OT 500: Old Testament Survey
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Instructor
Dr. Douglas Stuart
Professor of Old Testament

Gordon-Conwell offers technical support during regular business hours. If you have a technical issue, please email helpdesk@gordonconwell.edu. All requests related to the course should be sent to the professor and/or the Semlink program staff (semlink@gordonconwell.edu).

Contact me with individual questions or concerns at dstuart@gordonconwell.edu. I will do my best to respond in a timely manner. Emails sent on a weekend or holiday may not be answered until a following regular weekday. On occasion, I may respond to your email by asking you to call me, if I think I could do a better job of answering your question via a phone conversation rather than via an email.

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Course Description
OT 500 surveys the entire Old Testament, touching on each of the thirty-nine OT books via lectures, assigned textbook readings, illustrative visual aids, and assigned Bible reading. This is not a simplistic or remedial course. It is an exploration of significant topics, unique features and the value for Christian belief and practice of the various parts of the Old Testament. The course lessons move through the Old Testament in a generally chronological fashion, bringing out historical and cultural information intended to help students appreciate the meaning of the inspired text.

Gordon-Conwell Mission
This course satisfies part of the following institutional learning objective: to

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

Snapshot of Course Requirements
OT 500 requires timely completion of the following course requirements:
1. Required Reading (graded pass-fail)
2. Three Online Forums (3% for each forum; 9% of final grade)
3. Two conferences (3% for each conference; 6% of final grade)
4. Mid-Term Exam (40% of final grade)
5. Final Exam (45% of final grade)
6. Preparation Questions for the Mid-Term and Final Exams (graded pass-fail)

Course Learning Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course, students will:
1. Establish a foundation for further study of the Old Testament and the New Testament through learning its main figures, events, and themes
2. Show an understanding of the Old Testament as Christian Scripture
3. Appreciate the great themes and unique features of the individual OT books
4. Reflect on the usefulness of the OT for Christian life and ministry
5. Explore a variety of factors that help make the OT more comprehensible to its readers.
Lesson Topics
Lectures entail the following topics:

Lesson 1: Week 1
- Background, Overview, Introductory Considerations
  - Israel's heritage (to 1400 B.C.), Creation, prehistory, the Patriarchs, the Exodus, the wilderness experience, etc.

Lesson 2: Week 2
- Israel's Law and Order
  - Laws and codes, worship, means of righteousness, etc.

Lesson 3: Week 3
- The Promised Land and Survival
  - Preparation, invasion, conquest, tribal inheritances, the Judges, the nations nearby, etc.

Lesson 4: Week 4
- Israel's Empire Years (1033-932, B.C.)
  - Saul, David, and Solomon

Lesson 5: Weeks 5-6
- Royal Poetry and Wisdom

Study Week: Week 7
- conference #1
- Mid-Term Exam

Lesson 6: Week 8
- The Divided Kingdom to the Fall of Samaria (931-722, B.C.)

Lesson 7: Week 9
- Judah: A Brief Respite (722-640, B.C.)

Lesson 8: Weeks 10-11
- The Last Days of Judah and the Fall of Jerusalem

Lesson 9: Week 12
- The Captivity of the People

Lesson 10: Week 13
- Return and Rebuilding
  - Judaism under Foreign Domination, Awaiting the Deliverer from Zion

Study Week: Week 14
- conference #2

Required Materials


A Bible. Read/skim through the Old Testament, in conjunction with the assignments. Use a modern translation of your choice (e.g., NIV, ESV, NRSV, ASV). Please do not use a paraphrase. (e.g., The Message, Amplified)

Course Requirements - Learning Activities
Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities as described below.

Readings
You are expected to complete the relevant reading in preparation for each lecture, leading up to each conference and online forum, the mid-term, and the final exam, but the reading assignments are not graded and reading notes need not be turned in. There is no reading log or other assignment that requires submission of proof of reading, since your reading is directly tested via the mid-term and final exams.

Exams
Each exam, mid-term and final, must be taken in the presence of a proctor, and you will be allowed 90 minutes to complete it. It will contain a set of short-answer questions, many of which will be taken from the list of exam preparation questions provided you in your course materials. It will also contain several semi-essay comprehensive Bible book questions, which ask you to provide one of the following: either the important topics, or the unique features, or the value for Christian belief and practice of a given biblical book.

The mid-term exam covers only the biblical books that are assigned in the course schedule up through lesson 5. The final exam covers only the biblical books that are assigned in the course schedule from lesson 6 through lesson 10.

As a study tool in preparation for the exams, study questions have been provided as a pdf and editable Word document in "Resources". In order to ensure fairness for all students and to enhance the learning experience, you are required to research and formulate the answers to these questions independently and without assistance from other students who are either taking this course or have previously taken this course. Specifically, you are not permitted to get answers to these questions from a list or lists that anyone else compiled. YOUR ANSWERS TO THE
Forums
At three points during the course, you will participate in an online forum by posting a response to questions posed by Prof. Stuart. It is expected that everyone will not only post responses to the posed questions, but also post at least one response to someone else's post.

Any class member whose initial post has been responded to may post one (not more) re-responses if he or she desires. A re-response is not required. By Tuesday following the Friday a post is due, Prof. Stuart will provide his own responses to what the members of the class have posted. See the Course Schedule for the times of the three forums.

1. In each forum, a question will be posted by the professor for you to respond to.
2. You must respond not only to the professor's question but also to one other student's initial post.
3. Start your initial post by indicating in fifty words or less the sources you used to compile your response (the readings, the lectures, the visual aids, other sources you chose to consult, etc.).
4. Write your response to the professor's question in 200-300 words. Make sure that you are not simply making up sentences, but are intentionally interacting with the course material as you address the question. Indicate your response the Scripture portions/passages that you are using in compiling your response, and explain, as needed, how they contribute to your response. In other words, your response needs to interact with Scripture and not be based merely on your general knowledge or personal opinions.
5. Your response to both the professor's question and to someone else's initial post should make contributions to the class. That is, both of them should be written with the goal of helping others understand and learn the answer to the question posed by the professor.
6. Specifically in regard to your response to the professor's questions:
   a. The sooner you post your response within the time allotted (see schedule below), the more likely it is to be useful to other students.
   b. You are free to comment on the nature of the question, such as how difficult it may be to answer fully or how sparse the data for providing an answer are, or how important a particular question is in your judgment for the study of the OT, etc. In other words, your answer can be partly evaluative and not merely informational.
7. Specifically in regard to your response to another student's posted response:
   a. Limit this response post to 100 words. That's not a lot, and cutting it down to that size may not be easy, but being able to summarize briefly your take on someone else's assertions is a valuable skill to develop.
   b. You may respond to an initial post by a fellow student or to someone's response to a post, or even to a response to a response (etc.).
   c. Be polite and scholarly in your response to another student's post. Try to honor its strengths, and where you disagree with it or see weaknesses in it, point these out with respect, supported by evidence from the course readings, from Scripture itself, etc. Make sure you are humble about your own assertions. Over-criticism of someone else's views or over-assertion of your own usually represents bad taste. A Christian scholar should always attempt to be clear and forceful with kindness and love of neighbor, and never dismissive or denigrating in order to score points.

Conferences
At two points during the course, Prof. Stuart and course students will participate in a real-time conference lasting 1.5 hours each time. Prof. Stuart will respond to questions from students submitted in advance and the questions may range fairly widely in scope. Students are encouraged to ask any questions of real concern to them, including questions about statements made in the readings, puzzling passages in the OT, how to use aspects of the OT in ministry, difficult sayings in the OT, interpretational challenges, faith challenges, etc. Depending on the number of questions raised, there may not be time to answer all of them. Students who did not get to ask a question in the first conference will have first priority for a question in the second one. See the schedule for the times of the two conferences.

The conferences will be recorded. If you miss a teleconference by reason of illness or other unavoidable emergency, you must apply for an extension, listen to the full teleconference within the time granted to you in the extension, and write a 400-500 word summary of the teleconference, submitted within the time granted to you in the extension.

The first conference will be held in Week 7. The second conference will be held in Week 14. Attendance of both conferences are mandatory.

Grading Policy
Your final grade for the course will be computed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% per Forum</td>
<td></td>
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https://sakai.gcts.edu/portal/tool/61ff4cf0-513f-47bb-ba04-de672127f963/printFriendly
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Forum (3)</td>
<td>9% Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Participation (2)</td>
<td>3% per Conference 6% Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation Questions for Exams (2)</td>
<td>Pass/Fail for entire course</td>
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</tbody>
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Grading Scale

- A: 92.5-100
- A-: 90-92.4
- B+: 87.5-89.9
- B: 82.5-87.4
- B-: 80-82.4
- C+: 77.5-79.9
- C: 72.5-77.4
- C-: 70-72.4
- D+: 67.8-69.9
- D: 62.5-67.4
- D-: 60-62.4
- F: 0-59.9

Other Course Policies

**Proctored Exams**

All exams in this course will be proctored. Your proctor must be someone who works for a church or volunteers for a church in an officially recognized capacity (pastor, elder, ministry leader, office administrator, etc.), a library or a school. Your proctor cannot be a member of your family or a current Gordon-Conwell student. Your proctor should be present throughout the time you are taking the exam.

The student will need to identify a suitable proctor and submit his/her name and email address to the Semlink office via the proctor registration form before every exam. The Semlink office will then email your proctor login information for your exam so he/she can help you login at the time when you take the exam. Please submit your proctor information to the Semlink office at least 2 business days before you plan to take the exam. Check with libraries in advance for special summer and holiday hours.

**Instructor Feedback**

The instructor will attempt to respond to forum posts by the Tuesday after the Friday the post is due. He will attempt to post grades in the gradebook within two weeks of submission.

**Late Work**

All learning activities will be penalized 5% per day after the due date.

**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](http://www.albion.com/netiquette).

**Additional Seminary Policies**

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