

BIBLICAL STUDIES (BIBL)

BIBL 100 Introducing Biblical Literature 3

This course provides a general introduction to the origins, story, and significance of the Christian Bible. Students will examine the Bible's nature, purpose, and authority; its historical narrative, cultural background, literary structure, and main theological concepts. Major emphasis is placed on understanding the overall storyline of the Bible as one grand narrative of redemption. It is intended as a foundation level course, suitable for those who have no previous knowledge of the Bible or Christian thought. Not open to students who have already taken BIBL-101/102 or BIBL-200.

Core Category: Spiritual Literacy

BIBL 200 Exploring Biblical Literature 3

This course provides a general introduction to the origins, story, and significance of the Christian Bible. Students will examine the Bible's nature, purpose, and authority; its historical narrative, cultural background, literary structure, and main theological concepts. Major emphasis is placed on understanding the overall storyline of the Bible as one grand narrative of redemption. It is intended as a more in depth introductory course, suitable for those who have some previous knowledge of the Bible or Christian thought. Not open to students who have already taken BIBL-101/102 or BIBL-100.

Core Category: Spiritual Literacy

BIBL 201 Biblical Interpretation 3

The art and theory of biblical interpretation will be explored through a historical, philosophical, and theological survey. The primary aim is to prepare students for an academically rigorous course of study in biblical and theological studies, but our discussion will also provide the basis for both personal Bible study and the preaching and teaching of the Bible.

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 202W Research Methods 3

This course provides an in-depth look at a selected book of the bible and related theological issues. The primary aim is to help students develop the research and writing skills needed in biblical and theological studies. Emphasis is placed on the fundamentals of good writing, critical thinking, and forming and defending academic arguments.

Core Category: Theology

Prerequisites: Take one from BIBL 101, BIBL 102, BIBL 100, BIBL 200, HONR 140, or HONR 141

BIBL 310 The Torah 3

An exegetical, historical and theological study of the traditions about Israel's emergence as the people of God. Elements treated are the primeval history, patriarchs, exodus, the law of Sinai and the wilderness experience.

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 320 The Prophets 3

An in-depth analysis of the Former and Latter Prophets. This course considers important historical and theological questions engaged by the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings) in comparison with the archaeological record and the Bible's other historical books (Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah). This historical narrative will provide a framework for contextualizing the messages and themes of the Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the twelve Minor Prophets)."

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 325 Women in Scripture and Tradition 3

This course investigates the changing roles and perceptions of women in the Bible and in Christian tradition. In addition, the course will evaluate conflicting interpretations of key texts as they have been used throughout history to determine the functional placement of women in the family, society and the church.

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 330 Special Topics 1-3

BIBL 335 Early Judaism & New Testament 3

Jesus and his earliest followers lived and died as Jews. What came to be known as Christianity did not begin as an autonomous new religion, but rather as a movement within early Judaism. For this reason the earliest documentary remains of this movement preserved in the New Testament should be studied in the first instance as Jewish texts. This course introduces the literature, groups, beliefs and practices that comprised Second Temple Judaism. It will selectively illustrate how knowledge of early Judaism enlightens our understanding of the ministry of Jesus and the writings of the New Testament.

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 350 Wisdom and Poetry 3

A concentrated study of Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon with special attention to their meaning and relevance for modern life. The basic frame of reference will be Wisdom's creation theology and its relation to biblical faith as well as other living faiths of the world.

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 355 Film and the Bible 3

In this course, we will introduce the study of the Bible's reception history and the complicated relationship of reception history to traditional historical-critical methods of biblical study. More specifically, we will analyze cinematic retellings and appropriations of biblical stories as a significant avenue of the Bible's reception in modern culture. We will learn that the interface between the Bible and culture- like all biblical interpretation- is shaped by the interpreter's social and historical context, ideology, and medium. This course will also cover the basics of film criticism as the most appropriate tools for analyzing the audio-visual language into which these films translate the Bible. Finally, we will consider how our cultural influences the ongoing transmission of the biblical tradition and vice versa.

Core Category: Arts and Literature, Theology

BIBL 360 Jesus and the Gospels 3

This course will study our main canonical witnesses to Jesus--the Gospels. We will see how the Gospels present Jesus similarly and differently, notice main themes in the canonical presentation of Jesus, attend to post-biblical appropriations of Jesus (e.g., political, cultural, scholarly, literary and cinematic appropriations), and think together about how Jesus can and ought to shape Christian faith and faithfulness.

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 365 Sex, Violence, and the Bible 3

A theological and hermeneutical investigation of biblical texts in both the Old and New Testament that depict and often seemingly legitimate acts of violence. It provides an overview of how these "texts of terror" have been appropriated by communities of faith throughout history and an exploration of how to read such texts and scripture.

Core Category: Social Justice, Theology

BIBL 370 Paul: His Life and Letters 3

The history of the interpretation of Paul from the early Church to scholars of the modern period precedes an in-depth study of Paul's life and thought as presented in Acts and his letters.

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 375 The Marginalized and the Bible 3

A study of biblical perspectives on issues related to the marginalized, particularly slaves, children, widows, foreigners, and the disabled. The course covers Old Testament law, Jesus' parables, Paul's economics, and the social world of the Bible. The course utilizes insights from post-colonial, liberation, family, and social-scientific studies; it also considers the reception history of these issues in early Christianity.

Core Category: Social Justice, Theology

BIBL 385 The Sermon on the Mount 3

This course will explore the exegetical and theological dimensions of Jesus' most famous discourse: The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Attention will also be given to the literary aspects of the Gospel of Matthew as well as the practical dimensions of the Sermon on the Mount for the disciple of Jesus Christ.

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 390 Apocalyptic Literature 3

A general introduction to apocalyptic literature followed by a historical-cultural study of the symbolism and meaning of these two outstanding apocalyptic books. Special attention will be paid to competing varieties of interpretation, e.g., traditional, dispensational, critical.

Core Category: Theology

BIBL 400 Directed Study 1-3**BIBL 440 Senior Seminar 3**

Consideration of special topics essential for integrating the educational experience of seniors in the major.

BIBL 498 Teaching Assistant 1-3**BIBL 499 Research Assistant 1-3****BIBL 501 Old Testament Study I 3**

This course aims at introducing students to the history and content of the Old Testament in general. The main focus however will be given to an examination of the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy) and Historical Books (Joshua through Esther). Issues such as Ancient Near Eastern context, structure, composition and history of scholarship of the Pentateuch and Historical books will be discussed alongside themes of Creation, Fall, Flood, Emergence of Israel, the Law, the Cultic System, the Monarchy, the Exile and the Post-Exilic Periods.

BIBL 502 Old Testament Study II 3

This course will explore the books of the Prophets, who emerged in ancient Israel as an eclectic group identified only by their claim to speak for God, and their "high octave" condemnation of the socio-political and religious condition of their time. They communicated by preaching, singing, crying, walking naked and shaving, to name a few. This course will also study the great body of biblical literature which consists of the hymns, laments and thanksgivings of the book of Psalms, the wisdom sayings of Israel collected in Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes, the deep grief expressed in Lamentations, and the love songs of the Song of Songs. This course shall explore the relationship of the prophetic books and the Writings to the rest of the canon and then focus on specific issues, themes and theologies in the books.

Prerequisites: BIBL 501

BIBL 503 New Testament Study I 3

New Testament Study 1 is a foundational course in the study of the New Testament, covering Matthew, Mark, Luke-Acts, John, Hebrews, James, and Revelation. In order to appropriate the message of the New Testament for the world today, we need to first place ourselves back in the political, religious, and cultural world of the first century, and respect these documents as ancient narratives, written within a particularized historical setting and readership, by people of faith for the community of faith. Being more aware of our presuppositions, we can better allow the biblical authors to speak for themselves in their unique witness to the life of Jesus and the early church.

BIBL 504 New Testament Study II 3

This course covers the thirteen letters of Paul in the New Testament. Because these documents are pastoral letters, written to address specific problems, queries, and situations in the life of individuals and churches, we will pay attention to historical, cultural, social, and religious influences of the first century milieu, while addressing hermeneutical implications for today's world and church.

Prerequisites: BIBL 503

BIBL 513 Biblical Interpretation for Ministry 3

This is an introductory course in biblical interpretation. The course will equip students with skills needed to read, interpret and reflect theologically on the biblical text. Students will learn the "language" of biblical interpretation/method and be able to identify and evaluate critical commentaries for their life, ministry and studies. They will use basic bible tools for ministry in studying a biblical text through the lens of: Context (Social, Historical, Cultural, Whole Book), Questions of Author, Date, Occasion and Audience and Literary Genre (Narrative, Parables, Poetic, Wisdom, Apocalyptic and Letter/Epistle). New Testament and Old Testament texts will be examined. These skills will be built upon in subsequent seminary courses.

BIBL 514 Biblical Hebrew 3

This beginner's course in Biblical Hebrew will provide a strong foundation for reading, interpretation and exegesis of the Old Testament. Students will be introduced to high-frequency vocabulary and grammar through vocalization, translation and writing exercises. The course assumes a knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet, which will be assessed the first day of the course.

BIBL 515 Hebrew Exegesis 3

A course in intermediate Biblical Hebrew, focusing on grammar, syntax and lexicography through readings of selected passages from the Pentateuch.

Prerequisites: BIBL 514

BIBL 516 New Testament Greek 3

A beginner's course in the language of the New Testament in which the basic elements of grammar are studied and guidance provided in the use of interpretive tools. The student is introduced to elementary readings in the New Testament. (Students who have taken Greek in college may want to test out of this course and may wish to take Hebrew in its place).

BIBL 517 New Testament Greek Exegesis 3

A sampling of Greek texts from John's Gospel and a Pauline letter for further practice in translation. Attention will be given not only to the language but also to its broader setting in the ancient Mediterranean world, and implications for contemporary preaching and teaching.

Prerequisites: BIBL 516

BIBL 550 MTS Research in Biblical Studies 3

This course represents the first of two summative projects required for the MTS in Biblical Studies, in which the student, with the help of a faculty member, designs a research project in the form of an independent or directed study that is relevant to the student's area of interest. The project typically produces a research paper of 30-40 pages in length. There is room for flexibility and creativity if other formats are integral to achieving the learning outcomes of the project.

BIBL 550A MTS Research in Biblical Studies 3

This course represents the first of two summative projects required for the MTS in Biblical Studies, in which the student, with the help of a faculty member, designs a research project in the form of an independent or directed study that is relevant to the student's area of interest. The project typically produces a research paper of 30-40 pages in length. There is room for flexibility and creativity if other formats are integral to achieving the learning outcomes of the project.

BIBL 581A Reading the Text 1: Reading the Old Testament in Its Context: Part I 1.5

This is a survey course that emphasizes the historical, literary, and theological contexts of the Old Testament. Students will be introduced to the key events, movements, and figures in the history of Israel up to the Second Temple period within their larger Ancient Near Eastern context and to the different academic approaches to the story of the Old Testament. Coverage includes the Pentateuch, Historical Books, Writings and Prophets.

BIBL 581B Reading the Text 1: Reading the Old Testament in Its Context: Part 2 1.5

This is a survey course that emphasizes the historical, literary, and theological contexts of the Old Testament. Students will be introduced to the key events, movements, and figures in the history of Israel up to the Second Temple period within their larger Ancient Near Eastern context and to the different academic approaches to the story of the Old Testament. Coverage includes the Pentateuch, Historical Books, Writings and Prophets.

Prerequisites: BIBL 581A

BIBL 582A Reading the Text 2: Reading the New Testament in Its Context: Part 1 1.5

This is a survey course that emphasizes the historical, literary, and theological contexts of the New Testament. Students will be introduced to Second Temple Judaism and the Greco-Roman world of Jesus and the early church. Coverage includes the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, several key letters of Paul, and the book of Revelation.

BIBL 582B Reading the Text 2: Reading the New Testament in Its Context, Part 2 1.5

This is a survey course that emphasizes the historical, literary, and theological contexts of the New Testament. Students will be introduced to Second Temple Judaism and the Greco-Roman world of Jesus and the early church. Coverage includes the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, several key letters of Paul, and the book of Revelation.

Prerequisites: BIBL 582A

BIBL 604 Biblical Theology: Genesis As a Starting Point 3

An exploration of the theological themes of Genesis. Themes to be discussed include: creation, redemption, the nature of God, covenant, law, kingship, divine violence, righteousness, the people of Israel. These themes will be discussed in conversation with three perennial biblical theological issues: What was the author of Genesis trying to say theologically to his audience (historical dimension)? How did the author construct Genesis to communicate that theology (literary dimension)? and How do the themes of Genesis reverberate dynamically elsewhere in the Hebrew Scriptures and in New Testament (canonical dimension).

Prerequisites: BIBL 501

BIBL 606 Old Testament Book Studies: Jonah & Ruth 3

This course invites students to engage the biblical books of Jonah and Ruth in conversation with works of literature, art, and theology. We will explore questions raised in the books, including the nature of God, family, marriage, prophecy, election, death, and transformation in the context of ancient Israel. The course will introduce students to the history of interpretation of Jonah and Ruth in both Christian and Jewish traditions.

Prerequisites: BIBL 501

BIBL 607 Psalms 3

This course is an advanced study of the book of Psalms. Considerations will be given to major trends in modern scholarship with regard its historical settings, literary forms, canonical shape, and biblical theological significance. Opportunities will be provided to develop skills for interpreting poetry through in-depth study of representative examples of each genre. The purpose and relevance of the Psalms to the rest of the Bible and Christian faith will be explored.

Prerequisites: BIBL 501

BIBL 616 The Gospel of Luke 3

This course is a study of the Gospel of Luke based on the English text. We will discuss the author's presentation of God and Jesus, his view of salvation in relation to the themes of reversal and release, his concern for the poor and the marginalized, and his understanding of the role of Jesus and the early church in the context of God's plan for Israel and the world. Bible elective.

Prerequisites: BIBL 503

BIBL 617 Gospel of John 3

The Gospel of John presents an interpretation of Jesus' life and mission that is consistent with that of the Synoptic Gospels, even though it differs greatly from Matthew, Mark, and Luke in vocabulary and in the selection of Jesus traditions. Through chapter-by-chapter discussions, the distinctive literary and theological categories of the Fourth Gospel will be introduced. We will look at Jesus' encounters with different individuals, the "I am" sayings, Jesus the Son as the revealer of the Father who sent him, the characteristics of the community of faith, the role of the Holy Spirit, Jesus as the messianic King in the Passion narrative, and the meaning of Jesus' death as his glorification. Throughout these discussions, literary features such as dualism, Jewish symbolism, and rhetorical irony will be pointed out and explained. Bible elective.

Prerequisites: BIBL 503

BIBL 620 The General Epistles 3

Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, and Jude are the focus of this course. Using the English text and taking into account the cultural and historical settings of the various texts, we will address issues of structure, thematic elements, theology, Christology, and view of discipleship. Further, we will seek to help modern students grapple with the original meaning of these writers and explore the implications of each writer's words for the life and mission of the church in our time. Bible elective.

Prerequisites: BIBL 503

BIBL 622 Bible and the Koran 3

This is an introductory course in comparative studies of the Bible and the Koran. Students will learn basic facts with regard to the formation, place, function, and the basic theological teachings of the religious texts in each religious community. Our primary concern is not the religion itself but the sacred texts of the religion. We will focus on literary analysis of Koranic suras that are related to the themes of gods, prophets, salvation, Jihad, women, Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The goal of this course is to equip future church leaders with in-depth knowledge of the Koran so that they may serve, love, and bear witness to their Muslim neighbors.

BIBL 625 The Least of These: Biblical and Contemporary Responses to Poverty 3

This course will investigate the biblical record concerning attitudes and behavior related to needy people, and will offer students multiple opportunities to learn from and interact with people currently engaged in ministry (locally and globally) to those regarded as the least of these.

Prerequisites: BIBL 501 and BIBL 503

BIBL 626 Book of Revelation 3

A study of the contents of the Book of Revelation with special attention to its historical setting, literary style, and vision of Christ as the culmination of history. Varieties of interpretations will be examined and critiqued, with a synthetic approach to understanding its apocalyptic vision proposed. By doing so students will gain an appreciation for its message to the early church, its message about a climactic end to the age with the return of Christ, and its application for believers living between the times today. Bible or Theology elective.

Prerequisites: BIBL 503

BIBL 627 The Mission of Jesus in Mark 3

This course provides an opportunity to do four things: (1) work directly and methodically through the first half of the text of Mark's Gospel; (2) engage very selectively with the vast secondary literature on Mark and the context(s) of his account; (3) enter into extensive dialogue on (1) and (2) with fellow students and the professor; and (4) seek integration between mission today and the mission of Jesus as described by Mark. This will be a highly participatory and immersive experience as we listen carefully to Mark's unique contribution to our understanding of Jesus.

BIBL 632 Women in the Bible 3

This course investigates what some of the women in the Bible have to teach us about doing ministry in today's world. Although this course will be taught through the lives of the women in the Bible, the practical applications that can be learned from each of these biblical women are invaluable for anyone considering a career in ministry. Bible elective.

BIBL 635 New Testament Theology 3

In this new upper level Bible elective, we will consider thematic elements that are found across the diverse set of documents that make up the New Testament. These include, but are not limited to, the following: God's covenant with Israel and God's plan of salvation for the world, images in explaining the meaning of the cross, Christian community and mission as well as realized and future eschatology.

BIBL 640 Holy Land Study Tour 3

Participants will visit sites of archeological, historical and contemporary importance in the current State of Israel (Palestine). They will meet and interact with the people who call that place home, and will experience the life and cultures represented there. Our guide will introduce us to the archeology and history of this region in which so much of the biblical story unfolded, and Palmer professors and participants will build on this, thinking together about how these rich historical foundations pave the way for a deepening of our biblical-theological understanding, a fuller consideration of our exegesis of scripture, an expansion of our insights into the lived experiences of those people (historically and today) considered "other" in ethnic, religious and civil terms, and (perhaps) some eye-opening missional insights/implications. By our presence in the lands of the Bible, we become eyewitnesses of the stage upon which the God who acts revealed himself in Scripture. As a result, integration of history, theology and application (our "living out" the Scripture) will be a constant priority, an exercise which will be informed by exposure to the contemporary situation in the Middle East.

BIBL 650 Independent Study/Research in Biblical Studies 0.5-3

A guided course intended for advanced students who wish to do intensive, independent research in a problem related to Biblical studies. Credit hours determined with professor. Bible elective.

Prerequisites: BIBL 502 and BIBL 504

BIBL 660 Special Topics 3**BIBL 660A Ecclesiastes 3**

This course is a literary and theological study of Ecclesiastes in the context of the biblical wisdom tradition. We will explore implications of alternate perspectives, reading and interpretive strategies of the wisdom genre. Attention will be given to similar wisdom materials from the ancient Near East. Students will learn how Ecclesiastes deals with questions concerning fear of God, justice, meaning of life, suffering, creation, and theodicy. The application of this understanding to contemporary context and theological reflection would be a major interest.

BIBL 660B SpTop: First Corinthians 3

Reading First Corinthians should give us pause because all the problems Paul addressed in his letter to this fledgling church are still relevant to the church today. While it is important to delve into the historical-cultural context from which these issues arose, ample class time will be devoted to exploring the hermeneutical implications of the text for personal integrity and discipleship, life and ministry in the community of faith, and bearing authentic witness to the gospel.

Prerequisites: BIBL 503