



## OTEN 5300 Exploring the Old Testament

**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**Biblical Studies Division**  
**Fall 2019, Saturdays (1:00–4:50 p.m.)**

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### **Mission Statement**

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

### **Core Value Focus**

The seminary has five core values.

1. **Doctrinal Integrity:** Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically by preparing students to grow in understanding and interpreting of the Bible.
2. **Spiritual Vitality:** We are a worshiping community emphasizing both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary family for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word. Spiritual Vitality is addressed by reminding students that a dynamic relationship with God is vital for effective ministry.
3. **Mission Focus:** We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries. This course addresses Mission Focus by helping students understand the biblical foundations for fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments.
4. **Characteristic Excellence:** What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Characteristic Excellence is addressed by preparing students to excel in their ability to interpret Scripture, which is foundational to effective ministry.
5. **Servant Leadership:** We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us. Servant Leadership is modeled by classroom deportment.

The core value focus for this academic year is **Spiritual Vitality**.

### **Curriculum Competencies**

NOBTS faculty members realize that all ministers need to develop specific competencies if they are going to have an effective ministry. To increase the likelihood of NOBTS graduates having an effective ministry, the faculty developed a competency-based curriculum after identifying seven essential competencies necessary for effective ministry. All graduates are expected to have at least a minimum level of competency in all of the following areas:

1. **Biblical Exposition:** to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately.
2. **Christian Theological Heritage:** To understand and interpret Christian theological heritage and Baptist polity for the church.
3. **Disciple Making:** To stimulate church health through mobilizing the church for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and church growth.
4. **Interpersonal Skills:** To perform pastoral care effectively, with skills in communication and conflict management.
5. **Servant Leadership:** To serve churches effectively through team ministry.
6. **Spiritual and Character Formation:** To provide moral leadership by modeling and mentoring Christian character and devotion.
7. **Worship Leadership:** To facilitate worship effectively.

The curriculum competency addressed in this course is biblical exposition.

## Course Description

This course is an introduction to the literary, historical, and theological contents and contexts of the Old Testament. Significant interpretive issues are noted, major theological themes covered, and their relevance for Christian living addressed.

Students will be required to read the OT and demonstrate a basic understanding of its setting, meaning, and application for the NT Church today.

## Course Purpose

Biblical literacy is the essential foundation for all ministry. Without the Word of God, there is no knowledge capable of rescuing fallen humanity from the clutches of eternal doom. Hence, EOT functions as an assessment of what one already knows versus what more should be understood, valued, and applied in ministry.

Despite the hope that each student will gain proficiency in biblical languages, this class proceeds on the reality that the Old Testament must be important to a student for it to become important to those to whom we minister.

## Course Textbooks

### Required Texts for Classroom Discussion:

Hess, Richard. *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.

Motyer, Alec. *A Christian's Pocket Guide to Loving the Old Testament*. Scotland, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2015.

Ryken, Leland. *How Bible Stories Work: A Guided Study of Narrative Literature*. Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2015.

Any modern translation of the Old Testament.

### Highly Recommended Resources:

Mariottini, Claude F. *Rereading the Biblical Text: Searching for Meaning and Understanding*. Wipf & Stock, 2013.

Mitchell, Eric and Archie England. *Old Testament Survey: A Student's Guide*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2007.

Any audio Bible app (such as Bible.is)

## Student Learning Outcomes

1. The student will be able to understand the development and position of each major division of the OT (Authorship, Date, Content, Analysis, etc.).
2. The student will define significant OT themes, characters, nations, and historical events (and their relationship to the NT whenever appropriate).
3. The student will be able to discuss the basic structure and content of the OT books.
4. The student will demonstrate comprehension of the literary structure (macro & micro) of the OT as literature.
5. The student will identify selected methods currently employed in the study of the OT & understand the implications of the various theories.
6. The student will be able to name the books of the OT in order and will be able to discuss a variety of issues related to each book.

## Course Teaching Methodology

This course will utilize the following methodologies:

1. Given the introductory nature of this course, lecture presentations will be the primary teaching methodology.
2. Readings from the Old Testament and the textbooks will be used to supplement the student's knowledge gained during classroom lectures.
3. Research assignments will be given and completed by the student in order to develop and/or enhance the student's research and critical thinking skills.
4. A group project and qualitative research assignments will allow the student to explore the relevance and importance of the Old Testament.

## Course Requirements

1. Read the required **Old Testament books** in preparation for the forthcoming lecture.
2. Read your **Hess textbook** for the forthcoming lecture.
3. Complete **online quizzes** on the Blackboard shell for this course. The quizzes will cover the Bible reading as well as questions from the textbook. Quizzes will be available weekly beginning after class until 11 pm on Friday. *There will be a practice quiz available for the first full week of classes. Each student MUST complete this quiz in order to show proficiency in using the Blackboard quiz system.* Two quiz grades will be dropped.
4. Respond to **Blackboard posts** (2 total). The responses should be 6-8 pages, double-spaced, in length and should cite at least four sources (according to Turabian 7<sup>th</sup> ed.). These sources can either agree or disagree on the given topic. The student should demonstrate a general awareness of the given issue. These responses will be graded for grammar as well as content.

These responses will be graded according to the following rubric:

Blackboard Response Rubric			
Section	Content	Length	Points
e 1	Critical Reflection	(6-8 pp.)	20
v 2	Grammar, Formatting, and Spelling		10
i 3	Citation of at least four monographs or articles		10
e 4	Response to Peer's Research		10
w	Total	(6-8 pp.)	50

*A Christian's Pocket Guide to Loving the Old Testament.* Reviews should be 6-7 pages, double-spaced (12 pt, Times New Roman font). Students should provide a title page (1 p.), an adequate summary of the book (3 pp), and a critical evaluation (2-3 pp).

Book Review Rubric			
Section	Content	Length	Points
e 1	Title Page	(1 p.)	5
n 2	Suitable Summary	(3 pp.)	20
e 3	Critical Reflection	(2-3 pp.)	20
r 4	Grammar, Formatting, and Spelling		10
a	Total	(6-7 pp.)	55

**I articles** will be uploaded to Blackboard for additional reading (2 total). After reading each article, the student will provide a report of 8-10 pages, double-spaced, containing the following information with citations and references:

- A title page (1 p.)
- A summary of the article's content (2 pp.)
- A detailed account of at least three sources related to the article's content (2-3 pp.)
- A critical reflection of the article and the sources (3-4 pp.)

These responses will be graded according to the following rubric:

Article Response Rubric			
Section	Content	Length	Points
1	Title Page	(1 p.)	5
g 2	Suitable Summary	(2 pp.)	20
r 3	Documented sources (follow Turabian 7 <sup>th</sup> ed):	(2-3 pp.)	30
o u p p	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastor/Professor</li> <li>• Journal Article</li> <li>• Family Member</li> <li>• Church Member</li> <li>• Unbeliever</li> </ul>		
r 4	Critical Reflection	(3-4 pp.)	20
o	(This section should include two monographs)		
j 5	Grammar, Formatting, and Spelling		10
e	Total	(8-10 pp.)	100

et will be completed by students in groups ranging from two to four people. The group will pick an OT theme, passage, or verse and present its different interpretations in a panel discussion video. Students should look to Mariottini's *Rereading the Biblical Text* for ideas and examples. If the group is unable to complete a video together, they must see the professor or grader before 10/11.

Group Project Rubric		
Section	Content	Points
1	Group Information form completed and submitted on time	10
2	Explanation of biblical theme, passage, or verse	10
3	Presentation of different interpretations	20
4	Presentation Quality	5

5	Video Quality	5
	Total	50

8. **Final Exam.** Students will be given a comprehensive final exam. This exam will be available through Blackboard. The exam will be open book and will require students to respond to various types of questions: multiple choice, multi-select, true/false, open response, and constructed response. Students will be given a **practice exam** that **must** be completed in preparation for this exam. Students who receive a **85% or above** on the practice exam will **not be required** to take the final exam. The exam questions will be taken from the readings assigned in Hess, Motyer, and the Old Testament.

9. **Extra Credit:**

- Students will be allowed to complete up to two extra credit worksheets. Each worksheet will be comprised of four (4) questions, each pertaining to a specific issue/area of the OT and will require additional reading and research. Answers should be adequately researched and include well-reasoned arguments when necessary. Your responses should be single-spaced, typed, 12 pt, Times New Roman font, with footnotes or parenthetical citations (according to Turabian 7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Under no circumstances should you submit more than eight (8) pages per worksheet; this is critical analysis and not reflective rambling. These worksheets can only replace Blackboard discussions and weekly quizzes (up to 10%).
- Students will also be allowed to write a critical review of Hess for extra credit (5-6 pp). This review must compare Hess's OT introduction to at least one other OT introduction approved in advance. This review will only replace Article Responses (up to 12%).

**Course Grading System**

Attendance and Participation	15%
Blackboard Discussions (5% each)	10%
Weekly Quizzes/Reading (online; 1.6% each)	21%
Article Responses (8% each)	16%
Book Review	10%
Group Project	10%
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>18%</u>
Total	100%

**Grading Scale**

A	100–93
B	92–85
C	84–77
D	76–70
F	0–69

**Course Policies**

*Attendance:* See current Graduate Catalog. Students cannot miss more than 9 hours of class.

*Make-Up & Extra Credit:*

None allowed on individual basis beyond what is stipulated in syllabus. Online quizzes CANNOT typically be taken after the scheduled time. Any assignment turned in after the due date will receive no **higher than a 70%** unless the student has made prior assignments with the professor.

*Fulfilling the Terms of the Syllabus:*

No student will receive a passing grade in this course if all assignments are not attempted & completed. Failure to submit any major assignment (worksheets, etc.) will result in failure of the course. Even if late work is allowed, there could be as much as a letter grade drop per day.

*Citizenship/Conduct:*

Class participation (or the lack thereof) directly affects the final grade for this course. Thus, proper behavior and attire are expected at all times in the classroom. No gum, food, or drinks are ever permitted. Should the professor be

delayed, students should wait ten minutes before leaving. Class is then dismissed unless otherwise directed. For questions concerning these policies, please email me.

*Library:*

Students should be conscientious of other classmates when researching for article responses and Blackboard submissions.

*Cell Phones:*

Conversations & texting are not allowed during class time. My policy is for phones to be on vibrate (but not answered) or off. Playing, surfing, answering calls, or texting can result in expulsion (with absence) from that class. Repeated such behavior can lead to permanent expulsion from class. Please be conscientious of others and turn off all cell phones. Failure to follow this policy can affect the class participation grade.

*Computers:*

The use of computers in the classroom is a privilege. Computers should be used to take notes or gain access to pertinent material for lectures. Students caught using their technology, not directly related to notetaking (e.g., Facebook, etc.) will result in that person's privilege being revoked for the remainder of the semester. Should the professor conclude that technology is hindering class participation, privileges for the whole class could be revoked.

*Plagiarism:*

Students are given the task of writing an essay & answering worksheet questions in order to help them learn how to think critically about the ideas of others and to present the result of their analysis in a readable form. Plagiarism defeats these purposes by cheating the student out of an opportunity to grow. Plagiarism is a failure to distinguish between the work of the student and the work of others, either intentionally or unintentionally. Students that plagiarize will be reported to the Dean of Students & a grade of F will be assigned.

**Reminder.** Plagiarism can also result from the following (see Student Handbook pg. 189):

- A quotation that is lacking proper citation.
- Summarizing the words of someone else as if they are your own.
- Borrowing an outline, idea, or methodology without proper citation.
- Using an incorrect citation method; "Ignorance of the rules of citation is not an excuse."

## Course Schedule

Class Meetings	Reading Quizzes (Due Dates)	Assignments (Due Dates)	Exams
August 24	Aug 30; Sept 6; Sept 13; Sept 20	Loving the OT Book Review (Sept 13) Blackboard Discussion 1 (Sept 20)	
September 21	Sept 27; Oct 4; Oct 11; Oct 25	Article Response 1 (Sept 27) Blackboard Discussion with peer review (Oct 4) Group Project (Oct 25)	
October 26	Nov 1; Nov 8; Nov 15	Blackboard Discussion 2 (Nov 1) Article Response 2 (Nov 8) Blackboard Discussion with peer review (Nov 15)	Practice Exam (Oct 28)
November 16	Nov 22		Final Exam (Dec 7)

## Class Meeting Schedules

August 24	September 21
1:00–1:10 Introductions 1:10–1:15 Prayer Requests 1:15–1:50 <b>Syllabus Explanation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core Value Focus: Spiritual Vitality (5 min)</li> <li>Curriculum Competency: Biblical Exposition (5 min)</li> <li>Course Description/Purpose/Textbooks (5 min)</li> <li>Learning Objectives (5 min)</li> <li>Course Methodology/Requirements (10 min)</li> <li>Policies/Schedule (5 min)</li> </ul> 1:50–2:00 Questions/Hess Discussion Activity 2:00–2:35 <b>Biblical Historiography</b> 2:35–2:45 Questions/Short Break 2:45–3:15 Ryken Activity 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Story and Human Experience</li> <li>Story and Setting</li> </ul> 3:15–3:45 <b>A Theology of the Pentateuch</b> 3:45–3:55 Questions/Short Break 3:55–4:15 Hess Q&A 4:15–4:40 The Ten Commandments and Spiritual Vitality 4:40–4:50 Questions	1:00–1:10 Hess Discussion Question 1:10–1:15 Prayer Requests 1:15–1:40 <b>Exploring the Megilloth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the Megilloth?</li> <li>Ruth</li> <li>Song of Songs</li> </ul> 1:40–1:50 Questions/Ezekiel 20 Activity 1:50–2:25 <b>Old Testament Law</b> 2:25–2:35 Questions/Short Break 2:35–3:00 Ryken Activity 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Characterization</li> <li>Plot Structure and Unity</li> </ul> 3:00–3:35 <b>The Nature of Prophetic Literature</b> 3:35–3:45 Questions/Short Break 3:45–4:05 Hess Q&A 4:05–4:25 The Ten Commandments and Spiritual Vitality 4:25–4:35 Questions 4:35–4:50 Meet with Group Mates For Group Project
October 26	November 16
1:00–1:10 Hess Discussion Question 1:10–1:15 Prayer Requests 1:15–1:50 <b>Exploring the Megilloth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ecclesiastes</li> <li>Lamentations</li> </ul> 1:50–2:00 Questions/Ezekiel 20 Activity 2:00–2:35 <b>Jeremiah 29:1–11, Esther, and 1 Peter</b> 2:35–2:45 Questions/Short Break 2:45–3:15 Ryken Activity 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plot Devices</li> <li>Hero Stories</li> </ul> 3:10–3:45 <b>Psalms as Interpretation</b> 3:45–3:55 Questions/Short Break 3:55–4:15 Hess Q&A 4:15–4:40 The Ten Commandments and Spiritual Vitality 4:40–4:50 Questions	1:00–1:10 Hess Discussion Question 1:10–1:15 Prayer Requests 1:15–1:50 <b>Exploring the Megilloth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Esther</li> <li>Megilloth Theology</li> </ul> 1:50–2:00 Questions/Ezekiel 20 Activity 2:00–2:35 <b>Old Testament Law</b> 2:35–2:45 Questions/Short Break 2:45–3:15 Ryken Activity 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Story and Meaning</li> </ul> 3:15–3:45 <b>Those Other Books Called “The Writings”</b> 3:45–3:55 Questions/Short Break 3:55–4:15 Hess Q&A 4:15–4:40 The Ten Commandments and Spiritual Vitality 4:40–4:50 Questions

Make sure to also reference the course calendar:

[Exploring OT Calendar \(2019\).docx](#)

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#### Pentateuch

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