



**OTEN5300: Exploring the Old Testament**  
**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**Biblical Studies Division**  
**Spring 2022 - Online**

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**Mission Statement**

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College is to prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

**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.

**Course Texts**

Arnold, Bill T., and Brent A. Strawn. *The World Around the Old Testament: The People and Places of the Ancient Near East*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016.

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

Provan, Iain W., V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman, III. *A Biblical History of Israel*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003.

Walton, John H. *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament*. Zondervan Publishing, 1994. (CBCOT)

Any modern English translation of the Bible

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Students should

1. The student will understand the canonical development and arrangement of the OT.
2. The student will identify significant OT themes, characters, nations, and historical events (and their relationship to the NT whenever appropriate).
3. The student will demonstrate the value of the background, setting, literary structure, and message of the OT books (Authorship, Date, Content, Analysis, etc.).
4. The student will work with selected methods currently employed in the study of the OT & explain the resultant implications of the various theories.

## Course Teaching Methodology & Requirements

Note: The course is structured by weekly units to establish a rhythm and structure to the course. Weekly requirements must be completed by the end of the Saturday of each unit. Sundays are skipped to allow students a Sabbath. **\*\*Please pay attention to the “Interactive Component” that requires submission in the middle of the week for some students each week.\*\***

1. **Textbook Reading:** Students are responsible for reading the assigned pages in the textbooks for each of the fifteen units. The Unit Assignment Guide (UAG) stipulates the selected texts and pages due for each unit. See the [UAG](#) for this data.
2. **Bible Reading:** Students should complete reading through the entire Old Testament by following the UAG assignments (See below). Any *modern* English *translation* will suffice. If English is not your primary language, please contact the professor of record to gain permission to read in your native language. Follow the Bible reading assignments as identified in the [UAG](#).
3. **Three Worksheets:** Students will demonstrate mastery of the canonical text by submitting three worksheets during the semester. The worksheets will consist of [questions](#) (see below) requiring research. Each worksheet must be written well with proper formatting (footnotes, headings, etc), a minimum of 14 pages, double-spaced (plus a selected bibliography) but not longer than 20 pages! **These are due by Thursday (11:59pm) of the unit in which it is assigned--Units 6, 11, 16.** Graduating seniors must submit the final worksheet during Unit 15 to ensure timely processing for graduation. Note: Each worksheet includes four questions. I recommend working on 1 question/wk in the four weeks before so that the week the entire assignment is due serves as a week for revising and proofreading.
4. **Interactive Component: Building a Ministry Portfolio.** Embedded in the syllabus, there are [reflection questions](#) that will prepare each student for two objectives: (1) enable the student to think critically about using the Old Testament in ministry and (2) preparing each student for the upcoming worksheet by highlighting the significance of each research question.
  - a. Unless otherwise noted, students will be sorted into four reflection groups by the professor/teaching assistant. Each group will lead discussion on the assigned reflection topic during each of the four units (2-5; 7-10; 12-15) prior to each worksheet (6,11,16). See Blackboard for groups.
  - b. The group leaders for each unit are required to interact with each other about the assigned topic through Blackboard Discussion posts. The goal is for the leadership group to investigate and demonstrate how to employ the Old Testament in answering difficult life questions. As such, the group leading that unit must each contribute a minimum of 100 words on the topic. Referencing textbook and other scholarly resources is encouraged. **The Leadership group should complete their discussion by Thursday evening of each week/unit to allow the rest of the students to respond.**
  - c. All other students must contribute a minimum of 25 words (max of 75 words), especially bringing attention to biblical passages that address the assigned topic (pro/con). **These students should be prepared to respond to the contribution of the leadership group on Friday–Saturday of each unit-week.**
  - d. The work submitted is not formal but is a matter of thoughtful reflection about how to apply the Old Testament to meet the needs of the local church.

## Course Grading System

Textbook reading: statement of percentage read at the end of Unit 16	20%
Collaborative reflection unit contributions	
3, As leaders	20%
9, As class contributors	9%
Three Worksheets	51%

**Make-Up & Extra Credit:** Failure to submit any major assignment (worksheets or collaborative leadership contributions) 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. Notifying the professor and grader of accidents, illness, or church/family-related- unavoidable delays can lessen this penalty or allow us to grant some measure of grace.

**Netiquette:** Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online with professors and peers. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity will be expected at all times in the online environment.

**Plagiarism:** Students are given the task of writing reports & 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. NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

#### Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. [Selfserve@nobts.edu](mailto:Selfserve@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the [Selfserve.nobts.edu](http://Selfserve.nobts.edu) site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. [BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu](mailto:BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System [NOBTS.Blackboard.com](http://NOBTS.Blackboard.com).
3. [ITCSupport@nobts.edu](mailto:ITCSupport@nobts.edu) - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. [www.NOBTS.edu/itc/](http://www.NOBTS.edu/itc/) - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

#### Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

#### Writing Style Guide

A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Blackboard shell, or can be located online at the Writing Center’s page on the seminary website at:

<https://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf>

#### Unit Assignment Guide

Unit	Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
1	1/18 – 1/22	Course Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hess (pp 1-24)</li> <li>• Provan (pp 2-104)</li> <li>• CBOT (12, 60-61, 76-79, 90-93, 96)</li> </ul>	

2	1/24 – 1/29	Genesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genesis</li> <li>• Hess (pp 25-54)</li> <li>• Provan (pp 107-125)</li> <li>• Arnold (pp 1-106)</li> <li>• CBOT (13-18, 80-82, 97-98, 100-101)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 1</a>
3	1/31 – 2/5	Exodus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exodus</li> <li>• Hess (pp 55-78)</li> <li>• Provan (pp 125-137)</li> <li>• Arnold (pp 107-196)</li> <li>• CBOT (21, 62-65, 71-73, 84-85, 99, 102-110, 112-113)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 2</a>
4	2/7 – 2/12	Leviticus & Numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leviticus &amp; Numbers</li> <li>• Hess (pp 79-122)</li> <li>• Arnold (pp 197-266)</li> <li>• CBOT (19-23, 37)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 3</a>
5	2/14 – 2/19	Deuteronomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deuteronomy</li> <li>• Hess (pp 123-153)</li> <li>• Provan (pp 138-192)</li> <li>• Arnold (267-352)</li> <li>• CBOT (24-25, 38, 71-73, 79, 83-84, 86-87)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 4</a>
6	2/21 – 2/26	Joshua & Judges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joshua &amp; Judges</li> <li>• Hess (pp 161-219)</li> <li>• Arnold (pp 353-378)</li> <li>• CBOT (26, 37-39, 83, 104, 111)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Worksheet 1</a>
7	2/28 – 3/5	Ruth; 1 & 2 Samuel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ruth; 1 &amp; 2 Samuel</li> <li>• Hess (pp 220-274)</li> <li>• Provan (pp 193-238)</li> <li>• CBOT (40-46)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 1</a>
8	3/7 – 3/12	1 & 2 Kings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 &amp; 2 Kings</li> <li>• Hess (pp 275-316)</li> <li>• Provan (pp 275-277)</li> <li>• Arnold (pp 379-416)</li> <li>• CBOT (27-34)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 2</a>
SB	3/14 – 3/19	SPRING BREAK		

9	3/21 – 3/26	Psalms & Job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Psalms &amp; Job</li> <li>● Hess (pp 393-451)</li> <li>● CBOT (47-51)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 3</a>
10	3/28 – 4/2	Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, & Lamentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Songs, &amp; Lamentations</li> <li>● Hess (pp 452-512, 561-567)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 4</a>
11	4/4 – 4/9	8th Century Prophets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Jonah, &amp; Micah</li> <li>● Hess (pp 513-539, 599-610, 618-630, 637-655)</li> <li>● Arnold (pp 417-466)</li> <li>● CBOT (46, 52-56, 58, 65-67, 74)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Worksheet 2</a>
12	4/11 – 4/16	7th Century Prophets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Jeremiah, Nahum, Habakuk, &amp; Zephaniah</li> <li>● Hess (pp 540-560, 656-682)</li> <li>● Provan (pp 278-304)</li> <li>● CBOT (68-69)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 1</a>
13	4/18 – 4/23	6th Century Prophets 5th Century Prophets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ezekiel, Obadiah, Joel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi</li> <li>● Hess (pp 568-584, 611-617, 631-636, 683-710)</li> <li>● CBOT (58-70)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 2</a>
14	4/25 – 4/30	Post-Exilic Writings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Esther, Ezra, &amp; Nehemiah</li> <li>● Hess (pp 348--391)</li> <li>● CBOT (27, 35-36, 75, 107-118)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 3</a>
15	5/2 – 5/7	Chronicles & Daniel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 &amp; 2 Chronicles &amp; Daniel</li> <li>● Hess (pp 317-347, 585-598)</li> <li>● Arnold (467-500)</li> <li>● CBOT (57, 75, 105-106)</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Group 4</a>
16	5/9 – 5/14			<a href="#">Worksheet 3</a>

## **Reflection Questions**

### Unit 2

Ideological Question: Does the age of the earth matter to the original author or recipients of the book of Genesis?

### Unit 3

In what way do the covenant passages in Exo 32-34 and Deut 30 impact the NT churches understanding of the community of faith (Rom 5)?

### Unit 4

What are the impacts on the church for Mosaic or non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch?

### Unit 5

Deut 20-24 - (1) Integrity and purity/How could you use these passages to help women with divorce or abusive relationships. (2) How do the purity laws interact with the holiness laws of Leviticus.

### Unit 7

Compare and contrast Saul and David. Who was the more obedient king? Defend your answer.

### Unit 8

Identify 5 passages in the OT where archaeological information genuinely impacts one's understanding of the OT.

### Unit 9

How does the OT help people who have lost a loved one to a natural death or dramatic accident?

### Unit 10

Develop a discipleship strategy from Proverbs.

### Unit 12

How does justice in the prophets compare to the contemporary social justice movement?

### Unit 13

Address this question: What is meant by Second Temple Judaism? *For extra credit, read Peter Enns, Inspirational Incarnation.*

### Unit 14

Create 4 ppt slides providing an overview of the development of the Jewish Canon.

### Unit 15

What images in the book of Revelation are drawn from Daniel or other OT imagery?

## Worksheet Questions

### *Worksheet 1*

- Who were the Israelites and where did they come from?
- What is the purpose of Gen 1-11 as a whole unit?
- Discuss the authorship of the Pentateuch. Include arguments for one author, the fragmentary hypothesis, supplementary hypothesis, and documentary hypothesis.
- Discuss the idea of covenant in the Pentateuch. Students should focus on the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants.

### *Worksheet 2*

- Thoroughly discuss the theories concerning the entry of Israel into the land of Canaan (vast military conquest, peasant revolt, socio-political assimilation, etc). Include the progression of destruction within the land (the destruction of Ai, Shechem, Jericho, etc.).
- Discuss the difference between the Kings corpus and the Chronicler's History
- Briefly discuss the theologies in the Psalter
- List and explain the three major interpretive approaches for the Song of Songs.

### *Worksheet 3*

- Discuss the importance of Josiah's reform (2 Kings 22-23) in relation to history and the OT Canon.
- Discuss the authorship views of the book of Isaiah.
- Summarize the theologies of the Minor Prophets (answers should include a brief paragraph about each book.)
- Is the book of Daniel apocalyptic? Discuss the arguments for prophetic and apocalyptic genre. Include a discussion of dating and authorship.

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