



ERSKINE

SEMINARY

Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning

OT762

The Song of Solomon and Wisdom*

George M. Schwab, Ph.D.

Fall 2002

Thursdays, 8:00 – 11:00 am

Office Phone: 864-379-8882

E-mail: schwab@erskine.edu

Office: Bowie Divinity Hall, Room 23

Seminary Fax: 864-379-3171

Mailing Address: P.O. Drawer 668

Due West, SC 29639

I. Course Description: This course is designed to give the student familiarity with the sapiential portions of the Bible. These include the books of Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. Attention is given to the non-Israelite wisdom material contemporaneous with the production of these books. Students consider the New Testament's final word on wisdom and learn to interpret the wisdom texts in their whole canonical context.

II. Course Goals

A. General Mission of Erskine Seminary

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to “educate persons for service in the Christian Church.” To achieve this mission, the ability to understand biblical Wisdom books must be taught. How they point to Christ, and their implications for today, will be discovered.

B. By the end of the course, the student should be able to explain:

- The message, genius, and import of the Old Testament wisdom books
- To what beliefs and perspectives does each wisdom book call modern Christians
- How to apply this portion of Scripture to the lives of people today
- How Jesus fulfills each wisdom book, and the wisdom corpus as a whole
- How to critically appraise the way that psychologists and counselors have interpreted the Bible

III. Required Reading

* Note: A colorful syllabus cover can be downloaded from my website. This is worth 1% of extra credit; 2% if printed on photo-quality paper. The cover is NOT the webpage picture. Right-click on the link that says “Syllabus Cover,” download (Save Target As), then print from Microsoft Paint or some such program. *Make sure the whole image prints on one page.*

Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary has a bookstore portal of the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html> There you will find links to familiar vendors and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will carry a limited number of copies of every required text and orders for books can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

Hallo, William. *The Context of Scripture Vol. 1* (London: Brill, 1997), 61 – 68, 98 – 104, 110 – 130, 483 – 495, 563 – 568. Posted on moodle site.

Kidner, Derek. *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1985), 1 – 141.

Longman, Tremper. *The Book of Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 1-40.

Schwab, George. “The Proverbs and the Art of Persuasion,” *JBC* 14 no. 1 (1995): 6 – 17. Posted on moodle site.

_____. “Ecclesiastes and Counsel Under the Sun,” *JBC* 15 no. 2 (1997): 7 – 16. Posted on moodle site.

_____. “The Book of Job and Counsel in the Whirlwind,” *JBC* 17 no. 1 (1998): 31 – 43. Posted on moodle site.

_____. *The Song of Songs’ Cautionary Message Concerning Human Love*. (NY: Lang, 2002), 1 – 108. This is on reserve in the Library.

_____. *The Song of Songs*. Expositor Bible Commentary Vol 6, 2008. Posted on moodle site.

_____. *The Book of Proverbs*. Cornerstone Biblical Commentary Vol 7, 2009.

Von Rad, Gerhard. *Wisdom in Israel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1972), 144 – 176, 262 – 283. Posted on moodle site.

IV. Exams and Assignments

A. Exams 55% total

1. 15% of your grade will be Exam #1. This will cover the assigned readings and lectures.

2. 25% of your grade will be Exam #2 that will cover the lectures and the assigned readings after Exam #1. This exam is not comprehensive.

3. 15% of your grade will be the final exam, which is also *not* comprehensive.

B. Papers 40% total

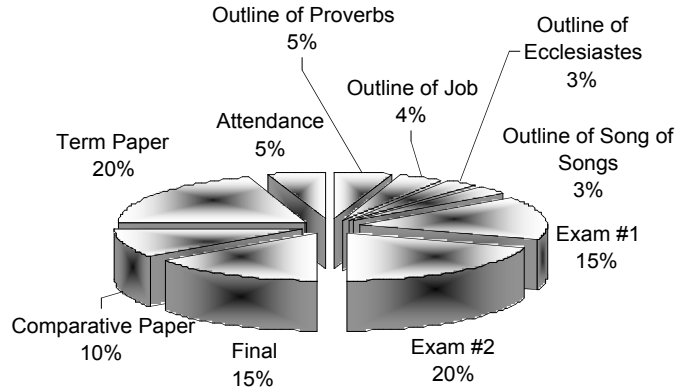
1. 20% of your grade will be on the term paper.

2. 10% of your grade will be on thoughtful outlines of the Biblical books.

3. 10% of your grade will be on your response paper to readings in comparative literature.

C. 5% of your grade will be class participation, attendance, and punctuality with assignments. If you miss more than 3 class periods, you will be given a failing mark for the course.

Requirements



V. Grading

A. The grade will be calculated as follows.

Grade	Value	GPA	Grade	Value	GPA
A	95-100	4.0	C-	78-79	1.7
A-	93-94	3.7	D+	76-77	1.3
B+	91-92	3.3	D	72-75	1.0
B	88-90	3.0	D-	70-71	0.7
		86-87	2.7		
C+	84-85	2.3	F	0-69	0.0
C	80-83	2.0			

B. The actual assignment of a letter grade will take into consideration the performance of the class as a whole (i.e. you will be graded on a curve).

VI. Seminary Policies

A. Incompletes: The grade of 'Incomplete' can be assigned as a final grade only when two conditions are met: 1) the student has completed the majority of the requirements for the course; 2) the student has been providentially hindered from completing the remaining requirements for the course. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form well before the semester's end and ask the professor to grant the request. An 'Incomplete' will automatically become an 'F' unless requirements are fulfilled by March 1.

B. Withdrawals: Once you have completed, signed, and submitted your registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract, and your billing will be based on this registration. If you decide not to take this class, a "drop/add" form must be completed, including securing the appropriate signatures. Failure to properly withdraw from the class will result in receiving a grade of "F" for the course and full tuition charges will apply. Erskine will make no exceptions to this policy.

C. Writing: The style guide adopted by the seminary is that of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. The seminary encourages making use of inclusive language. It is the mark of a good communicator to build bridges rather than barriers; therefore, such language should be used in all written work and oral presentations. The Seminary Catalog stands as an example of recommended usage.

D. Attendance: the student is required to attend all classes. If the student misses more than 3 classes, an F will automatically be assigned. Sleeping in class = an absence.

E. Language about God and Humanity. Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds refer to Him with masculine language. 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").

F. Conduct in Theological Discussions: There are no favorites at Erskine. Publicly rejecting this ethos with the result of making fellow students feel unwelcome will be considered unethical behavior, and is grounds for course failure on the level of cheating and plagiarism. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

G. Chapel Attendance. This class has a chapel attendance requirement. Consult the catalog or registration booklet for policy specifics. There is a fee for chapel truancy.


H. Plagiarism is using other people's wording or ideas in a way to give the impression they are yours. This is *theft*. Any borrowed text must be in quotes or clearly indented, with the source identified. Treat paraphrases of others' words or ideas similarly. List the source in a bibliography. You must obtain permission to submit work previously used for another course. At times, a source might be checked—so be cautious.

I. Exegesis Credit Policy. Students intending to use this course to fulfill their Old or New Testament exegesis requirement, must choose a passage and do a thorough exegetical study, using the exegetical procedure taught in the Principles of Exegesis course. Such students, then, must have successfully completed BI 502 Principles of Exegesis and, for those who began in Fall 2008 or after, BI 503 Introduction to the Biblical Languages prior to taking any course for exegesis credit. Additionally, students who are required to take the Biblical languages (Hebrew and Greek) must, in place of BI 503 Introduction to the Biblical Languages, successfully complete the respective language courses (Hebrew I & II for Old Testament courses; Greek I & II for New Testament courses) prior to taking any Bible course for exegesis credit. Students taking Bible electives without having met the exegesis and language course prerequisites may

only count those courses as general Bible electives, and cannot receive exegesis credit for them. For exegesis credit, do a thorough exegetical study using the exegetical procedure taught in BI 502, and BI 503 or using Hebrew (if applicable to your curriculum).

J. Office hours: Posted. You can always reach me by email.

VII. Course Schedule

	Topic	Assignments Due
9/3		Introduction to Wisdom Literature
9/10	Wisdom in Comparative Literature	<i>Read:</i> Kidner ch. 1; Hallo, 61 – 68, 110 – 130, 563 – 568.
9/17	Proverbs I	<i>Read:</i> Schwab, “Proverbs” article; von Rad. <i>Bring:</i> Outline of Proverbs.
9/24	Proverbs II	<i>Read:</i> Kidner ch. 2 – 3; Schwab, <i>Proverbs</i> intro.
10/1	Proverbs III	Exam #1 <i>Read:</i> Hallo, 98 – 104, 483 – 495; Schwab, <i>Proverbs</i> comments on 1:1 – 9:18.
10/8	Job I	<i>Read:</i> Schwab, “Job”; Kidner ch. 4 – 5; Schwab, <i>Proverbs</i> 10:1 – 14:27. <i>Bring:</i> Outline of Job.
10/15	Job II	<i>Read:</i> Schwab 14:28 – 22:16. <i>Bring:</i> Response paper.
10/22	Ecclesiastes I	<i>Read:</i> Schwab, “Ecclesiastes”; Kidner ch. 6; Schwab <i>Proverbs</i> 22:17 – 24:34. <i>Bring:</i> Outline of Ecclesiastes.
10/29	Ecclesiastes II	<i>Read:</i> Longman; Kidner ch. 7.
11/5	Song of Songs I	<i>Read:</i> Kidner, ch. 8; Schwab, “Cautionary Message;” Schwab <i>Proverbs</i> 25:1 – 29:27. <i>Bring:</i> Outline of Song of Songs.
11/12	Song of Songs II	<i>Read:</i> Schwab, <i>The Song of Songs.</i>
11/19	Wisdom in the New Testament, taped lecture	<i>Read:</i> Schwab, <i>Proverbs</i> 30:1 – 31:31. Exam #2
11/26		Thanksgiving 
12/3	Daniel, Psalms	<i>Bring:</i> Term paper.
TBA		Final Exam

VIII. Bibliography posted on moodle site.

SAPIENTIAL QUOTIENT
Introduction to Wisdom Literature
George M. Schwab, Ph.D.

Read each verse from Proverbs. In the blanks, write in a number between one and five. A five means that you almost always behave wisely and upright in that area of your life; a one means that you need a lot of work. Add the pairs of verses. Multiply your two lowest sums to get your Sapiential Quotient. A perfect score is 100%.

Wise in speech

10:19 + _____
 18:13 + _____

1st sum

Wise with Pleasure

Job 31:1 + _____
 20:1 + _____

2nd sum

Wise with emotions

12:16 + _____
 14:29 + _____

3rd sum

Wise in Humility

13:10 + _____
 25:27 + _____

4th sum

Wise with time

14:23 + _____
 26:14 + _____

5th sum

General Wisdom

25:17 + _____
 21:13 + _____

6th sum

Wise with Money

21:20 + _____
 23:4 + _____

7th sum

Sapiential Quotient

Multiply together your two lowest sums:

PERCENT