

THE CONTENT OF THIS DESCRIPTION IS NOT A LEARNING CONTRACT AND THE INSTRUCTOR IS NOT BOUND TO IT. IT IS OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AND INTENDED AS A HELPFUL GUIDE TO THE STUDENT. THE OFFICIAL COURSE SYLLABUS WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE FIRST CLASS.

=====

**TITLE:** Introduction to the Old Testament

**TERM:** January to April 2018 [20181]

**SCHEDULE:** Classes begin January 11, 2018; Thursdays: 9 to 11 am in CFC 101

**SAS timetable is available on SAS Website: [www.staugustines.on.ca](http://www.staugustines.on.ca) for day, time and room location.**

**PROFESSOR:** Rev. Dr. Frederick Y. Chung

**REGISTRATION:** LIMITED TO 30

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

While highlighting some of the more pertinent and valid insights of historical-critical scholarship, the focus of this course will be on the study of the Old Testament in its final, canonical form (as it has been received and transmitted by the faith community). Some key biblical passages in the Pentateuch/Torah and the Historical Books will be analyzed exegetically, with emphasis on the larger theological themes, or “mysteries,” which emerge in light of intertextual links with other passages in the Old Testament. This course will underline some important principles of biblical interpretation, including the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, the contextualization of the so-called “problematic” texts, and the premise of faith that Sacred Scripture is truly the Word of God communicated by human words.

*Note: This course is mainly designed for students who will follow up with further introductory courses on the Prophets and the Psalms/Wisdom literature. As such, it will focus primarily on the narratives giving a survey of Israel’s salvation history. However, thematic connections will be made whenever possible with prophetic and sapiential literature and the Psalter.*

### **CLASS OBJECTIVES:**

- Acquire the ability to interpret biblical passages using basic exegetical methods and tools.
- Recognize and articulate recurring theological themes in Scripture
- Appreciate both the contributions and limitations of the historical-critical method, as well as having a sense of the Old Testament in the general milieu of the Ancient Near East.
- Be familiar with the key personages, places and narratives of the Pentateuch and Historical Books.
- Begin making links to lectionary preaching, spirituality, apologetics, and Patristic interpretation.
- Be motivated to start reading the actual text of Scripture from cover to cover.

**PREREQUISITES:** None.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

1. A modern English translation of the Bible with notes and cross-references. Highly recommended edition: *The Catholic Study Bible: The New American Bible Revised Edition* (2016). Or as an alternative: *The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version* (2006).
2. Longman, Tremper and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. **2nd ed.** Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2006. [You may order this textbook personally online. It is also on three-hour **reserve** at St. Augustine’s Seminary Library.]

3. The Pontifical Biblical Commission. *The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*. Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2002 [also available online].

4. Other required and suggested readings will be provided online on the Blackboard/Learning Portal.

**OPTIONAL RESOURCES:**

Duggan, Michael. *The Consuming Fire: A Christian Introduction to the Old Testament. Updated and Revised*. Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 2010. This is a readable textbook, but it is without footnotes or index. After summarizing the Old Testament books, the author gives “New Testament Perspectives” which highlight some Christian interpretations of texts.

or: La Sor, William Sanford, David Allan Hubbard, and Frederic William Bush. *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982. This is a more thorough introductory text with endnotes and indices.

**POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENTS/PRESENTATIONS/TESTS:**

Participation	10%
Midterm Assignment (written)	20%
Essay	35%
Final Exam (oral)	35%

**ABRIDGED BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

Anderson, Bernhard W. *Contours of Old Testament Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999.

Barton, John. *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984.

Benedict XVI, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Verbum Domini of the Holy Father Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful on the Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*. Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2010.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Creation, Un-Creation, Re-Creation: A Discursive Commentary on Genesis 1-11*. London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2011.

Boadt, Lawrence. *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction*. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.

Brettler, Marc Zvi. *How to Read the Jewish Bible*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Brueggemann, Walter. *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.

———. *Theology of the Old Testament: An Introduction*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008.

Brueggemann, Walter and Tod Linafelt. *Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination*. 2nd ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012.

Childs, Brevard S. *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible*. 1st Fortress Press. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.

———. *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974.

Collins, John J. *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004.

- Duggan, Michael. *The Consuming Fire: A Christian Introduction to the Old Testament. Updated and Revised*. Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 2005.
- Otto, Eckart. "The Judean Legitimation of Royal Rulers in its Ancient Near Eastern Contexts." In *Psalms and Liturgy*, edited by D. J. Human and C. J. A. Vos, 131-139. JSOT.S 410. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2004.
- Fishbane, Michael A. *Haftarot*. The JPS Bible Commentary. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2002.
- Franke, John R., and Thomas C. Oden. *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel*. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2005.
- Fretheim, Terence E. *Abraham: Trials of Family and Faith*. Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2007.
- Longman, Tremper. *Old Testament Commentary Survey*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Menn, Esther M. "Sweet Singer of Israel: David and the Psalms in Early Judaism." In *Psalms in Community: Jewish and Christian Textual, Liturgical, and Artistic Traditions*, edited by Harold W. Attridge and Margot E. Fassler, 61-74. Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.
- Payne, David F. "The History of Bible Times." *The Collegeville Bible Time-line*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993.
- Pontifical Biblical Commission. *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church: Address of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and Document of the Pontifical Biblical Commission*. Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993.
- Pritchard, James B., ed. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.
- von Rad, Gerhard. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Rev. ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972.
- Rees, Anthony. *[Re]Reading Again: A Mosaic Reading of Numbers 25*. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 589. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- Sarna, Nahum M. *Exodus*. The JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991.
- Ska, Jean Louis. *Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch*. Edited by Pascale Dominique. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006.
- Sweeney, Marvin A. *Tanakh: A Theological and Critical Introduction to the Jewish Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.
- Walton, John H., ed. *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*, Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary 1. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
- Welker, Michael. "The Power of Mercy in Biblical Law." *Journal of Law and Religion* 29.2 (2014): 225–235.
- Wenham, Gordon J. *Genesis*. 2 vols. WBC 1, 2. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1987, 2000.