



# HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

## 5001 Advanced Introduction to the Old Testament Spring 2024, Thursdays 8:15-10:55 AM

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“Open my eyes, so that I may behold wonders from your *torah*.” - Ps 119:18

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces critical and theological approaches to the Old Testament through the study of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, known as the Pentateuch or Torah. The class involves readings and discussion of critical issues, such as the formation of the Hebrew Bible, biblical historiography, and ancient Near Eastern backgrounds, and theological themes, such as creation, covenant, and holiness. This broader focus on the message of the Hebrew Bible is grounded in close readings of particular Pentateuchal texts.

### **COURSE GOALS**

Our goals pertain to the italicized intended degree outcomes for the M.Div., M.A.C.M., and the M.A. degrees.

*Demonstrate exegetical skills in the interpretation of scripture*

1. Students will evaluate scholarly/critical approaches to Old Testament books and particular texts within the books.
2. Students will work through their own critical analysis of a Pentateuchal narrative text.
3. Students will demonstrate the skills of exegesis on a particular Old Testament text, interpreting it in light of its ancient Near Eastern context.

*Evidence a love for God and others and a personal commitment to spiritual formation*

1. Students should develop a respect for the creative and redemptive work of God as it is revealed in the Old Testament.
2. Students will learn to critically engage one another with the character of Christ, learning to harmoniously discuss variant viewpoints.

## TEXT BOOKS

1. Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. Revised and Updated. New York: Basic Books, 2011.
2. Davis, Ellen F. *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible*. New York: Cambridge, 2009.
3. Enns, Peter. *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015.
4. Schlimm, Matthew. *70 Hebrew Words Every Christian Should Know*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2018.
5. Ska, Jean-Louis. *Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch*. Translated by Pascale Dominique. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006. (See schedule for assigned pages)

An English translation of the Bible. I will be working from the NRSV and supplement our discussion with observations from the Hebrew text. Feel free to use a different major committee-based translation of your choice (e.g., NIV, ESV, Jewish Study Bible, NAS). Ask me if you are unsure about your translation. **You should choose a Bible in which you feel good about writing notes.**

## ANE READINGS

Hallo, *Context of Scripture*, 245-250 (CTA 2-CTA 3i 22); 255-262 (CTA 4-CTA 4 vii 25); 390-402 (*Enuma Elish*); 450-452 (Atra-hasis)

## ADDITIONAL READINGS

Fretheim, Terence E. "The Self-Limiting God of the Old Testament and Issues of Violence." In *Raising Up a Faithful Exegete*. Ed. K. L. Noll and Brooks Schramm, 179-191. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010.

Kugel, James L. *The Bible as It Was*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1997. Pages 1-49, 65-82.

Miller, Patrick D. "God and the Gods: History of Religion as an Approach and Context for Bible and Theology." In *Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology: Collected Essays*. JSOT Supp 267. Pages 365-396. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Place of the Decalogue in the Old Testament and Its Law." *Interpretation* 43 (1989): 229-242.

Seibert, Eric A. "Recent Research on Divine Violence in the Old Testament (with Special Attention to Christian Theological Perspectives)." *Currents in Biblical Research* 15 (2016): 8-40.

Ulrich, Eugene. "The Canonical Process, Textual Criticism, and Latter Stages in the Composition of the Bible." In "*Shar'arei Talmon*" *Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon*. Ed. Michael Fishbane and Emanuel Tov, 267-291. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Reading Notes on Ska** (10%, due **Jan 25 before class**) – Take notes on your Ska reading (Ska 1-75, 96-183, 162 pages). Besides a basic outline with key points and quotations with page numbers, *note especially your questions and your critiques* (strong points and weak points set off in brackets or different color font). Format your notes in a logical and orderly manner in a Word document or pdf. Your notes should be roughly 15-18 pages single spaced (Times New Roman). **Late notes are 5 points off per day.**
2. **Book Reviews** (10% each) – Reviews of *Inspiration and Incarnation* (**due before class Feb 15**) and *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture* (**due before class Apr 25**). Your reviews are *critical engagements* with these books. You should follow the IDEa format described by Dr. Berryhill at the end of this syllabus. Briefly: Devote a paragraph to Identify (identify the author and the context of the book), two pages to Describe (or summarize the chapters and main thesis), and four to five pages to Assess (or evaluate). After reading the book and formulating *your own critique*, read at least three substantive reviews and engage with these other reviewers in footnotes in your Assess section. Search ATLA for reviews. Demonstrate your critique with particular examples. Your review is to be double-spaced and written in 12 pt Times New Roman (about 7-8 pages). Reviews will be **downgraded 5 points for each day late.**
3. **Mark-up and written presentation of narrative text** (35%) – Each student will select a narrative text from Genesis 12-50 and present a "mark-up" of the text in class (currently scheduled on **Feb 22**). The mark-up is a visual, literary analysis of a narrative unit that includes observations about characterization, repetition, direct speech, the role of the narrator, and other literary features found in your text (See examples on Canvas). Suggested texts include Genesis 16:1-16; 18:1-15; 21:9-21; 22:1-19; 25:19-34; 28:10-22; 29:1-14a; 29:14b-30; 32:22-32; 33:1-17; 35:1-15. Each student will distribute their mark-up via Canvas to the other students before class on the day of presentations. We will allow five minutes or so for each presentation and five minutes for discussion. It is up to you as the reader to select a text (about 15 verses) and notify me of your selection no later than **Feb 8**. This is first come, first serve, with a maximum of two students per text. Students will write a 10-12 page exegetical paper on the literary features of their narrative text. **The paper is due Apr 11** (midnight CT). Late papers will be **downgraded 5 points per day**. The paper is to be written in 12 pt Times New Roman and according to the standards of Turabian's *Manual for Writers* and HST's Supplement to Turabian. The grade is based primarily on the paper and quality of the mark-up, but lack of preparation for the oral presentation will negatively affect one's grade. The paper itself should be a kind of commentary of the text with special attention to literary issues. Students must interact with and cite Alter. Students should also interact with other scholars regarding critical issues that come up within the text (10-15 quality resources). Your markup must be included as an appendix. For literary readings of Pentateuchal narratives see especially

Sailhamer and Alter on the Pentateuch. See also Jerome Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative* and Bible Project videos/podcasts on literary readings of biblical narrative.

4. **Final Exam** (35%, May 2) – The final will cover the class lectures and the readings (not Ska, Alter, Davis, or Enns). The exam will be closed note, although part of the exam *may* be open Bible (hardcopy only). Students will need to arrange for a proctor who can supervise for a three hour block of time.

## GRADING SCALE

A = 90-100    B = 80-89    C = 70-79    D = 60-69    F = < 60

## PROPOSED SCHEDULE

Jan 11 Introduction to the study of the Hebrew Bible

- A. The story of Israel (Timeline) – locating the prophets
- B. Biblical Criticism and Theological Interpretation

Jan 18 Genesis 1

- A. Creation in the Hebrew Bible; Psalms; Isaiah; Wisdom
- B. **Miller** “God and the Gods” 32 pages
- C. **Context of Scripture**, 245-250 (CTA 2-CTA 3i 22); 255-262 (CTA 4-CTA 4 vii 25); 390-402 (*Enuma Elish*); 450-452 (Atra-hasis)

Jan 25 Genesis 6-9

- A. The sources behind the Flood Narrative (Documentary Hypothesis; **Ska 1-75, 96-183, 162 pages**)

Feb 1 Formation of the Hebrew Bible

- A. Source >> Redaction >> Text (**Ulrich, 25 pages**)

Feb 8 Genesis 2-3

- A. The life and afterlife of Genesis 2-3 (Interpretation and Reception, **Kugel 72 pages**)
- B. Knowing Good and Evil in the Hebrew Bible (Wisdom)
- C. Introduce Narrative Criticism and Markup

Feb 15

- A. Narrative criticism; Close Readings of Genesis 19 and/or Exodus 1
- B. **Enns** Discussion (hand in reviews prior to class)

Feb 22 Genesis 12-50

- A. The Patriarchs and Biblical Theology (Promise; Blessing; Israel and the nations)
- B. Student Presentations on Markups

Feb 29 – Intensive/Study Week

March 7 – Spring Break

Mar 14 Yahweh as Divine Warrior

- A. Exodus/Exile and Crossing of Sea/River as biblical motifs
- B. Divine Warrior in Psalms and Prophets
- C. Exodus and Conquest; **Seibert** 8-40; **Fretheim** 179-191

Mar 21 Exodus: Sinai, the making of a people

- A. Law and Covenant Ceremony of Exodus 19-24
- B. What is biblical law? The 10 Commandments throughout the Hebrew Bible
- C. **Miller** “The Place of the Decalogue” *14 pages*

Mar 28 Exodus: Sinai, the making of a people continued

- A. God with us: the Presence of God
- B. A close reading of Exodus 32-34; Sin and Redemption

Apr 4 Leviticus: Holiness and Priestly Law

- A. Holiness in the Hebrew Bible
- B. Interpretation of Leviticus 17-20 and purity laws
- C. The priestly voice in the Hebrew Bible (Ezekiel)

Apr 11 **Papers Due** by Midnight Central Time

No Class – Please attend HST Homecoming events (April 11–13)

Apr 18 Deuteronomy and the prophetic voice in the Hebrew Bible

- A. Covenant revisited
- B. The Structure of Deuteronomy; Law and Narrative in ANE treaties
- C. Deuteronomistic History
- D. Jeremiah
- E. Torah in the post-exilic period: Isaiah 56-66, Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, Esther, Jonah

Apr 25 Prophetic Voice Part II (Jeremiah and post-exilic prophets);

Discuss **Davis** and hand in reviews prior to class.

May 2 – Final

## **ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

### **Accessibility/Communication**

HST professors are accessible to local and distance students. Please use the following to arrange appointments with me (in person or by phone):

Email: lhawley2@harding.edu

Cell Phone Number: (901) 275-0468

Office Phone Number: (901) 432-7729

The best way to communicate with me is by email. I check it often and expect you to check it as well for class announcements and additional documents. Feel free to contact me with your questions any time. I will use Canvas and your Harding University email address, so please make sure to check it regularly.

### **Credit Hour Workload**

For every course credit hour, the typical student should expect to spend at least three clock hours per week of concentrated attention on course-related work, including but not limited to time attending class, as well as out-of-class time spent reading, reviewing, organizing notes, preparing for upcoming quizzes/exams, problem solving, developing and completing projects, and other activities that enhance learning. Thus, for a three-hour course, a typical student should expect to spend at least nine hours per week dedicated to the course.

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks can now be ordered through a link on the HST website. The Textbooks tab can be viewed on the navigation bar on any page of the website. Check the book list provided under the Textbooks tab (<http://hst.edu/students/textbook-services/>) for correct ISBN's and editions to insure correct ordering. A link provided there will take you to Amazon where you will only need to enter the ISBN to order your books.

### **Students with Disabilities**

It is the policy of Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact Steve McLeod, the Associate Dean, at 901-761-1353.

### **Library Resources**

If you have not taken 5990 (Advanced Theological Research) or took it more than a year ago, go to the HST Web site ([www.hst.edu](http://www.hst.edu)) for information concerning library services to students. Under the "library" tab you will find a link to and instructions for searching the HST online catalog. There are also instructions for using the following databases available through the library: OCLC FirstSearch, EBSCOhost, Infotrac, and Religious and Theological Abstracts. Contact the library for passwords to these databases. Also available are the research guides distributed in 5990. These annotated bibliographies list basic tools you will find helpful in your research.

## Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty in all its forms is inconsistent with Christian faith and practice, and will result in penalties which could include a failing grade for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, dismissal from the course, and even dismissal from the school.

## Canvas Online Learning System

In addition to the live video platform Zoom.us (see below), this course uses Harding's *Canvas Online Learning System*, which is accessed at <http://elearning.harding.edu>. If you have problems gaining access to Canvas, contact HU technical support (501) 279-4545. You will need your HST username and your password to log into Harding Pipeline. These are the same credentials you use to register for classes via Pipeline.

When you need to contact your professor via email, you may use the email system contained in the Canvas learning management system, although it is best to email directly to [lhawley2@harding.edu](mailto:lhawley2@harding.edu).

Harding University gives each student an email address that also utilizes your user name. Many students use other email addresses as their preferred address. You can set your Harding G-mail account to forward messages to an alternative email address if you want; however, it is your responsibility to check your Harding email account regularly because this is the official Harding email address to which all Harding-related email will be sent.

## HST LIVE via ZOOM

In addition to Canvas (see above), this HST-Live course is supported with the video platform Zoom.us. For new Zoom platform users, go to <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697-Getting-Started> for helpful video tutorials about using this platform. The HST Live/Zoom Meeting ID for this course is **9012750468**.

Students new to HST LIVE should watch the HST LIVE orientation video before the first day of class. The video can be found at <https://hst.edu/students/canvas-online-learning/>.

### ***Equipment Requirements for LIVE Sections:***

- Internet access using a latest version of a web browser such as Firefox (preferred).
- Latest version of Zoom software. This changes periodically without notification. If you already have Zoom, use that account. Basic Zoom.us is available free.
- Laptop or tablet with camera or desktop computer with camera.
- Ear buds with microphone - Apple MD827LL/A EarPods with Remote and Mic work well. Order on Amazon.com, <https://goo.gl/jLYfBG>.
- Additional monitor – Live video conferencing is best facilitated with two monitors.

*Course Etiquette for HST Live:*

- HST Live is a convenience for distance broadcast and attendance. In terms of responsibilities, it is no different than on-campus participation. Attendance is required just as if in residence on the Memphis campus. Full participation in the class is expected.
- Please make arrangements in your ministry context or employment to be in attendance for all calendared sessions (e.g., a staff meeting is not an excused absence). The same applies to arriving late or leaving early.
- Be seated in an environment that approximates a classroom setting (e.g., a chair at a desk in your office). Remain stationary at your computer during the class session except during breaks.
- Arrange for your HST Live environment to be distraction free. Please do not answer phone calls during class.
- Failure to observe these and related etiquette matters will result in grade reductions at the professor's sole discretion.



# Writing a Critique / Book Review 2.0

By Carisse Mickey Berryhill  
Harding Graduate School Library

## Prewriting

1. Select a book.
2. Clarify the assignment.
3. Read the book.
4. Collect pertinent material from inside and outside the book.
  - a. Make notes so you can **identify the purpose** of the book: identify the author, the subject, the intended readers. Inside the book, look at front matter, cover, preface, table of contents, indexes, and bibliographies. Outside the book, look at biographical dictionaries, subject bibliographies, yearbooks and almanacs, encyclopedias.
  - b. Make notes so you can **describe the process** of the book: describe what data is used, what method of analysis the author employs, what conclusions are presented to the readers. Inside the book, use the text, headings, appendices, tables and figures, indexes, bibliographies. Outside the book, look at reviews and critiques of the book.
  - c. Make notes so you can **assess the system of values** embedded in the book. Evaluate its biases and presuppositions, its “fit” in its academic discipline or type of study, and the credibility of the work among its readers. Inside the book, use citation clusters, tone, persona, connotation, and subtextual clues. Outside the book, use book reviews, encyclopedias, book review indexes, and citation indexes.

## Finding Material about Books for Book Review Assignments

(Keyed to the Levels of IDeA)

by Carisse Mickey Berryhill, Ph.D.

Harding University Graduate School of Religion

	<u>IDeA Level</u>	<u>Inside the Book</u>	<u>Outside the Book</u>
1.	<b>Identify</b> the purpose	Front matter Cover Preface Indexes Bibliographies	Encyclopedias Yearbooks, almanacs Subject bibliographies Biographical dictionaries
2.	<b>Describe</b> the process	Text Headings Appendices Tables and Figures Indexes Bibliographies	Reviews, critiques
3.	<b>Assess</b> the system of values	Subtext Connotation Tone, persona Citation clusters	Reviews, review articles Encyclopedias Book review indexes Citation indexes

## **IDeA: A Heuristic Model for Prewriting Critical Book Reviews**

*Because professional book reviewing requires a level of analysis beyond summary, a systematic way to uncover aspects of the book being reviewed can be very helpful. Such a discovery method is called a “heuristic.” The model presented here combines research materials from James Moffett and from the team of Richard Young, Alton Becker, and Kenneth Pike.*

Moffett points out the triangular relation of author, audience, and subject. Young, Becker, and Pike have described the value of shifting one’s level of perspective on a subject to generate things to say about it: any subject can be viewed as a static item, a dynamic relation, or a complex system. A reviewer may identify the static features of the book, describe its processes, and ultimately assess its position in its field. From these three increasingly sophisticated levels of analysis, I derive the mnemonic acronym IDeA: identify, describe, and assess.

To begin with, the reviewer must identify the subject, the author, and the audience for the work. The triangle formed by these three components may be called “purpose.” Sources within the work for this identification are its front matter (cover, title page, table of contents, book jacket, prefatory remarks) and back matter (indexes, bibliographies). In the library, the reviewer may consult encyclopedias, yearbooks, almanacs, subject bibliographies, and biographical reference works.

At the intermediate or textual level, the reviewer must describe the data, the analysis of the data, and the conclusions drawn in the book. The triangle formed by these components may be called “process.” It is congruent with the top-level triangle because the subject supplies the data, the writer analyzes the data, and the audience is led to draw conclusions. Sources within the book for this analysis include the text itself, with headings, tables and figures, and appendices. Library tools are reviews and critiques.

At the deepest or subtextual level, the reviewer must assess the fit of the item in the subject literature of which it is a part, the biases or presuppositions of the author, and the credibility to the audience of the argument and presentation. The triangle formed by these three components may be labeled “value system.” Intratextual sources for this analysis include such subtextual features as connotation, tone, persona, and citation clusters. Appropriate library tools would be reviews, encyclopedias, subject bibliographies, book review indexes and digests, and citation indexes.

If a reviewer can recall the basic triangle of writer, subject, and audience, and then use the IDeA acronym to recall “identify, describe, and assess,” it is not difficult to reconstruct the entire heuristic model wherever and whenever it is needed. Having generated questions and collected information, the reviewer can compose a critical review which goes beyond bare summary to considerations of intention, presupposition, argumentation, and achievement.

By Carisse Mickey Berryhill, Harding Graduate School Library, April 18, 1995.

## EXPLANATION OF OLD TESTAMENT CURRICULUM AT HST

The Old Testament curriculum is designed so that students have opportunities to study most of the Hebrew Bible in the M.Div. and M.A. in OT degrees.

M.Div. students will graduate with *at least*:

- a comprehensive understanding of OT content (OT Survey or proficiency exam)
- an awareness and appreciation for critical and theological approaches to reading the OT (Adv Intro to OT)
- having studied the Pentateuch (Adv Intro to OT)
- having studied either the writings in Wisdom Literature or the prophets in Isaiah
- a useful ability in reading the bible in Hebrew (Hebrew I and II)

In addition, the M.Div. curriculum includes elective hours for students to:

- take the other English based text class (Isaiah or Wisdom Literature) not already taken for the OT text requirement
- take a third semester of Hebrew (Hebrew Readings), which qualifies students for Hebrew Poetry
- take Hebrew Poetry, the climactic course in the Old Testament offerings
- take Old Testament World or Old Testament Theology as a general elective

### 5000 Survey of the Old Testament

This class is designed to familiarize students with the general content of the Old Testament Scriptures and significant themes of each Old Testament book. Successful completion of this class meets the requirement for the English Bible exam.

Students should take this class if they want a graduate overview of the entire Old Testament. The majority of the reading is the Old Testament. Some critical issues will be introduced, but the focus is on the content and theology of each of the biblical books. Compare this description with Advanced Intro to OT.

### 5001 Advanced Introduction to the Old Testament

This course introduces critical and theological approaches to the Old Testament through the study of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, known as the Pentateuch or Torah. The class involves readings and discussion of critical issues, such as the formation of the Hebrew Bible, biblical historiography, and ancient Near Eastern backgrounds, and theological themes, such as creation, covenant, and holiness. This broader focus on the message of the Hebrew Bible is grounded in close readings of particular Pentateuchal texts.

If you want a class that will cover the entire Old Testament and will require you to read the Old Testament itself at length, please take Survey of the Old Testament.

### 5010 Old Testament World

A selective study of history, cultures, languages, literatures, and religions of the ancient Near East from 3000 B.C. to the time of Alexander that provides background for understanding ancient Israel and emergent Judaism as well as for interpreting biblical text.

### 5030 Old Testament Theology

A study of current approaches to understanding the message of the Old Testament. Selected themes and passages will be considered in light of their contribution to the theology of the Old Testament and its meaning for the modern world.

### 5060 Wisdom Literature

A study of biblical Wisdom literature — Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job — in light of its ancient Near Eastern and canonical contexts. The course seeks to identify the central themes and theological perspectives of Wisdom literature and to understand what “wisdom” means in various literary settings.

### 5082 Isaiah

A study of the text, background, and message of Isaiah. The class also engages the issues of prophecy, scribalism, and the religious use of the book of Isaiah in ancient Israel.

### 5090, 5091 Hebrew I and II

These two courses introduce the vocabulary and grammar of biblical Hebrew. Students who pass this class should be prepared to read narrative portions of the Hebrew Bible with supplementary use of the Hebrew lexicon.

### 5100 Readings in the Hebrew Old Testament

This course offers the opportunity to read narrative portions of the Masoretic Text (Hebrew Bible), expand Hebrew vocabulary, and learn the nuances of Hebrew syntax. Texts covered include Ruth, Exodus 32-34, and 1 Kings 16-19.

### 5130 Hebrew Poetry

A study of the poetry of the Hebrew Bible, with special attention to Psalms. In addition to a focus on the form and function of biblical verse, the class addresses the historical background and theological themes of particular Hebrew poems. This class requires 5100 Readings in the Hebrew OT. It counts as a text class.