

Syllabus for
GBIB 634—Wisdom Literature
3 Credit hours
Fall 2021

Modular/Distance Education Program (Blended B Course)
On campus component: October 27–29, 2021

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of the origins of the Wisdom tradition and the adaptation of the tradition within the faith of Israel. A study of the literary sources illustrates the relationship between Old Testament Wisdom and the universal wisdom traditions of the ancient Near East. Prerequisites: GBIB 505 or 551.

A study of the Wisdom Books of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes) and the Deuterocanonical books, Ben Sira (or Sirach or Ecclesiasticus), and the Wisdom of Solomon. Beginning with the ancient Near Eastern matrix of Wisdom in Mesopotamia and Egypt, students will study the roots, content, poetry, philosophy, and theology of this ancient literature and consider what it might say to modern Bible readers.

II. COURSE GOALS

The purpose of this course is to enable the student to do the following.

- A. Study the genre of Wisdom literature.
- B. Learn to use the Wisdom books responsibly as a resource for preaching and teaching.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS COURSE

As a result of successfully completing this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- A. Define and discuss the place of Wisdom books in the canon of the Old Testament.
- B. Discuss the various themes characteristic of Old Testament Wisdom.
- C. Identify and discuss the influence of Wisdom on the Psalms and Prophets.
- D. Explain the influence of the Wisdom tradition on the New Testament.

IV. TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

A. Required Textbooks

- Coogan, Michael D., ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha*. 5th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. (ISBN 9780190276072)
- Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005. (ISBN 9780801038884)
- Lucas, Ernest C. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Psalms & Wisdom Literature*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2003. (ISBN: 9780830825530)
- Murphy, Roland E. *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002. (ISBN 9780802839657)
- Perdue, Leo G. *The Sword and the Stylus: An Introduction to Wisdom in the Age of Empires*. Grand Rapid: Eerdmans, 2008. (ISBN 9780802862457)

B. Recommended Textbooks

- Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. New York: Basic Books, 2011 (1985 orig. pub.). (ISBN 9780465022564)
- Bartholomew, Craig G., and Ryan P. O'Dowd. *Old Testament Wisdom Literature: A Theological Introduction*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2011. (ISBN 9780830838967)
- Crenshaw, James L. *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*. 3rd Ed. Louisville: Westminster John Know Press, 2010. (ISBN 9780664234591)
- Dell, Katherine. *Get Wisdom, Get Insight: An Introduction to Israelite Wisdom Literature*. Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2000. (ISBN 9781573123150)
- Gammie, John G., ed., et al. *Israelite Wisdom: Theological and Literary Essays in Honor of Samuel Terrien*. New York: Union Theological Seminary, 1978. (ISBN 0891302085)
- Longman, Tremper III, and Peter Enns, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry, and Writings*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2010. (ISBN 9780830867387)
- Wood, James. *Wisdom Literature: An Introduction*. London: Gerald Duckworth and Company, 1967. (ISBN 9789997639646)

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. University Policies and Procedures

1. 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.

- 2. The Disability Service Center, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, assures that no qualified individual with a disability will be denied reasonable accommodations based upon the individual's needs. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Disability Service Center and properly register for these services. For more information, call 918.495.7018.

A. Graduate School of Theology and Ministry Policies and Procedures-Modular Distance Education Program

- 1. **Modular Intensive Week:** Each Modular Intensive Week, usually held in the CityPlex Towers on the 21st floor, has sessions Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
 - a. This week will be comprised of two 2 ½ day blended courses designated as Blended “A” and Blended “B”.
 - b. Blended “A” courses include 7 weeks of online instruction *prior to* the 2 ½ day modular intensive component.
 - c. Blended “B” courses include 7 weeks of online instruction *following* the 2 ½ day modular intensive component.
 - d. Students are to make travel arrangements that do not interfere with their involvement in all of these sessions, and confirm course location prior to arrival.
- 2. Instructions for the online portion of this course and designated assignments are to be found in the course management shell in Desire 2 Learn (D2L) and elsewhere in this syllabus.
- 3. Each overdue assignment will be penalized 10% for EACH WEEK it is late. After the third week, no credit will be given for the assignment.
- 4. **Incompletes**
 On rare occasions, the grade of “I” may be given for work that is incomplete at the end of the course semester due to a catastrophic event.
 - a. The student must establish with the instructor and the director of the Modular/Distance Education Program that work is incomplete for good cause and submit a Petition for Incomplete Grade, with documentation.
 - b. **The Petition must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester or summer course session, not exam week.**
 - c. **The submission of a petition does not automatically ensure the granting of an Incomplete.**
 - d. The petition must be approved by the academic committee of the

Graduate School of Theology and Ministry.

- e. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate the petition, make up any incomplete work, and submit a completed Request for Grade Change form (which has been signed by the course professor) to the academic office.
- f. If the work is not completed by the end of the subsequent semester, the incomplete will automatically convert to an “F,” unless an extension is formally granted.

4. Attendance

- a. Students are to attend all sessions associated with the specific blended course designation during the modular intensive week.
- b. All absences, late arrivals, and early departures receive a grade reduction equal to 2.5% for each classroom hour missed and **must be approved by the Modular Director.**

B. Course Policies and Procedures

1. Evaluation Procedures

a. Grading

- Weekly Reading Reports (20)
- Two Article Reviews (40 points)
- Two Short Essays (40 points)

b. Grading scale

- A=90-100%
- B=80-89%
- C=70-79%
- D=60-69%
- F=59% and below

2. Whole Person Assessment Requirements

WPA requirements for this course:
None

V. COURSE CALENDAR – INTENSIVE WEEK AGENDA

Wednesday, October 28, 2021 BLENDED B		
10:45 a.m.	12:00 noon	Chapel
12:00 noon	2:00 p.m.	Lunch/Modular Program Orientation
2:30 p.m.	3:15 p.m.	Welcome!
3:15 p.m.	3:30 p.m.	Break
3:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.	Intro to Wisdom Literature Class
4:30 p.m.	5:30 p.m.	(cont.)

Thursday, October 28, 2021 BLENDED B		
8:30 a.m.	9:00 a.m.	Intro to Wisdom Literature
9:00 a.m.	10:00 a.m.	(cont.)
10:00 a.m.	10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 a.m.	12:00 noon	Wisdom During the Kingdoms of Israel & Judah
12:00 noon	1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	3:15 p.m.	Wisdom During the Kingdoms of Israel & Judah (cont.)
3:15 p.m.	3:30 p.m.	Break
3:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.	Wisdom During the Neo-Babylonian Empire
4:30 p.m.	5:30 p.m.	(cont.)
FRIDAY, October 29, 2021 BLENDED B		
8:30 a.m.	9:00 a.m.	Wisdom During the Seleucid Empire
9:00 a.m.	10:00 a.m.	(cont.)
10:00 a.m.	10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 a.m.	12:00 noon	Wisdom During the Roman Empire
12:00 noon	1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	3:15 p.m.	Wisdom During the Roman Empire (cont.)
3:15 p.m.	3:30 p.m.	Break
3:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.	
4:30 p.m.	5:30 p.m.	

Weeks One: Introduction

“Introduction to the Poetical and Wisdom Books,” *NRSV* 5th ed. (2019): 729–33.
 Alter, Robert, “The Dynamics of Parallelism” in *The Art of Biblical Poetry*¹
 Berlin, Adele, “Parallelism and Poetry” in *The Dynamics of Biblical Poetry*²
 Lucas 2–3
 Murphy 1
 Perdue 1

Week Two: Wisdom During the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah: Proverbs

The Book of Proverbs (one chapter per day)
 Lucas 4
 Murphy 2³
 Perdue 2
 Estes “Proverbs” (*skim*)

Reading Reports due each week by Saturday @ midnight
Article Review 1 due by Saturday @ midnight

¹ Available in the class website under Content; Resources.

² Available in the class website under Content; Resources.

³ Do not overlook the “Appendix,” “Supplement,” and “Millennium Supplement” accompanying each major chapter (e.g., Proverbs, Job, etc.) as you work through Murphy’s, *The Tree of Life*.

Week Three: Wisdom During the Neo-Babylonian Empire: Job

The Book of Job

Lucas 5

Murphy 3

Perdue 3

Estes "Job" (*skim*)

Ellington, "Risking the World in Job"⁴

Short Essay 1 due by Saturday @ midnight

Week Four: Wisdom During the Ptolemaic Empire: Qohelet (Ecclesiastes)

The Book of Ecclesiastes

Lucas 6

Murphy 4

Perdue 5

Estes "Ecclesiastes" (*skim*)

Week Five: Wisdom During the Ptolemaic Empire (*cont.*): Qohelet (Ecclesiastes)

The Book of Ecclesiastes

Lucas 6

Murphy 4

Perdue 5

Estes "Ecclesiastes" (*skim*)

Article Review 2 due by Saturday @ midnight

Week Six: Apocryphal Wisdom Literature in the Seleucid Empire (*cont.*): Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus)

The Book of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus, or Sirach)

Murphy 5

Perdue 6

Short Essay 2 due by Saturday @ midnight

Week Seven: Wisdom During the Roman Empire: Wisdom of Solomon

The Wisdom of Solomon

Murphy 6

Perdue 7

Weekly "Reading Reports" (20% of the final grade)

Submit the Weekly Reading Report on Saturday each week by midnight. *Late reports are not acceptable.*

Two Article Reviews (40% of the final grade)

Prepare three well-written Article Reviews of academic articles summarizing the work and critically evaluating it. See "Wisdom Literature Article Review/Critique" on the class website for additional instructions.

Short Essays (40% of the final grade)

Prepare two well-written essays on topics from class reading assignments (professor approval required). 3–4 pages long, this exercise allows students to pursue topics of interest further than what is possible in a short week of assigned readings. If class textbooks

⁴ Available in the class website under Content; Resources.

address your topic they must be referenced in the essay. Additionally, at least three scholarly references must also be utilized in the essay, including one scholarly journal, in your research.)

**Inventory for Student Learning Outcomes
Graduate School of Theology and Ministry**

**Master of Arts in Biblical Literature
GBIB 634 Wisdom Literature William L. Lyons, Ph.D.**

Fall 2021

This course contributes to student learning outcomes for the Master of Arts in Biblical Literature degree 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.

Degree Program Outcomes	Significant Contribution	Moderate Contribution	Minimal Contribution	No Contribution
1	Translation, Biblical Language			
Demonstrate proficiency in translating the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament.	X			
2	Critical Methods of Exegesis			
Display ability to employ critical methods of exegesis from an informed theological/hermeneutical perspective.		X		
3	Major Old Testament Themes			
Correlate the major Old Testament themes, and formulate a coherent Old Testament theology.	X			
4	Major New Testament Themes			
Correlate the major New Testament themes, and formulate a coherent New Testament theology.		X		
5	Scripture in Cultural Context			
Apply the results of the critical study of Scripture in its cultural contexts to selected contemporary contexts.	X			
6	Tools/Methods of Research			
Write an advanced research M.A. thesis in Old Testament/New Testament using biblical critical tools and methods.	X			