

Syllabus for
BIB 437 Psalms and Wisdom Literature
3.0 Credit Hours
Spring 2017

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

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. Prerequisites: BIB 222, 306, and THE 217.

II. COURSE GOALS

The purpose of this course is to enable the students to become familiar with the origin, structure, and purpose of Old Testament Poetry.

This course will focus alternatively on Psalms in one semester and then on Wisdom Literature in a subsequent semester. The alternating structure (Psalms; Wisdom Literature; Psalms) allows students more time to study the poetry of ancient Israel in greater depth than would be possible when studying both collections of biblical books in a single semester.

Spring 2017: Psalms.

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. Explain 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. Describe the value of these books to the life of the Church.
- G. Explain how these books are relevant to today's individual

IV. TEXTBOOKS

A. Required Textbooks

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. New York: Basic Books, 1987.
(ISBN: 9780465004317)

Coogan, Michael D., ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha*. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. (ISBN 9780195289558)

Lewis, C. S. *Reflections on the Psalms*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1964.
(ISBN: 9780156762489)

Lucas, Ernest C. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Psalms & Wisdom Literature*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2003. (ISBN: 0830825533)

Mays, James Luther. *Psalms*. James Luther Mays, Patrick D. Miller, and Paul J. Achtemeier. Westminster John Knox Press, 1997. (ISBN: 9780804231152)

Prevost, Jean-Pierre. *A Short Dictionary of the Psalms*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1977. (ISBN: 9780814623701)

B. Recommended Textbooks

Berlin, Adele. *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*. Revised and expanded ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. (ISBN 978802803979)

Crenshaw, James L. *The Psalms: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001. (ISBN 0802808549)

Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005. (ISBN 9780801038884)

Lamp, Jeffrey S. *Writing Style Manual for the Theology Department*. ORU Bookstore, 2011.

Longman III, Tremper. *How to Read the Psalms*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1988. (ISBN 978-0-87784-941)

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. Double Cuts are assessed for absences immediately preceding or following holidays.
3. Students taking a late exam because of an unauthorized absence are charged a late exam fee.
4. 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, video, multimedia, or computer software. 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.
5. 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.

6. Students are to be in compliance with University, school, and departmental policies regarding ePortfolio requirements. Students should consult the ePortfolio handbooks for requirements regarding general education and the students' majors.
 - a. The penalty for not submitting electronically or for incorrectly submitting an ePortfolio artifact is a zero for that assignment.
 - b. By submitting an assignment, the student gives permission for the assignment to be assessed electronically.

B. School and/or 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. Late work will not be accepted. Assignments are due on or before the deadline given.
- b. Under rare circumstances, exceptions may be made in consultation with the faculty member for the course. However, except in extreme emergencies, students must contact faculty members before the assigned due date and request an exception to the policy.

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 Policy

- a. The Official Attendance Policy for the Undergraduate Theology Department is as follows:
 - (1.) If class meets three times a week, 3 unexcused absences will result in 1 grade letter reduction; 6 unexcused absences will automatically result in an "F" for the course.
 - (2.) If class meets two times a week, 2 unexcused absences will result in 1 grade letter reduction; 4 unexcused absences will automatically result in an "F" for the course.
 - (3.) If class meets one time a week, 1 unexcused absence will result in 1 grade letter reduction; 2 unexcused absences will automatically result in an "F" for the course.
- b. **The absences allowed prior to grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses, only. (Faculty may require documentation.)**
Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official University business and has received approval in advance from the University administration.
- c. The penalty for tardies is at the discretion of the instructor.

VI. COURSE CALENDAR and METHOD OF EVALUATION

Week One: Introduction

Lewis 1–8; 109–19

Week Two: Introduction (cont.)

Mays vii–39; Lucas ix–34

Week Three: Introduction (cont.): *"The Language of Worship"*

Alter ix–61; Berlin xv–17 (copy on D2L); Lucas 67–77

Week Four: Hymns and Thanksgiving Psalms

Psalms 8, 33, 100, and 138;¹ Mays & Lucas

Lewis 9–19, 90–98

Submit "Psalm Study Sheet"

Week Five: Individual Praise Psalms

Psalms 11, 23, 46, and 118; Mays & Lucas; Alter 111–36

Submit "Psalm Study Sheet"

¹ Read the Psalms listed **and** the material in Mays & Lucas on each Psalm, here and below.

Week Six: Songs of Zion

Psalm 84, 121, 125, and 126; Mays & Lucas; Lewis 76–89

Submit “Psalm Study Sheet”

Week Seven: Laments (Individual)

Psalm 6, 13, 42, and 43; Mays & Lucas; Lewis 34–43

Submit “Psalm Study Sheet”

Week Eight: Laments (National or Communal)

Psalm 44, 60, 83, and 90; Mays & Lucas

Submit “Psalm Study Sheet”

Submit Article Review

Spring Break!

Week Nine: Penitential Psalms

Psalms 32, 38, 51, and 122; Mays & Lucas; Lewis 66–75

Submit “Psalm Study Sheet”

Week Ten: Royal Psalms

Psalm 20, 21, 101, and 138; Mays & Lucas

Submit “Psalm Study Sheet”

Week Eleven: Enthronement Psalms

Psalm 93, 95–99; Mays & Lucas; Lewis: 44–53

Submit “Psalm Study Sheet”

Week Twelve: Imprecatory Psalms

Psalms 35, 83, 109, 137; Mays & Lucas; Lewis 20–33

Submit “Psalm Study Sheet”

Week Thirteen: Messianic Psalms

Psalm 2, 22, 45, 110; Mays & Lucas; Lewis 99–108, 120–38

Submit “Psalm Study Sheet”

Submit Original Psalm

Week Fourteen: Wisdom Psalms

Psalm 1, 19, 49, 127; Firth & Johnston 213–25 (copy on D2L); Mays & Lucas; Lewis 54–65

Submit “Psalm Study Sheet”

Week Fifteen: “Dead Sea Scroll Psalms”

Firth & Johnston 247–61 (copy on D2L)

Week Sixteen: *Finals Week (no class)*

METHOD OF EVALUATION

FINAL GRADE TABULATION:

1. Class participation (20%)
 2. Thesis and Bibliography (20%)
 3. Term Paper (40%)
 4. Oral Presentation (20%)
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Total: 100 percent

Attendance and Participation (20% of the final grade)

Based on attendance records, level of engagement with classmates during in-class discussion, and Weekly Reading Reports.

Preliminary Term Paper materials (10 points for each: prospectus and outline; and bibliography)

Prepare a thesis statement, paper outline, and prospectus to guide your research and also prepare a bibliography with at least 10 sources (including books, journals, and online references [no more than 2]) and present it in proper format. *Formatting guidelines available in the class website under Content; Paper Style Guides*. Submit it along with a title page (again in proper format). The submission should appear as follows:

1. Title page
2. Thesis statement (page #2)
3. Bibliography (page #3 and following)

Research Paper (40% of the final grade)

Prepare a well-researched, well-written term paper on a topic chosen in consultation with Dr. Lyons. Additionally:

1. Each essay should be 3000 words.
2. *No binding or paper covers of any kind*; a simple staple will be sufficient.
3. Part of the essay grade will include grammar, punctuation, spelling, and appropriate format.

Oral Presentation (20% of the final grade)

The last few weeks of class will be dedicated to oral presentations of student term papers.

Presentations should be 10 minutes and should include an introduction to your work, brief summary of main points, and a conclusion. Prepare and distribute an outline of your presentation for the class.

The instructional aids in the classroom and presentation creativity are especially encouraged.

Course Inventory for ORU's Student Learning Outcomes
BIB 437—Psalms and Wisdom Literature
Spring 2017

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				
1A	Biblical knowledge	X			
1B	Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit		X		
1C	Evangelistic capability		X		
1D	Ethical behavior	X			

2	Outcome #2 – Intellectually Alert				
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				
3A	Healthy lifestyle				X
3B	Physically disciplined lifestyle				X

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