



COURSE SYLLABUS

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SECTION 1: COURSE INFORMATION

Format: Eight weeks.

Course ID: BIOT 1433

Course Title: Old Testament Interpretation

College: College of Unrestricted Education – Department of Ministry and Theology

Prerequisites: None

Credit Hours: 3

Instructor: See the online course in MyFIRE for instructor contact information and availability.

Course Description

The course serves as an introduction to Old Testament interpretation. It provides an elemental framework for interpreting the Old Testament by exploring its ancient Near Eastern contexts; discussing literary, thematic, and theological constructs; and demonstrating how it informs Christian thought and practice.

Course Overview

This is going to be a fast-paced and packed 8 weeks. It is going to be a cross-cultural experience as you delve into the content and context of the Old Testament. You'll be challenged, and, hopefully, transformed as you engage the Word of God and consider how it informs your faith. This course will encourage and challenge you to read the Old Testament reverently and responsibly through frameworks of interpretation.

Course Workload

Time spent on course assignments will vary by student depending on familiarity with course content, reading rate of speed, writing rate of speed, and other individual factors. Based on averages for most students, it is estimated that the course workload estimate for this course is 50.16 (6.27 hours per week).

Course Materials

1. Walton, John H., and Andrew E. Hill. Old Testament Today: A Journey from Ancient Context to Contemporary Relevance. Second, Zondervan, 2013. Required and optional textbooks are accessed and ordered through [SEU's bookstore](#).

Disclaimer: The resources utilized in this course provide information, thoughts and insights that should encourage critical thinking on the part of the student. Please note as well that as an Assembly of God institution, Southeastern University does not necessarily endorse specific personal, religious, philosophical, or political positions found in these resources.

Intended Learning Outcomes

As a result of reading, study, and assessments in this course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the canon, including its formation, transmission, and reliability as Scripture.
2. Explain the process of OT interpretation and how to employ basic research tools.
3. Identify the ancient Near Eastern cultural, historical, and geographic contexts that inform biblical interpretation.
4. Recognize genres of the OT and how they inform interpretation.
5. Identify key themes, unique characteristics, and theological constructs of the OT that inform the Christian faith.

Late Work

Work ahead: For planned events (mission trips, vacations, surgeries) you are invited to work ahead in order to submit work by the due date. No permission is needed.

Request an extension: If you know you will not be able to turn work in on time, contact your professor at least 24 hours before the assignment is due. Let the professor know about your circumstances and when you can turn the work in. If the professor decides to grant you an extension and you get the work in when you say you will, there will not be a penalty. You should only request an extension when something unforeseen comes up that you have no control over; a professor has no obligation to grant an extension and will be less inclined to do so if you are asking for one every week.

Late work: without prior arrangements, late work* submitted within one week of the original due date will be considered for partial credit. Work will ONLY be accepted for the first seven days after it is due. NO WORK will be accepted past the last day of the course.

*Discussion Posts: late participation in discussion forums is not accepted for late credit. The purpose of the discussion forum is to engage with your classmates on substantive ideas related to the course material, and your classmates will not revisit forums past the due dates. Similarly, professors will not revisit forums to grade past discussion due dates.

Professors of Foundational Core courses have been instructed to follow this policy to ensure fairness across all FC classes. Your professor will work with you if true emergencies occur, but your busy schedule will not be considered an emergency. If you have travel, a vacation, a wedding, or any other plannable event, it is up to you to communicate with your instructor to avoid grade penalties.

Extra Credit

No extra credit accepted.

SECTION 2: SOUTHEASTERN POLICIES

Academic Policies

View this link to see Southeastern's Policies regarding SEU's Mission and Vision Statements, Title IX Statement, Student Services, Class Participation, Official Email, MyFIRE Use, Technical Difficulties, Technical Support, Disability Statement, Academic Honesty, Course Evaluation, Official Withdrawal, Grading Scale, and Netiquette.

SECTION 3: COURSE SCHEDULE

The **Course Schedule** provides a listing of your work in this course. The assessments are listed by Module and include the due dates and point values.

Note: Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. EST on the due date, unless otherwise noted.

AIM, LEARN, AND APPLY DESCRIPTIONS

Aim



When you see the Aim icon, you will be introduced to topics and ideas that will be covered throughout this module. The AIM will also provide you with a glimpse into your learning objectives and an introduction to this module.

Learn



When you see the Learn icon, all of your reading assignments will be listed and may include additional resources that your instructor is providing to help you complete the activities and assessments for the module.

Apply



When you see the Apply Icon, it will be time to demonstrate your learning for the module. The items here are those in which you'll be graded and may include discussions, activities, assignments, quizzes, exams, and projects.

MODULE 1
XX/XX/XX - XX/XX/XX



- Become familiar with instructor and classmates
- Articulate basic understanding of the canon and how the OT informs Christian faith



- Read: Nehemiah 9:5-38
- View: Videos and learning resources



- OT Interpretation Pre-test
 - Note: You must complete this pre-test to proceed in this course.
 - Points: Required, but ungraded
 - Due: Friday
- Week 1 Discussion Forum
 - Points: 5
 - Due: Saturday, Tuesday

MODULE 2:
XX/XX/XX - XX/XX/XX



- Students will have gained an understanding of the big picture of the story of the Old Testament.
- Students will have an understanding of authority, inspiration, revelation, and how that affects our view of Scripture.
- Students will understand that exegetical methods governed by the principles of hermeneutics are designed to help the face value of the text be understood.
- Students will have a grasp of some face value issues.
- Students will have grasped the value of comparative studies for the study of the Old Testament.
- Students will understand that the basis of confidence in the results of Old Testament study rest in faith.
- Students will have gained an understanding of the process of transmission of the biblical text and how that paucity of information influences our study of the Old Testament.



- Read: Old Testament Today, Unit 1: Orientation Fundamentals (pgs. 1–25)
- View: Videos and learning resources



- Discussion Week 2 Discussion Forum
 - Due: Saturday, Tuesday
 - Points: 5
- Quiz 1

- Due: Monday
- Points: 10

MODULE 3:
XX/XX/XX - XX/XX/XX



- Students will understand that stories have the elements of plot, setting, characters, and point of view and that the guides of selection, arrangement, and emphasis help reveal the author's main concerns to the reader.
- Students will understand the history of Mesopotamia and Egypt from about 2900 BC to 1500 BC.
- Students will better understand the concept of authorship in the ancient world.
- Students will have a grasp of the internal characteristics of the Pentateuch.
- Students will have a better understanding of the ancient view of the cosmos.
- Students will gain insight into the use of comparative literature for cosmologies, genealogies, flood stories, law collections, and covenant/treaty formats.
- Students will more accurately understand mythology.
- Students will have a better understanding of how the events of Genesis relate to history.
- Students will have a grasp of the theological perspectives put forth in the Pentateuch.
- Students will have a better understanding of the purpose of each book of the Pentateuch.
- Students will grasp the overall plotline of the book and understand how individual components fit into the message of the book.
- Students will better understand religious belief in the ancient world in order to gain insight into the Pentateuch.
- Students will understand the methods of relating science to the Bible.

- Students will have an understanding of the applicability of the Pentateuch to their lives.
- Students will recognize the steps necessary to apply an ancient law to modern culture.
- Students will consider what a renewed attention to holiness would mean.



- Read: Old Testament Today, Unit 2

- Introduction (pgs. 26–29)
- Chapter 1 (pgs. 30–45)
- Chapter 2 (pgs. 46–75)
- Chapter 3 (pgs. 76–116)
- Chapter 4 (pgs. 117–139)

- Read: Key Verses:

- Genesis 12:1–3
- Exodus 3:16–17
- Leviticus 19:2
- Numbers 6:24–26
- Deuteronomy 6:4–9

- View: Videos and learning resources



- Discussion Week 3 Discussion Forum

- Due: Saturday, Tuesday
- Points: 5

➤ Quiz 2

- Due: Monday
- Points: 26

MODULE 4:
XX/XX/XX - XX/XX/XX



- Students will gain an understanding of the history of Israel given in the books of historical literature.
- Students will understand the history of the ancient world and how the story of Israel interacts with, is influenced by, and influences that history.
- Students will better understand historiography in the ancient world. Students will recognize that the historiography of Israel is different from modern historiography and will understand that this difference has influenced the biblical text.
- Students will better comprehend the way that the Israelites and others in the ancient Near East viewed the world and its history.
- Students will have gained an overview of the plotline of Old Testament Narrative.
- Students will understand the power of story and the intended role of the characters within the biblical story.
- Students will better understand the theological perspectives of God leading the armies, kingship and covenant, divine abandonment, and lessons that Israel learned from the exile.
- Students will have an appreciation of Israel's vision of history as theology.
- Students will understand the purpose of each book of Old Testament Narrative.
- Students will grasp the main theme of each of the historical books.
- Students will understand the events leading up to, surrounding, and subsequent to the division of the kingdoms.
- Students will understand how to view history biblically.

- Students will grasp the continuity of the God of both testaments rather than seeing a disparity or dichotomy between them.
- Students will understand the relevance of history to their lives.
- Students will begin to realize how to use historical literature today.



- Read: Old Testament Today, Unit 3
 - Introduction (pgs. 140–43)
 - Chapter 1 (pgs. 144–62)
 - Chapter 2 (pgs. 163–96)
 - Chapter 3 (pgs. 197–229)
 - Chapter 4 (pgs. 230–44)
- Read: Key Verses:
 - Joshua 14:14–15
 - Judges 21:25
 - Ruth 1:16–17
 - 1 Samuel 16:7
 - 2 Samuel 7:8–16
 - 1 Kings 18:36–37
 - 2 Kings 17:7–15
 - 1 Chronicles 28:9–10
- View: Videos and learning resources



- Discussion Week 4 Discussion Forum
 - Due: Saturday, Tuesday
 - Points: 5
- Quiz 3
 - Due: Monday

○ Points: 20

MODULE 5:

XX/XX/XX - XX/XX/XX



- Students will correct their misconceptions about prophets and prophecy in order to better understand the prophetic biblical books.
- Students will understand the story line of the prophets in the original context.
- Students will have an understanding of the purpose of each type of oracle and the differences between them.
- Students will understand the purpose and characteristics of apocalyptic literature.
- Students will grasp the place of dreams, divination, and prophecy in the ancient world.
- Students will understand the difference between prophecy and proclamation of plan.
- Students will better understand the distinction between fulfillment and revelation.
- Students will gain an understanding of the theological perspectives set forth in prophetic literature.
- Students will better understand the concept of eschatology.
- Students will understand the purpose of each book of prophetic literature.
- Students will learn key themes in the books of prophetic literature.
- Students will gain a better understanding of the concept of messianic prophecy.
- Students will understand the overall purpose of the Book of the Twelve, as well as the contribution of each individual book.
- Students will understand the distinction between prophets and missionaries.
- Students will gain a better perspective of how to relate prophetic literature to their contemporary setting.
- Students will understand the caution and respect necessary when approaching the prophetic text.
- Students will learn that the message of prophecy is just as central as the

fulfillment of the prophecy itself.

- Students will understand the areas of life in which indictments, judgments, instructions, and aftermath of prophetic literature are applicable today.



- Read: Old Testament Today, Unit 4

- Introduction (pgs. 246–49)
- Chapter 1 (pgs. 250–65)
- Chapter 2 (pgs. 266–78)
- Chapter 3 (pgs. 279–97)
- Chapter 4 (pgs. 298–319)

- Read: Key Verses:

- Isaiah 55:6–7
- Jeremiah 31:31–33
- Lamentations 3:22–23
- Ezekiel 36:22–23
- Daniel 4:34–35
- Hosea 10:1–2
- Joel 2:28–32
- Amos 5:14–15
- Obadiah 15
- Jonah 3:10
- Micah 3:8–12
- Nahum 1:15
- Habakkuk 3:16–18
- Zephaniah 3:11–13

- Haggai 1:8
- Zechariah 1:14–17
- Malachi 3:1–3
- View: Videos and learning resources



- Week 5 Discussion Forum
 - Due: Saturday, Tuesday
 - Points: 5
- Quiz 4
 - Due: Monday
 - Points: 20

MODULE 6:
XX/XX/XX - XX/XX/XX



- Students will gain an understanding of both articles of the Retribution Principle.
- Students will better understand the concept of wisdom.
- Students will understand the literary background of the righteous sufferer in ancient literature.
- Students will gain a deeper understanding of philosophical literature in the ancient Near East.
- Students will understand the background for love songs in the ancient world.
- Students will have a basic understanding of the content of the book of Psalms.
- Students will grasp the elements of Hebrew poetry.
- Students will be able to understand the major literary categories of the psalms, as well as multiple subcategories and minor categories.
- Students will gain knowledge of hymnic literature in the ancient world.
- Students will have a basic understanding of the issues of authorship in the psalms.
- Students will understand the purpose of wisdom literature as a whole and the worldview that should result from a proper understanding of God that this wisdom literature offers.
- Students will grasp the theology of the Retribution Principle and the biblical perspective on that theology.
- Students will be able to articulate why the theme of creation is so important in wisdom literature.
- Students will better understand the praxis of worship in Israel and how this differs from worship today.
- Students will understand the distinction between vindication and appeasement and how these motivations influenced thinking in the ancient world.
- Students will gain an understanding of the thinking surrounding the afterlife belief in the Old Testament.

- Students will be able to discuss the identity of Satan in Job.
- Students will be able to articulate the purpose of each book of wisdom literature.
- Students will understand the courtroom structure of the book of Job and be able to express how this contributes to fulfilling its purpose.
- Students will have a better understanding of the Leviathan.
- Students will gain an understanding of the structure of the book of Psalms.
- Students will learn basic information about each of the five books of Psalms.
- Students will understand the relationship between proverbs and truth.
- Students will be exposed to comparative wisdom literature in the ancient world.
- Students will understand the applicability of wisdom literature in life when things go wrong.
- Students will be able to articulate the difference between purpose and cause, and the impact that this has on the way that one thinks about God's actions in history and in the world.
- Students will understand the role that fulfillment and the pursuit thereof should play in the life of the follower of God.
- Students will grasp the guidance that Proverbs offers to the family.
- Students will respect the power of sex.
- Students will understand what we expect from God and what God expects from us.
- Students will understand the purpose of the devotional use of the psalms.



- Read: Old Testament Today, Unit 5
 - Introduction (pgs. 320–23)
 - Chapter 1 (pgs. 324–31)
 - Chapter 2 (pgs. 332–42)
 - Chapter 3 (pgs. 343–57)
 - Chapter 4 (pgs. 358–88)

- Chapter 5 (pgs. 389–415)
- Read: Key Verses:
 - Job 28:20–28
 - Psalm 145:8–20
 - Proverbs 3:5–6
 - Ecclesiastes 7:14
 - Song of Songs 8:6–7
- View: Videos and learning resources



- Week 6 Discussion Forum
 - Due: Saturday, Tuesday
 - Points: 5
- Quiz 5
 - Due: Monday
 - Points: 25

MODULE 7:
XX/XX/XX - XX/XX/XX



- Students will gain an understanding of OT study tools available to scholars and Christians today.
- Students will employ some basic research tools.



- Book View: Podcast and learning resources



- Discussion Week 7 Discussion Forum
 - Due: Saturday
 - Points: 5
- Old Testament Interpretation Research Project
 - Due: Monday
 - Points: 35
- Old Testament Interpretation Research Presentation
 - Due: Monday
 - Points: 25

MODULE 8:
XX/XX/XX - XX/XX/XX



- Students will understand the plotline of the Old Testament as it continues into the New Testament.
- Students will understand points of continuity and discontinuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- Students will grasp that salvation is secondary to relationship with God.
- Students will be able to more accurately interpret the Old Testament in light of the New and the New Testament in light of the Old.
- Students will understand what the Old Testament is, what the Old Testament teaches, how the Old Testament teaches, and by whom/what the Old Testament teaches.
- Students will be able to articulate the overall theme of the Old Testament.
- Students will better understand what to do with the Old Testament as the authoritative self-revelation of God.



- Read: Old Testament Today, Unit 6 (pgs. 416–34)
- View: Learning resources:



- Week 8 Discussion Forum
 - Due: Saturday
 - Points: 5
- Final Exam
 - Due: Monday

○ Points: 100

SECTION 4: ASSESSMENTS

Class Participation

Description

Students will participate in discussion forums, responding to videos by posting possible quiz questions and writing reflective prayers.

Total Possible Points

40

Grade Weight

15%

Quizzes

Description

Students will take quizzes over the 8 weeks. Students may either skip one quiz or drop their lowest quiz score at the end of the course

Total Possible Points

101

Grade Weight

25%

Research Project

Description

Students will complete a research worksheet, which gives them exposure to biblical studies tools and resources.

Total Possible Points

35

Grade Weight

15%

Research Presentation

Description

Students will present their research via short videos for the benefit of the class.

Total Possible Points

25

Grade Weight

5%

Final Exam

Total Possible Points

100

Grade Weight

40%

