Reinhardt University



God's special relationship with Israel and the law of Moses presupposed God's uniqueness as the only God. In the OT story, however, the Israelites constantly broke this covenant by worshipping other deities as shown by the above stelas, altars, and statues dedicated to other deities.

COURSE: Rel 204 010 MC (SECTION # 1) and 030 MC (SECTION # 2)

SURVEY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

TERM/YEAR: SPRING Semester, 2024

SESSION:

SCHEDULE

AND CLASSROOM: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

SECTION # 1: 8:00 - 8:50 AM, TARPLEY 211 SECTION # 2: 11:00 - 11:50 AM, TARPLEY 211

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Aquiles Ernesto Martínez

Professor of Religion

Religion Program Coordinator

OFFICE HOURS: You may call or email me to make an appointment via TEAMS or at

my office.

Office Tarpley # 103 (bottom floor)

Phone (770) 720-5973 E-mail aem@reinhardt.edu **CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION.** A panoramic view of the content, main characteristics, and message(s) of the Hebrew Bible considering their social context and as literary expression of the faith, life, and history of Ancient Israel.

RELIGION PROGRAM OBJETIVES (RPO).

- 1. To enable students to understand the various major religions of the world (RPO 1).
- 2. To enable students to clarify their vocation (RPO 2).
- 3. To assist students to understand the Christian tradition (RPO 3).
- 4. To enable students to think critically and be able to express those ideas in writing, speech, and visual media (RP0 4).
- 5. To help students become familiar with a variety of research methods appropriate to the field of religion, particularly those relevant to the study of primary Sources (RPO 5).
- 6. To help students develop their own understanding of moral and spiritual issues (RPO 6).

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COURSE OBJECTIVES. Considering the general objectives of the Religion Program, the main purpose of this course is to introduce you to the basic elements that define a collection of Ancient Jewish documents called "the Old Testament" or "Hebrew Bible" (which is foundational for understanding Judaism and Christianity). More specifically, after completing this course, you will be able

- 1. To define the nature and purpose of the Hebrew Scriptures (RPO 1)
- 2. To summarize the plot of the story contained in the Hebrew Bible and its implications (RPO 1)
- 3. To briefly discuss the significant impact the OT has had in Judaism, Christianity, and Western society (RPO 1, 3, 4 and 5)
- 4. To identify some of the main historical, literary, theological, and socio-cultural features of the OT (**RPO 1 and 5**)
- 5. To summarize the basic message of some of the books of the OT (RPO 1)
- 6. To draw a picture of the socio-cultural background that served as the matrix and socializing environment of the OT and its participants (i.e., The Ancient Near East) (RPO 1)
- 7. To provide a brief explanation of the origin and formation of the OT as "Sacred Scripture" or Canon in Judaism and Christianity (RPO 1, 3, and 4)
- 8. To use a few practical strategies for reading the OT critically but with relevance, creativity, and innovation (RPO 1 and 5)
- 9. To view the Hebrew Bible as a source of insight, inspiration, thought, faith, pleasure, and ethics (RPO 1 and 6).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING SYSTEM. Your academic performance will be evaluated based on a **100 point-scale**. All the points you earn for every assignment need to be added to your accumulated total, not averaged out. At the end of the course, the points you accumulate will give you the corresponding letter grade according to the following scale: **F (0 - 59)**; **D (60-69)**; **C (70-79)**; **B (80-89)**; **A (90-100)**. **Grades will NOT** be rounded (unless you participate in class and/or do extra-work on the tests; see explanations below) (for example, an accumulation of 79.5 points is not literally a B but a C). The assignments with their corresponding point-values will be distributed as follows:

1. SHORT TESTS (50 POINTS) (RPO 1, 3 AND 4). Considering all the learning objectives for this course, there will only be 5 OPEN BOOK/NOTES TESTS measuring your knowledge of some BASIC FACTS about the OT (from a literary, cultural, social, religious, and

historical perspective) and the basic points of the OT story. To prepare for these tests, you must study (before every class) the handouts posted in CANVAS and my presentations. Regarding all these tests, I will provide you with some TEST GUIDELINES or INSTRUCTIONS ahead of time so you can do well.

The point-distribution for these tests will be as follows:

Test # 1 – 10 points Test # 2 – 10 points Test # 3 – 10 points Test # 4 – 10 points Test # 5 – 10 points

Finally, you must take these tests on the designated dates. No exceptions! In cases of emergencies, I must be notified ahead of time. For the dates of these tests, please check *The Calendar of Topics and Assignments* below.

2. <u>REFLECTION PAPERS (50 points)</u>. In an effort to make the material somewhat relevant, you will be writing five short papers on topics of your choice (addressing two issues each) and that are important for understanding some important aspects of the OT story in its context and taking into account our points of view centuries later.

These are the topics that the papers will address:

PAPER 1: CHOOSE AND ANSWER TWO OF THE QUESTIONS LISTED BELOW:

- In your own words, what are the main arguments used to support the claim that the OT was written from a male perspective and what are some biblical examples you can use to illustrate this point of view? (1 full page).
- When Martinez argues that the OT has been interpreted in a tragic way because of the subjectivity of the interpreters and the nature of the Bible itself, what does he specifically mean? After providing an answer in your own words, describe one example to support your answer (1 full page).
- In what historical context was the OT written and why is knowing this so important? (1 full page).

PAPER 2: CHOOSE AND ANSWER TWO OF THE QUESTIONS LISTED BELOW:

How are the following Power-Point lectures on the following topics (to be presented in class) relevant to our understanding of the OT its historical context, and their practical implications for our present lives centuries later?

- The Flood Story (1 full page).
- The Hammurabi Law Codes (1 full page).
- Sargon I and Moses (1 full page).
- Strange Laws in Moses' Law (1 full page).

PAPER 3: CHOOSE AND ANSWER TWO OF THE QUESTIONS LISTED BELOW:

• Based on what we have studied so far about "the conquest" of the land of

Canaan (as narrated in the books of Joshua and Judges), what is your critique of "the God of Israel" as characterized by OT writers, namely, the type of God who promises and gives the land of Canaan to the Israelites in exchange for their loyalty and who, to this end, asks the Israelites to kill the inhabitants of this land and take their land? (1 full page).

- From a 21st century perspective, what is your critique of the religion of the Canaanites as characterized by OT writers and the profile we have reconstructed in the handout? (1 full page).
- After studying 1 Samuel 8:1-22, what is your critique of "kingship" as a form of
 political organization according to the way it is characterized in this passage and
 in conversation with a 21st century perspective or what you know about political
 systems? (1 full page).

PAPER 4: CHOOSE AND ANSWER **TWO** OF THE QUESTIONS LISTED BELOW:

- Taking into consideration what we have learned about the conquest of the land
 of Canaan (as narrated in the books of Joshua and Judges), what is your critique
 of "the God" of Israel who promises and gives the land of Canaan as a reward
 for their obedience and who, to this end, asks the Israelites to kill the inhabitants
 of this land and take their land away from them? (1 full page).
- What is your critique of the religion of the Canaanites as characterized by the OT and based on the what the handout says about this people? (1 full page).
- After studying 1 Samuel 8:1-22, what is your critique of "kingship" as a form of social organization according to the way it is characterized in this passage from a 21st century perspective? (1 full page).
- After studying 1 Kings 12:1-33, what is your critique of division of the kingdom of Israel and the formation of Judah and Israel from a 21st century perspective? (1 full page).

PAPER 5: CHOOSE AND ANSWER **TWO** OF THE QUESTIONS LISTED BELOW:

- Reflecting on the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions, the destruction of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and the deportations of many Israelites to foreign territories, please provide a brief critique of these events from a 21st century perspective (1 full page).
- One of the efforts to reform the lives of the Hebrew exiles, led by Ezra and Nehemiah, involved making them obey the Torah to renew the Covenant with Yahweh. "Mixed marriages" was one of the issues to be addressed back then as part of this effort. After studying this event as narrated in Ezra 9:1-2; 10:9-11, 17-18, 44; Nehemiah 13:23-31, please provide a critique of these biblical passages from a 21st century perspective (1 full page).
- Study carefully Nehemiah 9:1-38. After you do this, please discuss what this text is about and in what ways how this text related to the essence of Rel 204 Survey of the Old Testament (1 full page).

REQUIRED FORMAT FOR ALL THE PAPERS. No MLA, Turabian, or any other official format required. You may use person pronouns in writing your papers. Also, since all students have the capabilities and potential to contribute to a scholarly culture of teaching and learning, it

is expected that all the papers will be your own work. These papers must be double-spaced, typed, and written using a 12 character-font (Times New Roman). If by any chance you use secondary sources, you must make a clear distinction between "your own words" and "the words of the sources" you used. Credit must be given to the materials used and/or consulted (only author, name of the source, and page number). All these papers must be your own work. Plagiarism will be penalized.

More specifically, your papers must be evaluated based on the following additional criteria: (a) style and grammar; (b) faithfulness to the subject matter; c) critical-thinking skills; and (c) engagement, creativity, and relevance to today's world. Points will be taken off if the above guidelines are not followed literally and faithfully. Outstanding papers will be considered for extra credit.

All papers must be turned on CANVAS on the designated dates by AT MIDNIGHT THE LATEST. No later papers will be accepted.

3. EXTRA CREDIT: PARTICIPATION IN CLASS (RPO 1-9). Since all of us are part of a course that seeks to create a culture of teaching and learning, you are expected to intentionally participate in class with your insights, good observations, arguments from other perspectives, words of clarification, and meaningful questions, to contribute to an environment that is conducive to the personal understanding and the growth of all your classmates. We are partners in this undertaking! Thus, you must be willing and open to engage in conversations with the professor and others to be successful and get credit for it.

Taking notes in itself, being silent in class, and coming to class **DO NOT count as participation in themselves.** Depending on the quantity and quality of your pro-active participation, and at my discretion, I will assign you a 0, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 points for this part of the course. The rule is at least **ONE PARTICIPATION PER WEEK**. AFTER THE SECOND WEEK OF CLASS, I will start **KEEPING TRACK** of your participation and assigning a tentative grade (as if it were the last day of class). This tentative grade can and/or will change depending on you.

Only students who participate according to the above criteria will be considered for **EXTRA CREDIT** and/or for **GRADES TO BE ROUNDED** at the end of the semester.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING ALL ASSIGNMENTS. No academic work can be RESUBMITTED or RETAKEN. However, DRAFTS OF ANSWERS OF YOUR ESSAYS can be sent ahead of time for review so you can do well.

TUTORING AND TIME FOR STUDING. As you can tell from "the Calendar of Topics and Assignments" below, I have set apart some FRIDAYS as formal times for studying during our regular class schedule and for you to make appointments with me when necessary so we can make sure you understand the themes to be covered in class, the materials, and the assignments. There will be NO formal classes on those designated dates. It is your responsibility to take advantage of this provision so you can do well.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ATHLETES. Those of who play sports for Reinhardt must contact me and let me know ahead on time when you will be missing class because of games, injuries and/or emergencies so I could make the corresponding adjustments. You must **NOT** rely on your coaches' notifications sent to me. You must contact me individually about these issues.

CREDIT HOUR STATEMENT. Over 15 weeks, students will spend 150 minutes per week in lectures, class discussions, and examinations (37.5 hours for the semester). Instructional time includes a 3-hour final exam. Out-of-class work includes papers, reports, service as volunteers,

visits to religious places, and preparation for exams, and is estimated at around 300 minutes per week (75 hours for the semester).

CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS. The Center for Student Success (CSS) is located in Hill Freeman Library Room 313. CSS offers free peer and faculty tutoring to support Biology courses, Math, Spanish, and writing across the university curriculum, as well as other subjects with peer tutors for a variety of subjects depending on current peer tutor staffing such as Chemistry, Accounting, French, and more.

This service is free of charge to Reinhardt students. Appointments are preferred and are the best way to connect to the CSS, but there are walk-in hours that vary and are posted each semester. Students may request a tutoring appointment or request an update of current programming, please complete a tutoring request for specific tutors or a general inquiry at https://www.reinhardt.edu/academic-resources/center-for-student-success/, or email css@reinhardt.edu. Students receive an email from the CSS/Pharos that is their record of their meeting with a CSS tutor.



Faculty may refer students for tutoring or other academic success workshops through Pharos 360. From the Pharos screen, instructors would type in the student name/ID number in the search bar, select *Student Updates* from under the student photo icon, and then select *CSS referral*.

There is also the availability of online tutoring through brainfuse, through the specific to Reinhardt link https://www.brainfuse.com/highed/helpNow.asp?a id=68F429E2&ss=&r=



Brainfuse is an online platform where students can receive specific subject area tutoring or access other study supports. Please contact css@reinhardt.edu or schedule a general request appointment in the CSS for more information on how to register for and use Brainfuse.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Students with learning disabilities must read and comply with the following statements: "The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a documented disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Academic Support Office (ASO). Reinhardt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Therefore, if you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the

Academic Support Office (ASO). ASO is in the basement of Lawson Building. Phone is 770-720-5567. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper ASO letters/forms."

COURSE FORMAL POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS. Having in mind that education is about equipping students with the values, skills, knowledge, and experiences to interact with the world in relevant and transformative ways, it is expected that student will honor a set of ethical, professional, and civil principles that will guide their actions in this course. We hereby outline some of the most important ones:

- 1. ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES. To create a culture of learning, professionalism, and civility, all students are expected to attend class faithfully and on time. Although the Reinhardt Catalog states that attendance is an "obligation," please remember that attending class is also a privilege. Formal education is a blessing not too many people enjoy. Missing too many classes (without any legitimate justifications) will have negative implications on your final grade. In the case of an emergency or justified absences, please contact me via email ahead of time to indicate the reasons why you were not or will not be in class.
 - **2. INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONALISM.** Throughout this course the following ethical principles are assumed as norms of conduct:
 - a. ANY FORM OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE AND WILL BE SERIOUSLY PENALIZED. PLAGIARISM or CHEATING will make you make you fail this course!!!!
 - b. Good-in-class behavior is assumed as a norm. Any form of disrupting behavior is not acceptable. It is assumed that each student will follow the Reinhardt's code of conduct as explained in the student handbook.
 - c. This class is a **FREE-CELL-PHONE ZONE**. Cell phones must be turned off and put in your pockets or back packs. Failure to comply with this requirement will have negative implications on your grade.
 - d. LAPTOP COMPUTERS/TABLETS may only be used for TAKING NOTES and you must formally ask for permission to do so. During class time, you are NOT ALLOWED TO DO HOMEWORK FOR OTHER COURSES or USE SOCIAL MEDIA. You must be fully present! Failure to comply with this requirement will have negative implications on your grade.
 - e. The conditions of this syllabus are binding and must be followed faithfully. I assume you all know its content. By deciding to take this course, you **ALL AGREE** to follow the norms ruling this course.
 - f. Any comment or suggestion that contributes to your growth as students, the improvement of this class, and a learning environment is welcome. I am here to help you learn, succeed and be a better human being. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to ask for help. Feel free to contact him at any time.
 - 3. COMMUNICATION MODE. All of you are responsible for constantly checking CANVAS (Files, Announcements, etc.) and your Reinhardt email accounts regarding issues pertaining to this course (materials, lectures, announcements, class schedule changes, grades, etc.). When you communicate with me, you must follow a formal, respectful protocol. You must be polite and/or use manners. Do NOT use your personal emails!

4. IMPORTANT REINHARDT ACADEMIC DATES

January 9, Tuesday, Final day to add P-designated online courses. **January 16**, Tuesday, Final day to change schedule, end of drop/add.

January 16, Tuesday, Last day to submit a graduation application for May 2024 degree completion without a late fee.

March 12. Tuesday Final date to withdraw with grade of W, full semester classes.

March 18-28 Advising/Registration summer and fall semesters 2024.

April 1, Monday, Final day to submit a graduation application for participation in Spring 2024 Commencement Ceremony

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF STUDENT SUCCESS. Your job is to do well in this class, be responsible, take initiative, follow my instructions carefully, listen, and be open to new understandings, skills, knowledge, and methodologies. My job is to make sure that these goal are achieved giving all of you my best. It is a relational undertaking. To this end, the following principles may help us get there:

- I. HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND CHALLENGES
- II. YOU CAN AND WILL RISE TO THE OCCASION
- III. THE QUALITY OF YOUR EFFORT IS THE KEY
- IV. YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE WITH YOUR IDEAS, QUESTISM KNOWLEDGE, AND EXPERIENCES
- V. LISTEN TO OTHER VOICES AND CONSIDER OTHER PERSPECTIVES
- VI. MAKE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES RELEVANT
- VII. BE ATTENTIVE, RESPONSIBLE, TAKE NOTES, AND PARTICIPATE
- VIII. REVIEW THE MATERIAL DAILY
- IX. DEVELOP FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIPS
- X. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

REQUIRED READINGS.

Any version of the Bible (preferably the NIV). I strongly recommend the Harper/Collins Study Bible.

Selected OT passages and presentations in class. Also, handouts to be downloaded from CANVAS.

RECOMMENDED READINGS (for those of you who would like to deepen your understanding of the OT).

- Boadt, Lawrence. Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.
- Craigie, Peter C. <u>The Old Testament: Its Background, Growth & Content</u>. Nashville: Abingdon, 1986.
- Holladay, William L. <u>Long Ago God Spoke: How Christians May Hear the Old Testament Today</u>. Fortress.
- Laffey, Alice L. <u>An Introduction to the Old Testament: A Feminist Perspective.</u> Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988.

Rendtorff, Rolf. The Old Testament: An Introduction. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1991.

CALENDAR OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS.

IF NEDEED SOME CLASSES WILL BE TAUGHT LIVE ON TEAMS

YOU MUST STUDY THE HANDOUTS AND PRESENTATIONS BEFORE COMING TO CLASS!

SOME DAYS HIGHLITED IN "BLUE" BELOW, WE WILL HAVE NO FORMAL CLASS AND HAVE BEEN SET APART FOR STUDYING AT HOME AND TUTORING.

WEEK # 1		
Date	Topic	Assignment
January 8	Welcome and Course Description	
January 10	The Old Testament: A Panoramic View	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
January 12		Study handout and presentations Participation in class

WEEK # 2		
Date	Торіс	Assignment
January 15	MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY – NO CLASS	
January 17		Study handout and presentations
January 19		Study handout and presentations

WEEK # 3		
Date	Topic	Assignment
January 22		Study handout and presentations Participation in class
January 24	The Ancient Near East: Understanding the Matrix and Socializing Environment of the Old Testament	Study handout and presentations

	Participation in class
January 26	Study handouts and presentation
	Participation in class
	PAPER # 1

WEEK # 4		
Date	Topic	Assignment
January 29		TEST # 1 - OPEN BOOK (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE ON CANVAS)
January 31	The Laws of Moses: Ideological Foundation of Hebrew Faith, Identify, and Practice	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 2		Study handout and presentation

WEEK # 5		
Date	Торіс	Assignment
February 5		Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 7	Genesis Presentation on the Flood Story	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 9	Exodus	Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK # 6		
Date	Topic	Assignment
February 12	Presentations on Sargon I and Moses	Study handout and presentation Participation in
February 14	Leviticus	Study handout and presentation
		Participation in class
February 16	Presentation on the Hammurabi Law Codes	Study handout and presentation

WEEK # 7		
Date	Topic	Assignment
February 19	Numbers Presentation on Strange Laws in Moses' Laws	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 21	Deuteronomy	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 23		Study handouts and presentations PAPER # 2

	WEEK # 8	
Date	Торіс	Assignment
February 26		TEST # 2 - OPEN BOOK (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE ON CANVAS)

February 28	"A Land Flowing Milk and Honey:" Israel's Conquest of the Promised Land	Study handout and presentations Participation in class
March 1		Study handout and presentations Participation in class

WEEK # 9		
Date	Topic	Assignment
March 4-8	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES	

WEEK # 10		
Date	Topic	Assignment
March 11	Canaanite Religion and Culture Binding Back: Religion in Israel and its Covenant with God	Study handouts and presentations Participation in class
March 13	"A King Like Those of Other Nations:" The Establishment and Early Years of the Monarchy in Israel	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
March 15	King Saul	Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK # 11		
Date	Topic	Assignment
March 18	King David	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
March 20	King Solomon	Study handout and presentation Participation in class PAPER # 3
March 22		TEST # 3 – OPEN BOOK (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE ON CANVAS)

WEEK # 12		
Date	Topic	Assignment
March 25	Israel versus Judah: The Division of the United Monarchy	Study handout and presentation
		Participation in class
March 27	God's Voice to a People in Crisis: The Great Prophets of the 8 th Century BCE	Study handout and presentation
		Participation in class
March 29	GOOD FRIDAY - NO CLASS	

WEEK # 13		
Date	Topic	Assignment
April 1	The Fall of the Northern Kingdom - Israel: The Assyrian Exile Begins	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
April 3	The Fall of the Southern Kingdom - Judah:	Study handout

	The Babylonian Exile Begins	and presentation Participation in class
April 5	Life During the Babylonian Exile: Home Away from Home	Study handout and presentation
		Participation in class
		PAPER # 4

WEEK # 14		
Date	Topic	Assignment
April 8		TEST # 4 – OPEN BOOK (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE ON CANVAS)
April 10	Life After the Babylonian Exile: The Israelites Go Back Home and Struggle to Restore What Was Lost	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
April 12		Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK # 15		
Date	Topic	Assignment
April 15	Insights for Pious Living: The Wisdom Traditions	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
April 17	Between the Old and New Testaments	Study handout and presentation Participation in class

April 19	Study handouts and presentations
	Course Evaluation

WEEK # 16		
Date	Topic	Assignment
April 22	What's In and What's Out? The Rise and Formation of the OT as Scripture	Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK OF FINAL EXAMS		
Date	Topic	Assignment
SECTION # 1 FRIDAY, APRII 26 8:00 AM		TEST # 5 – OPEN BOOK (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE ON CANVAS)
SECTION # 2 TUESDAY, APRIL 30 8:00 AM		TEST # 5 – OPEN BOOK (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE ON CANVAS)