

Syllabus for
BIB 437-97—Psalms and Wisdom Literature
3.0 Credit Hours
Summer 2011—Directed Study

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the wisdom books of the Old Testament (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes) and of the action books (Psalms, Song of Solomon, and Lamentations). It emphasizes Hebrew poetry and its relation to other ancient literature, including Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom of Solomon.

Course Prerequisites: BIB 222, 306, and THE 217

II. COURSE GOALS

The aim of this course is to help the student become familiar with the origin, structure, and purpose of Old Testament Poetry and to enhance the student's skills as an interpreter of the biblical texts, particularly the poetic and wisdom literature of the Old Testament.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS COURSE

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- A. Discuss the structure of Hebrew poetry, including poetic parallelism.
- B. Prepare an outline of the purpose and significance of the Hebrew poetic wisdom literature.
- C. Discuss the messages of the individual books.
- D. Show the development of these worship and wisdom books in relation to the religious and cultural development of Israel.
- E. Discuss the ancient Near Eastern parallels to Hebrew poetic literature.
- F. Explain the value of these books to the life of the Church.
- G. Discuss the relevancy of these books to today's individual.
- H. Write a Christian testimony of the student to his or her spiritual and practical growth as a result of the study.

IV. TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

A. Required

Brown, William P. *Character in Crisis: A Fresh Approach to the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996. ISBN 0-8028-4135-X.

D&L=Dillard, Raymond B., and Tremper Longman III. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994. ISBN: 0-310-43250-2.

EBC 4=Gaebelein, Frank E., ed. *1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job*. Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 4. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988. ISBN: 0-310-36460-4.

EBC 5=Gaebelein, Frank E., ed. *Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Vol. 5. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991. ISBN 0-310-36470-1.

Longman III, Tremper. *How to Read the Psalms*. Downersgrove: InterVarsity Press, n.d. ISBN 0-87784-941-2.

Murphy, Roland E. *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996. ISBN 0-8028-4192-9,

B. Recommended

Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. *The Messiah in the Old Testament*. Studies in Old Testament Biblical Theology, ed. Willem VanGemeren and Tremper Longman III. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995. ISBN: 0-310-20030-X.

Kee, Howard Clark. *The Cambridge Annotated Study Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. ISBN: 0-521-50875-4.

Walton, John H. *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament*. Revised and Expanded ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994. ISBN: 0-310-48161-9.

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. University Policies and Procedures

1. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory at Oral Roberts University. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.
2. Students taking a late exam because of an unauthorized absence are charged a late exam fee.
3. Students and faculty at Oral Roberts University must adhere to all laws addressing the ethical use of others' materials, whether it is in the form of print, electronic, video, multimedia, or computer software. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating involve both lying and stealing and are violations of ORU's Honor Code: "I will not cheat or plagiarize; I will do my own academic work and will not inappropriately collaborate with other students on assignments." Plagiarism is usually defined as copying someone else's ideas, words, or sentence structure and submitting them as one's own. Other forms of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to) the following:
 - a. Submitting another's work as one's own or colluding with someone else and submitting that work as though it were his or hers;
 - b. Failing to meet group assignment or project requirements while claiming to have done so;
 - c. Failing to cite sources used in a paper;
 - d. Creating results for experiments, observations, interviews, or projects that were not done;
 - e. Receiving or giving unauthorized help on assignments.

By submitting an assignment in any form, the student gives permission for the assignment to be checked for plagiarism, either by submitting the work for electronic verification or by other means. Penalties for any of the above infractions may result in disciplinary action including failing the assignment or failing the course or expulsion from the University, as determined by department and University guidelines.

4. Final exams cannot be given before their scheduled times. Students need to check the final exam schedule before planning return flights or other events at the end of the semester.
5. Students are to be in compliance with University, school, and departmental policies regarding the Whole Person Assessment requirements. Students should consult the Whole Person Assessment handbooks for requirements regarding general education and the students' majors.
 - a. The penalty for not submitting electronically or for incorrectly submitting an artifact is a zero for that assignment.
 - b. By submitting an assignment, the student gives permission for the assignment to be assessed electronically.

B. Department Policies and Procedures

Note: Attendance policy is enforced. Excessive absences will affect your grade. See syllabus attendance policy.

1. Completion of a Course
 - a. All assignments are due on the dates established in the course calendar, which is published in the syllabus or assigned in class. **Any assignments turned in after the scheduled due date will be penalized five percent (5%) of the original value per day including weekends, breaks, and holidays.**
 - b. **No work** is accepted after the final date of regular classes.
2. Incompletes
 - a. An incomplete is given only after the student establishes with the instructor and the department chair by written petition that his or her work is incomplete for good cause (i.e., lengthy illness, death in the family). **Incompletes are rarely granted.** Only those absences that are incurred within the time period of the extenuating circumstances prompting an incomplete will be excused. The student is still accountable for any other absences and will be penalized for them according to the attendance policy.
 - b. A Petition for Incomplete Grade with all supporting documentation must be submitted for approval at least one week prior to the end of normal classes. The submitting of a petition does not automatically ensure the granting of an incomplete. The petition must be approved by the appropriate academic committee of the Undergraduate Theology Department.
3. Examinations and Other Assignments
 - a. Early examinations **are not** allowed.
 - b. Late examinations are administered only when extenuating circumstances are present (such as a death in the family the week before

exams, sudden and major illness the week of exams that is documented by a physician). In fairness to all students, some persons should not have more time to prepare for an examination than others. **The granting of a late examination request is rare.**

- c. A Petition for Late Examination without penalty must be signed by the professor and the chair. Proper documentation must accompany the petition and must be submitted to the Undergraduate Theology Department. The student must schedule the makeup exam with the professor of the course. The exam must be taken no later than five (5) calendar days after the approval of the petition. **Grade penalties may be applied as indicated by the Academic Affairs Committee.**
- d. **All** exams will be given as scheduled. It is the student's responsibility when purchasing airline tickets, for example, to take this schedule into consideration. **Not being present for the final examination automatically results in failure of the course.**
- e. These requirements apply to all quizzes, tests, and examinations administered by the Undergraduate Theology Department.

4. Attendance

- a. The Official Attendance Policy for the Undergraduate Theology Department is as follows for a three-semester hour class:
 - (1) If the class meets three times a week, the missing of 6 class sessions will result in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 12 class sessions will automatically result in a grade of "F."
 - (2) If a class meets twice a week, the missing of 4 class sessions will result in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 8 sessions will automatically result in a grade of "F."
 - (3) If the class meets once a week, then missing 2 class sessions will result in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 4 class sessions will automatically result in a grade of "F."
- b. **The absences allowed prior to grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses, and are not designed for indiscriminate use.** Many students incorrectly assume that they may use these allowable absences as unexcused "cuts" from class. Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official University business and has received approval in advance from the University administration.
- c. Students are expected to be prompt for classes. **Two tardies will equal one absence.**

C. Course Policies and Procedures

1. Evaluations

a.	Summary & Reflection	25%
b.	Essay: Existence of God	40%
c.	Essay: Messianic Prophecies	25%
d.	Reading Affidavit	<u>10%</u>
	Total:	100%

2. Whole Person Assessment Requirements

None

3. Grading Scale: A= 100-90; B = 89-80; C = 79-70; D = 69-60; F = below 60

VI. COURSE CALENDAR

In the *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, the student will find the complete text of each book of the Bible in the New International Version. For each of the Biblical books covered, the student is to read in the *Expositor's Bible Commentary* the introduction to the Biblical book in question, the Biblical text, **and the commentary on it** (the Biblical text and the associated commentary is presented passage by passage); however, the sections of the commentaries labeled "Notes" do not have to be read. The student is also to read the apocryphal books *Ecclesiasticus* (also known as *Ben Sirach*) and the *Wisdom of Solomon* in a Bible of their choice. The *Expositor's Bible Commentary* does not cover these books, so I have listed *The Cambridge Annotated Study Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version* as an optional textbook. I highly recommend its purchase as it is used in the Intertestamental Literature course.

	Longman	EBC	D&L	Murphy	Brown
Week 1					
Poetry	87–122				
Wisdom Introduction				1–13 191–193 231–233	1–21
Proverbs		5: 883–1134	235–245	15–29 193–200 234–240	22–49
Job		4: 843–1059	199–210	33–46 202–208 241–247	50–119
Week 2					
Ecclesiastes		5: 1137–1197	247–255	49–60 209–212 248–257	120–150
Ecclesiasticus				65–79 214–217 259–264	
Wisdom of Solomon				83–94 217–220 265–269	
Song of Songs		5: 1201–1244	257–265		
Murphy Conclusions				97–175 221–228 270–280	
Brown Conclusions					151–164
Week 3					
Psalms		5: 3–880	211–234		
Longman	9–85				
Longman	125–149				

Written Assignments (All of which are to be Submitted via Desire to Learn)

Assignment #1: On Line Component/Assignment: Write a summary and reflection of Brown *Character in Crisis*. Demonstrate that you have read and understood the book. Be sure to reflect on Prov 1:7 and 9:10 in the course of the essay.

Assignment #2: On Line Component/Assignment: In an essay of substantial length, discuss the importance of one's presuppositions with regard to the existence of God in the pursuit of wisdom and/or knowledge. Show how the wisdom literature informs this discussion. In so doing, discuss the following passages and what they reveal about their respective authors' views on the same question and what a Christian can learn from the books of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes in this regard: Prov. 1:7; 9:10; Job 42:1–6; Eccl. 7:15–18; 12:9–14. Discuss the passages from the apocryphal books that bear on this issue. Comment on the present state of Western culture in light of this issue. What role has the Church played in bringing about this state and what should the Church do now? What should you do?

Assignment #3: On Line Component/Assignment: Write an essay of sufficient length discussing the Messianic prophecies in the Psalms and the Wisdom Literature and how they are fulfilled in

Jesus. You will find chapters I, IV–V, and X in Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *The Messiah in the Old Testament*, very helpful.

Assignment #4: On Line Component/Assignment: On a separate sheet of paper, write a statement indicating what percentage of the assigned readings you have read and sign the statement. This is an all or nothing assignment. Anything less than all (100%) of the readings will result in no points being earned for this assignment.

Week #	Assignment Due on Friday of each week
1	No assignment due
2	Assignments one and two due
3	Assignments three and four due

Email each finished assignment by Friday at Midnight of the week due to dvance@oru.edu.

Course Inventory for ORU's Student Learning Outcomes
BIB 437-97—Psalms and Wisdom Literature
Summer 2011

This course contributes to the ORU student learning outcomes as indicated below:

Significant Contribution – Addresses the outcome directly and includes targeted assessment.

Moderate Contribution – Addresses the outcome directly or indirectly and includes some assessment.

Minimal Contribution – Addresses the outcome indirectly and includes little or no assessment.

No Contribution – Does not address the outcome.

The Student Learning Glossary at <http://ir.oru.edu/doc/glossary.pdf> defines each outcome and each of the proficiencies/capacities.

OUTCOMES & Proficiencies/Capacities		Significant Contribution	Moderate Contribution	Minimal Contribution	No Contribution
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1	Outcome #1 – Spiritually Alive Proficiencies/Capacities				
1A	Biblical knowledge	X			
1B	Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit			X	
1C	Evangelistic capability	X			
1D	Ethical behavior			X	

2	Outcome #2 – Intellectually Alert Proficiencies/Capacities				
2A	Critical thinking		X		
2B	Informational literacy				X
2C	Global & historical perspectives	X			
2D	Aesthetic appreciation	X			
2E	Intellectual creativity		X		

3	Outcome #3 – Physically Disciplined Proficiencies/Capacities				
3A	Healthy lifestyle				X
3B	Physically disciplined lifestyle				X

4	Outcome #4 – Socially Adept Proficiencies/Capacities				
4A	Communication skills			X	
4B	Interpersonal skills				X
4C	Appreciation of cultural & linguistic differences	X			
4D	Responsible citizenship			X	
4E	Leadership capacity			X	