Old Testament Survey
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Charlotte
Spring 2013
September 2, 2013 – December 14, 2013

Instructor: Dr. Tim Laniak

Teaching Assistant: Douglas W. Price Jr., M. Div.

Contact Information
Doug can be reached at dprice1@gordonconwel.edu. He is your first point of contact.

Dr. Laniak can be reached via email at tlaniak@gcts.edu and will welcome dialog during virtual office hours and for special issues.

A technical Help Desk is available if you run into any technical issues. They can be reached during normal business hours at helpdesk@gordonconwell.edu. If you run into any issues off hours, please email the T.A.

Course Description

OT 500 is an introductory survey of the primary content, figures, and themes of the Old Testament. This course also introduces students to the historical-cultural context of the biblical world and the connections between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Gordon-Conwell Mission

This course satisfies the following institutional learning objectives:

Demonstrate a strong understanding of both the content of the Bible and the overarching redemptive story from Genesis to Revelation.

Relation to Curriculum

OT500 is a foundational course for all degrees and programs and as such has no prerequisites. It is the first course in the online MAR program and satisfies one of two OT requirements for all MA programs. Note: Students are expected to have read the entire Old Testament before beginning this course.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Know the main figures, events, and themes in the Old Testament, their relationship to the New Testament, and their ongoing significance for our lives.
2. Understand the importance of background information and to become familiar with resources that illuminate the geographical, historical, and cultural contexts of God's revelation in the Old Testament.
3. Interpret the Old Testament with sensitivity to background, genre and literary context.

Module Topics

The following are a listing of the module topics in this course.

1. Preparing for the Journey: Introduction to the Old Testament
2. The Formation of the People of God: From Eden to Canaan (Genesis-Deuteronomy)
3. The Mission of the People of God (Part 1): Covenant Living Attempted in the Promised Land (Historical Books: Joshua-1 Kings)
5. The Exile and Return of the People of God (Part 1): Covenant Breakdown under the Assyrians (2 Kings 1-20, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Jonah, Nahum, Isaiah)
6. The Exile and Return of the People of God (Part 2): Covenant Breakdown under the Babylonians (2 Kings 21-25, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Lamentations, Joel, Obadiah)
7. The Exile and Return of the People of God (Part 3): Covenant Living Reengaged under the Persians (Daniel, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles)
8. The Bridge (Residency Week: “Pulling It All Together” in Preparation for the New Testament)

Required Materials


Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. ISBN# 978-0310246046


Recommended Materials


Course Requirements

Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities as described below. The successful completion of these activities will require each student to spend a minimum of 135 hours devoted to coursework, both in class and out of class. The following chart indicates how these hours are distributed across the various course assignments. Descriptions of the assignments are listed below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignment</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
<th>Estimated Time Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content Mastery</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>70 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Construction</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>25 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>135 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### I. Content Mastery

To meet the objectives of knowing and understanding the OT, students need to spend a great deal of time reading, viewing presentations, and interacting with the content. Content Mastery will be encouraged and measured through the following activities.

**Readings**

The core content and primary text for this course is the Old Testament (OT) itself. Students are expected to have read it prior to beginning the first module. The modules will include other reading and viewing requirements that supplement your understanding of the vast and varied content of the OT. Reading Arnold and Beyer’s *Encountering the Old Testament* will help you understand each book of the Bible with attention to its structure, major themes and some historical background information. Fee and Stuart’s *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* pays particular attention to reading and interpreting different genres. The connection between background and big picture is reinforced through your reading of Youngblood’s *Heart of the Old Testament*. Although not required, you will find Fee and Stuart’s *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* useful for organizing the most important content and emphases of each book. You will also be encouraged to explore recommended websites to mine the rich research and resources provided on the Internet. You will discover many tools to help you in your lifelong study of scripture.

**Multimedia Presentations**

Video and narrated PowerPoint presentations will reinforce your reading and support your comprehension of the Old Testament. In each module there will be short video introductions by the professor; students will also view 15-30 minute instructional presentations on the books of the OT offered in both video and audio formats through a proprietary website. Students will view narrated PowerPoint presentations that provide images and commentary on the historical background of the Old Testament. These presentations will explore the historical-cultural context with ancient parallel texts and images of relevant artifacts and provide commentary on the books themselves. Through these various multimedia presentations, we will incrementally build a “big picture” of the Old Testament, what unifies it, and how it anticipates the New Testament. Please note that all narrated PowerPoint and video presentations are copyright protected and cannot be copied from the web or distributed in any form. Please see the copyright notice at the end of the syllabus for more information.
**Module Assignments**

In most modules, students will complete assignments in which they interact with the content for that module. These assignments are designed to facilitate understanding of the content by helping students to visualize and mentally organize the events depicted in the OT using maps and timelines.

**Module Tests**

Old Testament Survey requires students to build a base of knowledge that is progressively organized throughout the term. The base knowledge (people, places, dates, etc.) will be tested in three objective (multiple choice) exams that cover the material for two or three modules. Test questions are drawn from the Old Testament, lectures and course reading.

While these tests are online, they must be proctored in the student’s local community. Students must identify a qualified proctor and location in advance of the exam (see Proctored Exam policy in the Course Policies section).

Students will have the opportunity to check their understanding of the OT content through self-check quizzes in each module that are ungraded. These short quizzes provide sample questions of the type that will be in each test, but they are not the actual questions.

**II. Content Construction**

**Guiding Questions**

Students will not only master the content of the Old Testament, but will also build their own understanding of the larger meaning of the OT. This objective will be accomplished through the construction of reflective answers to the following five “Guiding Questions”:

1. What is the nature of biblical revelation in light of its ancient Near Eastern literary and cultural contexts? Take into account the genres of Scripture and extra-biblical parallels. Consider the divine and human dimensions of God’s Word.
2. What has each book, section of the Bible, and genre revealed about God? How is God progressively revealed over time (include metaphors, characteristics and mission of God)?
3. What has each book, section of the Bible, and genre revealed about God’s people, their relationship with God and each other, and their role and mission in the world (include metaphors, mission, ethics, worship, “living by faith,” etc.)?
5. In what ways has God spoken to you in your journey through the Old Testament?

**Weekly Reflections**

Students are required to post weekly reflections of a minimum of 200 words on each of the Guiding Questions in their blog. The T.A. and professor will occasionally provide feedback on these reflections as the students prepare to shape their thoughts toward the Guiding Questions Essays at the end of the course.
Guiding Questions Essays

At the end of the course, students will synthesize and edit their reflective writing on the Guiding Questions into five (5) separate 1,000 word Essays. See the Guiding Questions Essays Rubric for more detail about this assignment.

III. Participation

This course is designed to be highly interactive with a significant portion of the learning happening in interactions among students and between individual students and the professor and T.A. Participation in this course will be measured in several ways.

Course Discussions Overview

Discussion in OT Survey serves two purposes. First, students will have the opportunity to seek clarity about the content they are reading. The second purpose is to consider together the implications of this content in contemporary life and ministry. While this purpose is reflective in nature, students should always refer back to objective content provided in the lectures, readings and, especially, the Old Testament in all discussions.

Forums

Students will post on the Forums personal reflections that invite feedback from their peers on this journey of reading and reflecting. Forum postings should contain original thought and reflection and make substantive contributions to class discussion. Check out the Participation Rubric and the Example Posts document for further information.

NOTE: All students are required to keep a separate document of all forum posts (discussion starters and reply posts) with a word count under every post. This single document will be turned in at the completion of the course. Failure to turn in this document (or to list word count) will result in a grade deduction.

Residency

The course concludes with a summative residency at the GCTS Charlotte campus December 9-11, 2013. Attendance is mandatory for all three days. Our time during the residency week will be devoted to summarizing and discussing your responses to the Guiding Questions. Students will receive a grade based on the quality of their participation in these group discussions.

More information will be available on the format and logistics of the residency as the course nears its conclusion. See the Course Participation Rubric for further detail.

Grading Policies

Grading Schedule

The final course grade reflects the following components:
### Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Maximum Points Possible Per Assignment</th>
<th>Total Points Possible</th>
<th>% of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments (10)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Guiding Questions Reflections (5)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation: Forums (8)</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding Questions Essays</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Grading Scale

The following grading scale will be used for all graded coursework and the final course grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Course Policies

#### Proctored Tests

All tests in this course are online and will be proctored. The student will need to identify a suitable proctor and location and submit the Proctor Approval Form by the week before a test opens. To access the exam, a password will be sent directly to the Proctor.
Instructor Feedback

I will attempt to respond to email messages within 24-48 hours, excluding Sundays. I will provide feedback on assignments within two weeks of submission. I will post grades in the grade book within two weeks of submission.

Document Formatting and Submission

Formatting preferences and citation style:

Please use the latest version of Turabian as the style guide for the Guiding Questions Essays. Format the paper with 1” margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font, and footnotes (rather than endnotes).

File naming convention for assignments:

Assignments and papers should be labeled with first initial and last name followed by the course and semester. Example: jsmithM#_L#SP13. Any assignment lacking the proper file naming convention may be subject to a grade deduction.

Late Work

Tests, module assignments, weekly guiding questions reflections, and final guiding questions essays will be deducted one letter grade per day after the due date. In the forums, starter posts are worth a maximum of 6 points and are deducted 2 points per day late. Each reply post is worth a maximum of 3 points and are deducted 1 point per day late. The remaining 0.5 points can be earned by submitting all of your posts on time.

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Netiquette

Gordon-Conwell does not tolerate disruptive or disrespectful behavior in the online communications in any course. Students should review the netiquette policy in the Student Handbook and this website: http://www.albion.com/netiquette.

Additional Seminary Policies

For additional seminary policies that may pertain to this course, please refer to this Syllabus Addendum.