

Erskine Theological Seminary

OT 501 CO: INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT I

(Syllabus Revised August 4, 2009)

Fall 2009

Columbia Campus: Mondays, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Class Starts on Labor Day, September 7

Professor: Max Rogland

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OFFICE HOURS FOR FALL 2009:

I will typically be available Monday through Friday in my office in Columbia between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., though it is always advisable to call or email for an appointment first. Other times may be available.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course surveys the history and literature of Israel to the end of the united kingdom. In dealing with Israelite economic, social, political, cultural, and religious life, the Old Testament is illumined by studies in archaeology, geography, and ancient Near Eastern texts. Introductory issues such as canon, historical-critical approaches, and the authority of the Old Testament are also treated. *Three hours.*

COURSE GOALS:

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to “educate persons for service in the Christian Church.” To achieve this mission, the ability to understand the Bible in various contexts must be taught. These contexts include the Bible’s ancient Near Eastern cultural setting, the immediate context of the literary unit in question, the context of the book of the Bible at issue or the OT as a whole, its canonical context admitting the light of the NT that points to Christ, and the context of the whole counsel of God that includes the implications of the Word today. This course will seek to raise the students’ awareness of how to read the OT in these various contexts. The specific goals of this course are as follows:

- This course will expose the student to the history and geography of the OT. Many of the names and places should become clear, and the timeline of events should crystallize the student’s understanding of the progress of redemption. Along the way, insights from comparative studies will be discovered.
- At appropriate points in the study of the material, the questions that generations of modern scholars have asked of the text will be raised and their answers supplied and critiqued. The strengths and weaknesses of these approaches will be considered, including the “grammatical-historical” method of interpretation.

- The student will gain adeptness at relating the OT revelation to its fulfillment in Christ's person and work. How the NT influences our reading of the Old is an important consideration in this course. The "grammatical-historical" method is not the all-in-all of interpretation. The centrality of the gospel and the culmination of all the OT motifs and themes in Jesus will be discussed.
- Finally, the importance of the OT in the formation of our contemporary theology, character, and wisdom will be placed before the student.

ERSKINE DISTANCE EDUCATION NETWORK (EDEN):

This course utilizes Erskine's EDEN website as a place to make class resources available to you as well as the means for completing and submitting various assignments. Thus, you will need frequent access to a computer with a reliable internet connection. If you have never used the EDEN site before then see the directions below on how to set up an account (Appendix A). After you have set up an account you will need an enrollment key in order to access the OT 501 CO online classroom. Students must have their EDEN accounts set up by the first class session.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush. *Old Testament Survey. Second Edition.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996. (ISBN: 978-0-8028-3788-2)

Vanhoozer, Kevin (ed.), *Theological Interpretation of the Old Testament. A Book-by-Book Survey.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008. (ISBN: 978-0-8010-3624-8)

Soulen, Richard, and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, 3rd edition. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001. (ISBN: 978-0-664-22314-4)

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS:

W. Grudem (ed.), *The ESV Study Bible.* Wheaton: Crossway, 2008. Many formats and bindings are available; the basic hardcover edition is ISBN 978-1-4335-0241-5.

M. Silva (ed.), *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996. (ISBN: 0-310-20828-9)

Students continue to be responsible for securing their own required textbooks. As a convenience, there is a bookstore on the seminary's home page. To access this site and its information, locate textbooks, and compare prices, go to:

<http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>

A limited number of copies of each textbook will be available from the Erskine Campus Bookstore, and copies may be ordered through that Bookstore.

PLEASE NOTE: When ordering a book that has been published in more than one edition, make certain that you acquire the correct one (check the ISBN number when ordering); do not attempt to substitute an older edition of a required textbook.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Reading: You are required to read the Bible from Genesis 1 through 1 Kings 11 in its entirety, as well as a number of secondary sources (a complete reading schedule will be provided at a later date; keep checking the Erskine website for an update of this syllabus).

A reading check list (see Appendix B below) must be turned in at the final class session on **December 7**.

2. Torah Exam (**November 2**). A study guide will be provided by the instructor.
3. Old Testament History and Geography Exam (**December 7**). A study guide will be provided by the instructor.
4. Four textual analyses (details will be provided in class), due on **September 28, October 19, and November 16, and December 7**.

COURSE GRADING:

Your grade will be calculated according to the following percentages:

1. Reading: 10% (grade based upon percentage of readings completed by the deadlines given by the instructor)
2. Torah Exam: 25%
3. Old Testament History and Geography Exam: 25%
4. Four textual analyses: 40% (4 @ 10% each)

ERSKINE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY'S GRADING SCALE:

100-95	A	85-84	C+	71-70	D-
94-93	A-	83-80	C		
92-91	B+	79-78	C-	69-0	F
90-88	B	77-76	D+		
87-86	B-	75-72	D		

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS AND SEMINARY POLICIES:

Registration: Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract, and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a “drop/add” form and secure the appropriate signatures prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student’s receiving a grade of “F” for the course, and full tuition charges will apply. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

Official Seminary Class Attendance Policy and Policy on Absences: Class participation is considered an important part of the total educational experience at Erskine Seminary. Students are expected to attend classes on a regular basis and are responsible for the mastery of all materials required in the course. In general, students are allowed up to three hours of unexcused absence without penalty.

Late and/or Incomplete Work: Any work not submitted by the due date will be assessed a late penalty. Students should review the Seminary policy on “Incompletes” in the Seminary catalog. The grade of “I” or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of “I” is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally com-

plete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An "I" in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become "F."

Plagiarism: Any student who commits plagiarism is in violation of Seminary policy and is liable for dismissal. See the academic section of the Catalog for complete information.

Language about God and Humanity: Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

Conduct in Theological Discussions: Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

Style and Bibliographical Formatting Requirements: All written assignments must be typed/processed (12-point type, double-spaced, one-inch margins) and fully documented, following the standards in the "Style and Form Standards" (Erskine Seminary).

Taping Class Lectures: I am hoping to tape the class lectures and post them onto the EDEN classroom. If you wish to tape a lecture using your own recording device, you must complete an "Audio Recording Request" form, which can be downloaded from the Seminary website at: http://www.erskineseminary.org/Academics_Files/PdfDownloads.html

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments & Exams
9/7 (Labor Day!)	Introduction; Genesis		
9/14	Genesis (cont.)		
9/21	Genesis (cont.)	Bible: Genesis	
9/28	Exodus	Bible: Exodus	Textual analysis #1
10/5	Leviticus	Bible: Leviticus	
10/12	Numbers	Bible: Numbers	
10/19	Deuteronomy	Bible: Deuteronomy	Textual analysis #2
10/26	Deuteronomy (cont.)		
11/2	Introduction to OT Historical Books & Joshua	Bible: Joshua	Torah Exam
11/9	Joshua (cont.)		
11/16	Judges & Ruth; Samuel & the Rise of the Monarchy	Bible: Judges and Ruth	Textual analysis #3
11/23	Thanksgiving Break		
11/30	Saul and David	Bible: 1 & 2 Samuel	
12/7	David and Solomon	Bible: 1 Kings 1-11	OT History/Geography exam Textual analysis #4

Appendix A: First time EDEN users

If you have never created an EDEN account, please complete the following steps to access to the online classroom.

If you have taken an EDEN course previously, go to the web site listed below and enter your user name and password.

1. Go to the online classroom website: <http://eden.erskineseminary.net/>
2. Select the term for which you are enrolled.
3. Read carefully the text under the heading “*Is this your first time here?*” Click on the “*Start now by creating a new account*” button.
4. An email will be immediately sent to the email address you entered in the new account form. When it arrives read the email and click on the web link it contains. Your account will be confirmed and you will be logged in. This must be done in a timely manner – the confirmation will not stay for long in the system.
5. Find the course for which you are enrolled.
6. Enter the **enrollment key** in order to access the online classroom. You will be provided this key upon confirmation by the Registrar’s office.

** Notes:

- The **enrollment key** and your **user name and password** are different. Do not attempt to use one for the other.
- It is recommended that you write down your user name and password so that it won’t be forgotten. The EDEN office cannot provide you with this information.
- Please do not share the enrollment key with other students.

Appendix B: Reading Check List

Bible Reading:

	Date due	Percentage of reading completed on time
Genesis	9/21	
Exodus	9/28	
Leviticus	10/5	
Numbers	10/12	
Deuteronomy	10/19	
Joshua	11/2	
Judges & Ruth	11/16	
1 & 2 Samuel	11/30	
1 Kings 1-11	12/7	

Secondary Reading:

The schedule of secondary readings is still being developed and will be made available on the course's EDEN website and/or in class.

I verify that the above readings were completed as indicated.

Signature

Print name