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OT 5103A Hebrew Exegesis and OTI I  
Fall Session 2019 (3 hrs)  
Tuesday/Thursday 9:10-10:25 AM  
Classroom: Todd 114

OT 5103A Course Syllabus (Fall 2020)  
Hebrew Exegesis and Old Testament Introduction I  
Tuesday/Thursday 9:10-10:25 AM, Todd 114  
Dr. Gordon Johnston, Professor of Hebrew Studies

*“Keep hard at the biblical languages, for they are the sheath  
in which the sword of the Spirit rests.” –Martin Luther*

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the exegesis of Hebrew narrative, including an introduction to textual criticism and to the basic tools and methods of lexical analysis, as well as a review of Hebrew morphology and syntax in conjunction with translation of the Book of Ruth. The course will also include a survey of the historical, cultural, literary, and theological backgrounds of the Old Testament and an introduction to various forms of Old Testament criticism.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

- *Cognitive Objectives*—In addition to reviewing the basics of biblical Hebrew introduced in OT101-102, this course is designed to introduce you to an exegetical process for interpreting Old Testament narrative literature. The course will also introduce the student to the historical, cultural, literary, and theological background of the Old Testament, particularly in building a case for the historicity the Old Testament in the public square.
- *Affective Objectives*—As a result of this course, we hope you will gain (1) greater facility in reading and analyzing biblical Hebrew, (2) appreciation of the importance of doing exegesis in the original text of the Hebrew Scriptures, (3) confidence in your ability to think through important interpretive issues, and (4) appreciation for the importance of understanding backgrounds as a foundation for interpreting the Old Testament.

## COURSE TEXTBOOKS

### Required Texts—Hebrew Exegesis

- Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. (You will read approximately 200 pages)
- Ellis R. Brotzman and Eric J. Tully, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016. (You will read approximately 180 pages)

### Required Texts—Old Testament in the Public Square: Choose Two of Three

- Ralph K. Hawkins, *How Israel Became A People*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Abingdon Press, 2013. [211 pages]
- James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition*. Oxford University Press, 1999 [227 pages]. eBook: <https://web-a-ebSCOhost-com.dts.idm.oclc.org/ehost/detail?sid=b840bccc-8b4b-401a-b512-b9a9b51fed9a@sdv-sessmgr03&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1#AN=23654&db=nlebk>
- Alan Millard and Donald Wiseman, eds., *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives*. InterVarsity Press, 1980 [197 pages]. For electronic version, click: <https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/ePN.html>

### Electronic Texts in the DTS Logos Package for Hebrew Exegesis

- Karl Elliger and Walter Rudolph, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1984).
- Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, Johann Jakob Stamm, eds. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 2 volumes (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2011).

### Recommended Texts for Hebrew Exegesis

- Craig C. Broyles, Craig C., ed. *Interpreting the Old Testament: A Guide for Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001).
- Robert B. Chisholm, Jr. *A Workbook for Intermediate Hebrew: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on Jonah and Ruth* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006).
- Robert B. Chisholm, Jr., *From Exegesis to Exposition: A Practical Guide to Using Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998).
- A.E. Cowley, ed. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar. Edited and Enlarged by E. Kautzsch*. 2nd English edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910.
- Willem VanGemeren, ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997)
- J. de Waard, P. B. Dirksen et al., eds., *General Introduction and Megilloth*, fascicle 18 of *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004)
- Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990).
- Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline* (reprint edition; Toronto: University of Toronto: 1967). ISBN 0802014518, 9780802014511

## PHILOSOPHY OF COURSE WORK, COURSE LOADS, READING LOADS

1. The course requirements for my sections of OT103 and 104 are based on a philosophy which reflects what I believe is a reasonable course load for ThM students. My approach is based on the assumption that ThM students (like all graduate and undergraduate students) should not be expected to devote more than 40-42 hours per week to their course work. Although ThM studies are intellectually demanding, I do not believe the total work load of any student should exceed 40-42 hours per week, which is the traditional standard of a full-time work load in contemporary society. As I see it, this 40-42 hour weekly work load should include the number of hours devoted to course work both in class as well as outside class. The work load for my sections of OT103 and 104 is designed with this in mind.
2. The recommended course load for a full-time ThM student is 15 credits each semester, which will allow the student to complete course work in 8 semesters or 4 years. Assuming the ideal of 40-42 hours for the student's course load each week, 15 credits equates to 12.5 hours in class and 29.5 hours of course work outside class each week. This results in a formula of approximately 2.0 hours of course work outside class for each 1 hour in class each week for a full-time student taking 15 credits. Alternately, this results in a similar formula for a full-time student taking 12 credits each semester. Assuming the ideal of 40-42 hours for student course load each week, 12 credits equates to 10 hours in class and allows for 32 hours of course work outside class each week. This results in a formula of approximately 2.5 hours outside of class for each 1 hour in class. Consequently, I have intentionally designed the weekly course load for all of my sections of OT103 and OT104 as 3 credit courses to be completed within 6.0 to 7.5 hours of course work outside of class each week.

3. In the case of a 3 credit course, this equates to 6.0 to 7.5 hours of course work outside of class each week. In the case of a traditional 14 week semester (along with the mid-semester reading week), this equates to approximately 100 hours of coursework outside of class (along with about 35 hours in class over the semester resulting in about 135 hours total). Thus, I have designed the course load for my sections of OT103 and 104 to be completed within 100 hours of course work outside of class (e.g., the student taking 15 credits in a semester should budget 90+ hours of course work outside of class, while the student taking 12 credits in a semester should budget 110+ hours of course work outside of class). The work load for my sections of OT103 and OT104 is designed with this in mind.
4. Since the course load in my sections of OT103 and OT104 requires about 100 hours of course work outside of class, I have designed the assignments to be completed within 100 hours (on average) during the span of the semester. Since all the assignments will count toward the 100% total of the final course grade, the percentage of the final grade corresponds to the total number of hours (on average) required to complete each assignment. To put things simply, if a particular assignment will ordinarily require 10 hours to complete, it is allotted 10% of the final course grade. The course requirements are designed to reflect an equitable 1:1 correspondence between the number of hours that will be required to complete the assignment and the number of points available to earn on that assignment. The wise student will therefore allot a minimum of 10 hours of course work outside of class to any assignment that counts 10% of the final course grade. If an assignment counts 5% of the final course grade, the student should not spend 20 hours completing the assignment. Likewise, if an assignment counts 25% of the final course grade, the student should expect to devote 25 hours to that assignment to ensure that adequate time and attention spent to ensure a good grade.
5. Empirical research indicates that reading rates of technical literature by the typical graduate student fall into five categories: (1) scanning; averages 5 pages per minute; (2) skimming; averages 2.5 pages per minute; (3) rauding (not to be confused with the term “reading”); averages 1 page per minute; (4) learning; averages 1 page every 2.5 minutes; (5) absorbing; averages 1 page every 5 minutes. Here are helpful definitions of these five rates of reading and levels of comprehension which I have arranged into three basic categories:
  - Scanning: this involves surveying a work to discover the most basic idea about the topic discussed, but without careful attention to detail. Average rate: 5 pages per minute or 300 pages per hour.
  - Skimming: this involves perusing the basic content of a reading as a means of identifying the basic argument and the main points. Average rate: 2-3 pages per minute or 120-180 pages per hour.
  - Rauding (not to be confused with “reading”): this is the normal rate of reading individual sentences for basic comprehension. Specialists call this “rauding” since it involves shifting gears up or down depending on the demands of individual sections within any reading. Speeding up when hitting familiar material and slowing down when hitting new material. Average rate: 1 page per minute or 60 pages per hour.
  - Learning: this is the more engaged attempt to not only read each individual sentences, but to actively attempt to follow the author’s argument as a whole. Unless specified otherwise, this is the reading rate and comprehension level which I will ask you to engage in my ThM courses. Average rate: 1 page every 2-3 minutes or 20-30 pages per hour.
  - Absorbing: this is the most engaged attempt to understand the author’s argument as a whole as well as in detail. This is what professors generally have in mind when they assign readings which students will be required to discuss in a seminar style class. This is known as a “close reading.” This is the reading rate that I have in mind in my PhD courses that are conducted in seminar style in which the doctoral students lead the discussion. Average rate: 1 page every 5 minutes or 12 pages per hour.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Course Requirements: Old Testament in Public Square (35%)

#### 1. Out-Of-Class Viewing of Online Video (2%)

By the end of the first week of the semester, you must view the PBS/NOVA video, “The Bible’s Buried Secrets.” You may view it on the NOVA website (<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/bible/program.html>) or YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMeWaYIzfx4>) or you may purchase/download it for \$1.99 on iTunes. Please allow two (2) hours to watch the entire video. Note: The NOVA website divides the video into 13 short segments, while YouTube and iTunes provides the entire video in one uncut version.

This video presents the current mainstream (non-conservative) approach to the origin of ancient Israel, the origin of ancient Israelite monotheism and the origin of the Hebrew Scriptures. The video is very critical and dismissive of conservative approaches to these three issues. So while it does not present the approach which evangelicals adopt, it is important that conservatives understand the consensus non-conservative approach. Our goal in watching this video is to enable you to understand the typical mainstream approach so that you will be prepared and equipped to engage these kinds of issues in public square discussions.

By the end of the first week of the semester, you must click the “Video Viewing Report” on Canvas (you will find this in the Assignments page in the course folder) to report whether or not you have watched the video. Completion of this assignment will count 2.5% of the final course grade. *Failure to watch the video will result in a deduction of one-full letter grade (from A to B) of the Old Testament in Public Square portion of the course.*

#### 2. Reading Assignments (12.5%)

Each student must read two (2) of the three (3) options for course textbooks for this portion of the course for a total of 400 pages. You may choose two of the three options listed below

- a) Ralph Hawkins, *How Israel Became A People* (Grand Rapids: Abingdon Press, 2013)
- b) James Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 1999). For eBook version, log onto WorldCat (= Library Catalogue) and insert the following link into your browser: : <https://web-a-ebshost-com.dts.idm.oclc.org/ehost/detail?sid=b840bccc-8b4b-401a-b512-b9a9b51fed9a@sidc-v-sessmgr03&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1#AN=23654&db=nlebk>; or
- c) Alan Millard and Donald Wiseman, eds., *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives* (InterVarsity Press, 1980). For electronic online version, click: <https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/ejn.html>

Note: The student may also complete the course reading assignment by reading the the single (1) course textbook below which is 400+ pages total. If you choose to read Kitchen, your will not be required to complete any readings in either of the three textbooks above.

- d) Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

Following my philosophy of reading rates and reading comprehension (see above), I am asking you to read these two books at the “learning” rate (level #4), which is about 30 pages per hour (1 page every 2 minutes). Please budget 6.25 hours to read each book and 12.5 hours total to read the two books. Since I am asking you to devote 12.5 hours total to careful and thoughtful reading, completion of the reading assignment will count 12.5% of the final course grade. Please submit a reading report at the end of the semester on Canvas.

### 3. Old Testament in Public Square Paper (20%)

Each student will research/write a course paper designed to refute/respond to the mainstream approach presented in the PBS/NOVA video, “The Bible’s Buried Secrets” (see above). Plan to devote 20 hours to the research/writing of this paper. This paper will count a total of 20% of your final course grade.

The student should evaluate/critique the overall meta-narrative of the mainstream approach as a whole as well as one (1) selected, specific issue presented in the video. For a basic summary critique/evaluation of this approach, see <https://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=13&article=2753>. Keep in mind that this paper is not to be framed as an apologetics exercise, but as a rigorous research paper dealing with issues related to historicity and authenticity of the Old Testament (but more than a theological defense of inspiration/inerrancy from a faith-based presupposition). The student should seek to emulate the approach modeled in the course textbooks as well as the approach modeled in the professor’s presentations/lectures. You should frame your paper as an intellectually credible response to the mainstream approach that you would be able to give to a layperson or college student who is seeking help in thinking through the issues.

Your paper must be 10-12 pages in length (double-spaced, 12 point font) following Turabian style. The paper should be well researched, carefully written and meticulously edited. You may begin your research by drawing upon the discussions in the required course textbooks (Hawkins, Hoffmeier, Millard and Wiseman) for this portion of the course. But your paper must go beyond the course textbooks by interacting with a minimum of 5-6 peer reviewed scholarly publications (e.g., journal articles, monographs, scholarly books, dissertations). You are encouraged to follow the bibliographic trail of the scholarly sources cited in the footnotes/endnotes of the three required course textbooks to help you find helpful academic sources for your research paper. I also encourage you to access the following bibliographic research databases and scholarly archives:

- *Recommended Scholarly Archives Available through the Electronic Databases of the DTS Library:*
  - JSTOR
  - Old Testament Abstracts (via EBSCO)
  - ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global
- *Recommended Scholarly Archives Available on the Internet:*
  - [www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu)
  - [www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com)

### Course Requirements: Hebrew Proficiency Exam (Pass/Fail)

- Before the beginning of class on the third week of the semester, students will take a proficiency exam to review OT101-102. The exam will be posted on Canvas on **Monday, August 31** and will be available until **Monday, September 28** (it will close on Monday evening at 11:59 pm). *Failure to complete this exam will result in the course grade being lowered by one letter grade.*
- You will have a time limit of 60 minutes to complete the exam. The exam will consist of three parts focusing on Jonah (but excluding chapter 2): (1) parsing of selected verbs in Jonah, (2) vocabulary of selected terms in Jonah, (3) translation of two verses from Jonah (chapters 1, 3, 4).
- If you score 86 or above, your final course grade will be raised by: (a) two points for a grade in the A range (94-100) or (b) one point for a grade in the B range (86-93).
- If you fail to score 70% on this exam, you will be required to meet with a department tutor until you have passed a makeup exam. The makeup exam cannot be taken until you have spent at least four hours with a tutor, who will then inform the professor that you are eligible for the retake exam.

## Course Requirements: Hebrew Exegesis (65%)

### 1. Hebrew Translation Assignments: Book of Ruth (Pass/Fail)

Each student must complete Hebrew translation assignments in the Book of Ruth according to the schedule. Each translation assignment must be completed prior to the beginning of the class period for which it is scheduled. The student must upload his/her translation to Canvas according to the course schedule. Completion of the translation assignments in the Book of Ruth will be a Pass/Fail grade.

### 2. Translation/Parsing and Syntax Quizzes (10%)

Each student will take ten (10) of twelve (12) translation/parsing/syntax quizzes on the Book of Ruth. The two lowest grades (including quizzes missed) will be dropped. The ten highest grades will each count 1% for a total of 10% of the final course grade. Each quiz will be available on Canvas until the due date when it will be locked. So please make sure that you take each quiz by the due date.

### 3. Two Hebrew Word Study Assignments (15%)

Each student must complete two (2) Hebrew word study assignments in the Book of Ruth. The student should plan to devote approximately 7.5 hours on each of the two assignments for a total of 15 hours total. Each of the two Hebrew word study assignments will count 7.5% for a total of 15% total of the final course grade. For instructions, see the handouts for Hebrew Word Study Assignments on Canvas. Please see the course schedule for the due dates of the two Hebrew word study assignments.

### 4. Two Textual Criticism Assignments (15%)

Each student must complete two (2) Hebrew text-critical assignments in the Book of Ruth. The student should plan to devote approximately 7.5 hours on each of the two assignments for a total of 15 hours total. Each of the two Hebrew text-critical assignments will count 7.5% for a total of 15% total of the final course grade. For instructions, see the handouts for Hebrew Textual Criticism Assignments on Canvas. Please see the course schedule for the due dates of the two Hebrew textual criticism assignments.

### 5. Course Paper: Exegetically Based Biblical Theology of Book of Ruth (25%)

Each student must write/submit an exegetically informed paper presenting a Biblical Theology of the Book of Ruth. This paper must be typed (double-spaced, 12 point font) and should be 10-12 pages in length. This paper must reflect an exegetically informed approach to the Hebrew text. For instructions, see the handout for the guidelines to this paper on Canvas. You should budget 25 hours to complete this assignment. Submission of an acceptable paper will count 25% of the final course grade. Please see the course schedule for the due date for this assignment.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STAGE ONE DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Any student in the Stage One Ph.D. program must complete two sets of additional requirements: (1) read 50 additional verses in Hebrew narrative; and (2) read additional 500 pages of OTI-related material. For a recommended list of the additional chapters in Hebrew narrative, please see the secretary of the Ph.D. Studies Program. Please consult with the professor about these additional requirements during the first week of the course. The student must report completion of these additional requirements by the last week of the semester.

## GRADE SCALE

A+ 99-100	A 96-98	A- 94-95	B+ 91-93	B 88-90	B- 86-87	
C+ 83-85	C 80-82	C- 78-79	D+ 75-77	D 72-74	D- 70-71	F 0-69

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADING

- Old Testament in Public Square: 1 credit (35%)
  - NOVA Video, “Bible’s Buried Secrets” 2.5%
  - Course Textbook Reading 12.5%
  - Old Testament in Public Square Paper 20%
- Hebrew Exegesis: 2 credits (65%)
  - Hebrew Translation Assignments: Book of Ruth Pass/Fail
  - Hebrew Translation/Parsing/Syntax Quizzes 10%
  - Hebrew Word Study Assignments: 2 @ 7.5% each 15%
  - Hebrew Textual Criticism Assignments: 2 @ 7.5 % each 15%
  - Exegetically Based Biblical Theology of the Book of Ruth 25%

## SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Dallas Theological Seminary works to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with psychological, medical, physical, and learning disabilities. A student desiring or needing accommodations on the basis of such disabilities or of medical incidents such as hospitalization or severe injury is to contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities (<https://students.dts.edu/studentlife/disability-services/>). If the student is aware of a condition that may impact his/her studies, the student should contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities at prior to the beginning of the semester or at the onset of a crisis.

## COURSE POLICIES

### Completion of Written Assignments

When doing the various assignments remember this is graduate school. All questions should be answered in complete sentences (not with a mere “yes” or “no”) and every assertion must be supported (even if the question does not specifically say “explain”). Some questions are supplemented by leading questions designed to help you answer the main question. However, this is not always the case. In other instances you will need to use logic and common sense to determine what steps are necessary to solve a problem.

### Plagiarism

Be aware of the seminary’s policy regarding plagiarism (see latest edition of the Student Handbook). If you need further clarification on what constitutes plagiarism, please see me privately. Note carefully that plagiarism is not just quoting someone without giving credit; it can also take the form of stealing another’s *ideas* without giving them their due. You may not consult with other students or even look at their work when doing the assignments. Something can be said for the benefits of teamwork, but in a ministry context, which we are attempting to simulate, you will rarely have the opportunity to consult with others when studying for your next sermon or lesson. You

must develop a certain degree of independence in your research and work. However, you may consult commentaries and other published works when doing the assignments, except for sources specifically prohibited for certain assignments. It should go without saying that you may not consult the work of students who have already had the course.

#### Late Assignments

All assignments must be submitted at the beginning of the class session for which they are due. If a paper is handed in late, it will be penalized one full grade increment (for example, B+ to C+) for each day it is late.

#### Absences

Four unexcused absences are allowed without penalty. Each unexcused absence beyond this number will result in a reduction of the final grade in accordance with the student handbook policy. If a prolonged illness keeps you from attending class, or work and ministry responsibilities conflict with the scheduling of this course, you should drop the course and take it at a more convenient time. You will be charged with an absence for every three classes you are late. You are officially late if you enter the classroom five or more minutes after the class officially begins.

[COURSE SCHEDULE \(See Separate Document\)](#)