***Course Identification***

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Course Number: WYB1008HF  
Course Format: In-class and Remote  
Course Name: Introduction to the Old Testament I  
Location: Wycliffe College, Leonard Hall  
Time: Wednesday 7-9 PM  
Prerequisites: None

### ***Course Description***

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Introduction to Old Testament literature and history, with emphasis on application within the church. Lectures, small breakout discussion groups, and readings and quizzes or reading notes, inductive studies, and final paper.

### ***Course Resources***

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#### **Required Course Texts**

Richard S. Hess, *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016. ISBN 9780801037146

A modern translation of the Old Testament is also required (e.g. NRSV, NJPS, NET, or NASB). The NET Bible offers extensive textual notes and is available for use online or as a free download from [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org).

The textbooks for this course are available through the U of T Bookstore's website, which offers shipping or in-store pickup for physical texts. Enter your UTORid into the Bookstore's textbook tool at [https://uoftbookstore.com/buy\\_textbooks.asp](https://uoftbookstore.com/buy_textbooks.asp) to get a personalized list of all the textbooks for the courses you're enrolled in.

The textbook is also available from The Graham Library, which has acquired the eBook edition of Hess' *the Old Testament*. Please use the following link <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/lib/utoronto/detail.action?docID=4901264>

### **Recommended Books and Resources**

- I encourage you to download an audio version of the Bible <http://www.bible.is/apps>.
- <https://thebibleproject.com/> This is a fabulous crowd-funded project that has very help summaries of each biblical book as well as many other helpful topics. I recommend you watch the video of each biblical book before you read it and the textbook.
- Check out another great resource [www.bibleodyssey.org](http://www.bibleodyssey.org)

### **Course Website(s)**

- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the U of T Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>.

### **Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

<b>COURSE OUTCOMES</b>	<b>COURSE ELEMENT</b>	<b>PROGRAM OUTCOMES</b>
<b>By the end of this course, students will</b>	<b>This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:</b>	<b>This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)</b>
• identify the content, structure, and themes of the books of Genesis through 2 Kings	Weekly quiz or reading notes on Scripture and textbook; inductive studies on Genesis and Judges; final the final assignment	<b>MTS: 1.1</b> <b>MDiv: 1.1</b>
• identify various ways Old Testament texts have been interpreted throughout history, including current issues in Old Testament scholarship	Weekly quiz or reading notes on textbook	<b>MTS: 1.2</b> <b>MDiv: 1.2</b>
• read and analyze a biblical book and suggest ideas for its application for the church today;	inductive studies on Genesis and Judges	<b>MTS: 1.2</b> <b>MDiv: 1.2</b>
• identify and outline the structure, contents, and basic	class assignment	<b>MTS: 1.1, 2.1</b> <b>MDiv: 1.1, 2.1</b>

timeline of events in the Old Testament		
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## Evaluation

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### Requirements

The breakdown of the assignments for the fall semester is as follows:

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| 1) Quizzes on Scripture and Textbook Readings or Notes on Textbook (some weeks there will be drama option) (top 7 out of 8) | 15% |
| 2) Inductive Study on Genesis (due September 29)  | 25% |
| 3) Inductive Study on Judges (due Nov 3)  | 25% |
| 4) Timeline chart 1 page (due Nov 24)   | 5%  |
| 5) Final paper (December 15)  | 30% |

Lectures will be held once a week for two hours except during the weeks when a seminar is scheduled to replace the second lecture hour. Regular and faithful attendance at lectures and seminars is mandatory. There will be weekly quizzes on the readings from the assigned biblical reading and the textbook. At least half of the questions will be from the assigned biblical reading. This is intended to encourage you to prioritize biblical over textbook reading, but obviously both are important. The quizzes will be done in class. Some students may prefer to prepare reading notes on the on the textbook and on the assigned biblical readings. The weekly reading notes on the textbook should be no more than one page per chapter or no less than 1/2 page. Notes on biblical texts and seminar readings are not required. Only the top 7 quizzes or reading notes (out of 9) count towards your grade.

### Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

**Late work (BD).** Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. One percentage point per day may be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline. The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline

that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

## **Policies**

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**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as> The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges: <https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/>

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>.

**Back-up copies.** Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

**Obligation to check email.** At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at [www.utorid.utoronto.ca](http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca). The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

**Email communication with the course instructor.** The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

## **Class Schedule**

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**Week 1 (September 15)** Introduction: History of the Study of the OT in the Church.

**Week 2 (September 22)** History of the Study of the OT in the Church (continued).

**Read and be Prepared to discuss** Amanda Benckhuysen's posted chapter on the Gospel of Eve 7-22.

**Week 3 (September 29)** Genesis. **Inductive study on Genesis due before class**

**Read** Sloan for a great treatment of Genesis 1-3.

**Week 4 (October 6)** Genesis continued; Exodus.

**Quiz 1:** Genesis and Exodus, (*The Old Testament: Hess, The Old Testament* chaps 1 and 2).

**Week 5 (October 13)** Leviticus.

**Quiz 2:** Leviticus, (Hess, *The Old Testament*, chap 3); seminar reading on Comparative ancient Texts- Corporal Punishment in the ancient world posted on Quercus.

**Week 6 (October 20)** Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Ritual Law.

**Quiz 3:** Numbers, Deuteronomy; (Hess, *The Old Testament*, chap. 4, 5).

Read about the suspected adulteress in Num 5:11–31, the rite of the spurned widow in Deut 25:5–10 and sacrifice in Lev 1–3 in preparation for dramatic presentations. Drama option.

**Week 7 (October 27)** Reading Week.

**Week 8 (November 3)** Deuteronomy, The Theology of the Pentateuch.

**Inductive study on Judges due by class time today.**

**Week 9 (November 10)** Joshua, Ruth.

**Quiz 4:** Joshua, Ruth Hess, *The Old Testament* ch 6, 8

**Week 10 (November 17)** Judges.

**Quiz 5:** Hess, *The Old Testament* chaps. 7. Seminar on Texts of Terror: Judges 19–21. Come to class having read the short piece by nineteenth-century Anglican on Judges 19, Josephine Butler, “A Typical Tragedy: Dead Hands upon the Threshold;” and the fascinating article by Black American scholar Koala Jones-Warsaw, “Toward a Womanist Hermeneutic: a Reading of Judges 19–21,” *A Feminist Companion to Judges*, 172–86; if you have time, read the following excellent piece John Thompson, “Reading Sex and Violence,” in *Reading the Bible with the Dead*, 185–214.

**Week 11 (November 24)** 1 and 2 Samuel.

**Quiz 6:** 1-2 Samuel; Hess, *The Old Testament*, chap. 9

**One-page Timeline due by class time today.**

**Week 12 (December 1)** Kings.

**Quiz 7:** 1-2 Kings (TOT, chap. 10).

**Week 13 (December 8)** 1-2 Chronicles Hess, *The Old Testament* chap.11

**Quiz 8:** Seminar on Canonical Criticism. Come to class having read Brevard Childs, “The Old Testament as Scripture of the Church,” *Concordia Theological Monthly* 43 (1972) 709–22. For a great lecture on Childs’ life and legacy see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QXiWTK6SRI&t=13s>

**Week 14 (December 15)** **Final Paper due by class time today.**

### **1. Instructions for Inductive Studies**

Use the following headings to organise your paper. Be sure that the amount of space devoted to each section reflects its value. That is, if you state the theme of the book in only two sentences, you will not receive the full 25 marks.

#### **1. Table of contents with captions (10%)**

I am looking for appropriateness, conciseness and – to a lesser extent- creativity. (N.B. Don't be constrained by the traditional chapter divisions; remember that they are a late addition to the text and may not always be helpful in outlining the structure of a biblical book).

#### **2. Analysis of the book's structure (35%)**

Expand and justify your table of contents. How did you come up with your structure? What are the major sections of the book? How are these sections subdivided? Are the sections of a different literary style (poetry, biographical or sermonic material)? Be sure to defend your assessment of the book's structure.

#### **3. Theme of the book (25%)**

What is the one central message or theme of the book? How is this theme developed? Be sure that you don't confuse the theme of the book with sub-themes or motifs. Be sure to support your assessment of the theme with evidence from the biblical text.

#### **4. General observations and theological insights (20%)**

What are some of the more prominent theological emphases of the book? How are they developed? How do these emphases relate to other books in the Bible?

#### **5. Ideas for preaching or teaching: questions for further study (5%)**

How would you preach or teach this book? Provide a brief outline (be specific) and be sure to indicate your intended audience (adult congregation, Sunday school, etc.). Also include a list of questions for further study that emerge from your paper.

#### **Essentials to remember:**

1. Grammar, spelling, and style will account for 5% of your grade. Be sure to proof-read your paper carefully before handing it in!
2. **Do not use secondary resources** (textbook, annotated Bible, commentaries etc.) You may use an Atlas or Dictionary for place names or puzzling terms, but make sure to cite it properly.
3. Papers should be typewritten and not more than 7 pages (not including the title page and bibliography), Papers should be double spaced with margins of no less than 1 inch; use a 12 pt font.

#### **2. Instructions for One-page Timeline – the font can be smaller than 12 but it has to be legible**

Find 3 good examples of Old Testament Timelines that you could recommend to someone in your church who felt their understanding of the main events and history in the Old Testament was inadequate. The examples can be online resources or taken from a book. Prepare a one-page timeline that will help you and others get a better handle on the key dates and figures in OT history. Include a bibliography that includes the "good examples" and any other resources you use in preparing your timeline.

### **3. Instructions for Thematic Paper**

**Option A:** In this assignment I want you to discuss how the call of Abram in Gen 12:1-3 is pivotal to Genesis-2 Kings. Your paper should consist of four sections. In the first section discuss Genesis 12:1-3 and outline the Lord's promises to Abram. In the second section discuss how the passage relates to the rest of Genesis (both before and after the passage). In the third section, discuss how the passage relates to Exodus-Deuteronomy. In the fourth section, discuss how the passage relates to Joshua-2 Kings. The primary purpose of this assignment is to ensure that you have a grasp on Genesis-2 Kings as a whole. You obviously cannot include everything in this paper; look for examples that are typical or especially pertinent. As with the inductive studies, you are not permitted to consult secondary literature. The paper is to be between eight and ten pages double-spaced.

**Option B:** In this assignment I want you to discuss God's concern for the outsider (the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the marginalized) in Genesis -2 Kings. Your paper should consist of three sections. In the first section discuss the theme of the marginalized or outsider in Genesis. In the second section discuss the theme of the marginalized or outsider in the law. In the third section, the theme of the marginalized in Joshua-2 Kings. The primary purpose of this assignment is to ensure that you have a grasp on Genesis-2 Kings as a whole and the importance of the theme of God's care for outsiders. As with the inductive studies, you are not permitted to consult secondary literature. You obviously cannot include everything in this paper; look for examples that are typical or especially pertinent. The paper is to be between eight and ten pages double-spaced.

**Option C:** In this assignment I want you to discuss the theme of land and landlessness in Genesis to 2 Kings. Your paper should consist of three sections. In the first section discuss the theme of the land in Genesis. In the second section discuss the theme of the land in Exodus to Deuteronomy. In the third section, the theme of land in Joshua-2 Kings. The primary purpose of this assignment is to ensure that you have a grasp on Genesis-2 Kings as a whole and the importance of the theme of land in this material. You obviously cannot include everything in this paper; look for examples that are typical or especially pertinent. As with the inductive studies, you are not permitted to consult secondary literature. The paper is to be between eight and ten pages double-spaced.

### **4. Guidelines for Reading Notes:**

1. The syllabus sets a limit for the reading notes as one-half page (minimum) to one full page (maximum) of notes per chapter. Part of purpose of these limits is to make sure you are spending enough time in the reading, but also to make sure you not spending too much time in it as well. The assignment is not meant to be busy-work, but is there to help you work through the material and engage with it.

2. As such, a better mark is given to reading notes that are closer to the maximum than the minimum. These are more likely to engage with the chapter than those that do not. Think of it from my perspective: you are trying to show me that you have read these chapters and have engaged with them. Aim to write one full page double spaced per



chapter (12 pt font; Times New Roman or equivalent), and if you want to go a little longer (1.5 pages) that won't be a problem. Just use your time wisely.

3. Along the same lines, do not be afraid to give some examples in your summaries. For example, instead of simply writing, "The authors then summarized how the patriarchal narratives fit within their ancient Near Eastern context," it would be helpful to add in an example of how they did that, "They did this by such and such..." A little bit of extra explanation shows that are not simply leafing through only to summarize in generalities.

4. Try to imitate the authors of the book as far as time spent on certain topics. For example, if the authors spent half of a chapter summarizing the four theological themes of Genesis 1–11, then roughly half of your summary (half a page) should be concerning the four theological themes of Genesis 1–11. Emphasize what the authors emphasize; this way you should not run out of room.

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