



# Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

## *Course Identification*

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Course Number : WYB1008HF  
Course Name: Introduction to the Old Testament I  
Campus: St. George  
Time: Wednesday 11-1

## *Instructor Information*

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Instructor: Marion Taylor                      Teaching Assistants:  
[m.taylor@utoronto.ca](mailto:m.taylor@utoronto.ca)

Office Hours:                      By appointment: Wycliffe College, Room 227

## *Course Prerequisites or Requisites*

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None.

## *Course Description*

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Introduction to Old Testament literature and history, with emphasis on application within the church.

## *Course Methodology*

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Lectures, seminars, readings, paper

## *Course Outcomes*

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COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students will	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the content, structure, and themes of the books of Genesis through 2 Kings</li> </ul>	Weekly quiz or reading notes on Scripture and textbook; inductive studies on Genesis and Judges; final the final assignment or exam	<b>MTS:</b> 1.1 <b>MDiv:</b> 1.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify various ways Old Testament texts have been interpreted throughout history, including current issues in Old Testament scholarship</li> </ul>	Weekly quiz or reading notes on textbook	<b>MTS:</b> 1.2, 1.4, 1.5 <b>MDiv:</b> 1.2, 1.4, 1.5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• read and analyze a biblical book and suggest ideas for its application for the church today;</li> </ul>	inductive studies on Genesis and Judges	<b>MTS:</b> 1.2, 1.3 <b>MDiv:</b> 1.2, 1.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and outline the structure, contents and basic time line of events in the Old Testament;</li> </ul>	class assignment	<b>MTS:</b> 1.1, 2.1 <b>MDiv:</b> 1.1, 2.1

## *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.
- A modern translation of the Old Testament is also required, e.g., the *English Standard Version*, the *New Revised Standard Version*, *Tanakh: The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text*.

### ***Recommended Books and Resources***

- I encourage you to download the audio Bible app <http://www.bible.is/apps>. You can download chapters or whole books to listen to when you're not connected to Wi-Fi.
- <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.
- For help with inductive studies, Oletta Wald, *The New Joy Of Teaching Discovery Bible Study*. (Augsberg/Fortress, 2002).
- For a helpful resource of charts, maps and time lines, *Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps & Time Lines* (Rose Publishing: Torrance, 2015).
- For help in building your OT library see <http://bestcommentaries.com/>. Great guides to classic commentaries include two older works: Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Books for Pastor and Teachers* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977) and Charles Spurgeon's *Commenting and Commentaries: A Reference Guide to Book Buying for Pastors, Students, and Christian Workers* (reprint ed.; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1988).
- 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>.

## Class Schedule

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**Week 1 (September 11)** Lecture: Introduction: History of the Study of the OT in the Church.

**Week 2 (September 18)** Lecture: History of the Study of the OT in the Church (continued). **Inductive study on Genesis due before class today.**

**Week 3 (September 25)** Lecture: Genesis. *Quiz 1*: Genesis, *The Old Testament*, TOT chap 1; Write out the Books of the OT

**Week 4 (October 2)** Lecture: Genesis continued; Exodus. *Quiz 2*: Exodus, (TOT chaps 2).

**Week 5 (October 9)** Lecture: Leviticus. *Quiz 3*: Leviticus, (TOT, chap 3); seminar reading posted on Blackboard. Seminar on Ancient Near Eastern comparative literature.

**Week 6 (October 16)** Lecture and Drama: Numbers, Deuteronomy and Ritual Law. *Quiz 4*: Numbers, Deuteronomy; (TOT, 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.

**Week 7 (October 23)** Reading Week.

**Week 8 (October 30)** Lecture: Deuteronomy, The Theology of the Pentateuch. **Inductive study on Judges due by class time today.**

**Week 9 (November 6)** Lecture: Joshua, Ruth. *Quiz 5*: Joshua, Ruth TOT ch 6, 8

**Week 10 (November 13)** Lecture: Judges. *Quiz 6*: TOT chaps. 7. **One page Time line due by class time today.** 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 20)** Lecture: 1 and 2 Samuel. *Quiz 7*: 1-2 Samuel; (TOT, chap. 9)

**Week 12 (November 27)** Lectures: Kings. *Quiz 8*: 1-2 Kings (TOT, chap. 10).

**Week 13 (December 4)** Last Lecture. *Quiz 9*: (1-2 Chronicles TOT 11). 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 given by Robert Wilson his colleague at Yale see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QXiWTK6SRJ&t=13s> Check out also “Canonical Criticism” in *Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation*, edited by Corrine L. Carvalho. Oxford

Biblical Studies Online, which you can access through the University of Toronto library [electronic resource].

*Week 14 (December 11) Exam or Final Paper Option due by class time today.*

## *Evaluation*

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### **Requirements**

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. The summary of the biblical readings should focus on major story line and themes. Again 1/2 to no more than one page per book. Those doing reading notes should also make it a priority to read the assigned Bible readings. Notes on seminar readings are not required. Only the top 7 quizzes or reading notes (out of 9) count towards your grade.

All written assignments are due at the beginning of the class hour. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The minimum penalty for a plagiarized paper is the grade of zero. If you borrow ideas or distinctive phrases, you must acknowledge your source(s) properly.

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 (drama) (top 7 out of 9) | 15% |
| 2) Inductive Study on Genesis (due September 18)                                | 25% |
| 3) Inductive Study on Judges (due Oct 30)                                       | 25% |
| 4) Time Line chart 1 page (due Nov 13)  | 5%  |
| 5) Final Exam or Thematic Paper (December 11)                                   | 30% |

## ***Inductive Study***

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 related 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 (annotated Bible, commentaries etc.) You may use an Atlas or Dictionary for place names or puzzling terms, but make sure to cite them 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.

#### ***One page Time Line – the font can be smaller than 12 but it has to be legible***

Find 3 good examples of Old Testament Time lines 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 time line 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 time line.

### ***Thematic Paper Option Instead of Exam***

**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.

### **Grading System**

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

## *Policy on Assignment Extensions*

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office.

**One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.**

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

## *Policies*

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**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. 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* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges ([http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm)).

**Turnitin.com.** Students may be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

**Writing Style.** The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), which is available at Crux Books.