

**University of Dubuque Theological Seminary**  
**BI511D – Old Testament Introduction**  
**Online Course – UDTSLearning.net**  
**Fall Semester, 2009**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides an introduction to the content, historical background, canon, theological and critical issues of the Old Testament. This course fulfills the M.Div. basic first-year requirement in Old Testament studies (3 credits, letter grade only), but is open to all UDTS students.

**OBJECTIVES**

Students who complete this course will:

- 1) understand the basic content of the books of the Old Testament;
- 2) be able to place each book in its particular historical and canonical setting;
- 3) begin to think theologically about Old Testament themes; and
- 4) be familiar with several critical methodologies for interpreting the Old Testament.

In keeping with the stated purpose of the M.Div. degree (“to serve the one God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and prepare women and men for faithful, compassionate, and effective pastoral ministry”), this course meets the following M.Div. curricular objectives:

- 1) be formed by, live in, and minister out of Scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the church.
- 2) interpret the Christian Scriptures through faithful exegesis and in light of the Christian tradition.

**REQUIREMENTS**

In order to receive a passing grade students must meet the following criteria:

- 1) Class Preparation and Participation – students must adequately demonstrate their understanding of the assigned reading material by submitting written responses to posted discussion questions. In addition, students are expected to interact with other student responses in an appropriate manner. *See course objectives #2 and #3.*
- 2) Quizzes – regularly scheduled quizzes will be given to evaluate knowledge of specific Old Testament content. The format will focus on objective information, not response (which is monitored via requirement #1 above). *See course objective #1.*
- 3) Interpretation Exercise – students will be assigned an Old Testament passage to interpret according to a specific interpretive methodology. Each student (or, depending on the size of the class, group of students) will approach the text from a different method, utilizing the particular emphasis of that method to highlight various items in the text. The results of this exercise will be recorded in a short (5-8 page) paper. [NB – if class size demands a group approach to this exercise, each student is still responsible to submit his/her own paper.] *See course objective #4.*

4) Exams – students will complete a cumulative mid-term and final examination. Material to be covered on each exam will be distributed prior to the examination. Examinations are taken closed-book, operating with the student’s pledge of honesty. *See course objectives #1-4.*

### ASSESSMENT and GRADING

Final grades will be assessed as follows:

- Preparation/Participation - 30%
- Quizzes - 20%
- Interpretation Exercise - 20%
- Exams – 30% [mid-term 15%, final 15%]

The grading scale utilized in this course is provided below.

A+ = 100-97%	
A = 96-93%	C = 76-73%
A- = 92-90%	C- = 72-70%
B+ = 89-87%	D+ = 69-67%
B = 86-83%	D = 66-63%
B- = 82-80%	D- = 62-60%
C+ = 79-77%	F = 59% or below

### TEXTBOOKS

The following textbooks are required for course participation:

- 1) Any good study Bible. Among those considered “good” (i.e., scholarly rather than devotional in nature) are The HarperCollins Study Bible (NRSV), The New Oxford Annotated Bible (NRSV), and The NIV Study Bible. Students wishing to use a Bible other than those listed here should consult with the professor.
- 2) Steven L. McKenzie and Stephen R. Haynes, eds., *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application*, revised and expanded ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994.
- 3) John Drane, *Introducing the Old Testament*, completely revised and updated ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.
- 4) Thomas W. Mann, *The Book of the Torah: The Narrative Integrity of the Pentateuch*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1988.
- 5) Tremper Longman III, *How to Read the Psalms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988.
- 6) Rodney R. Hutton, *Fortress Introduction to the Prophets*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004.
- 7) William P. Brown, *Character In Crisis: A Fresh Approach to the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996.