



## On-Campus Course Syllabus

OTS 501 L1

Old Testament Introduction I: Genesis - Esther

Fall 2023

### Class Information

**Day and Time:** Tue 4:45 – 7:15

**Room Number:** E206

### Contact Information

**Instructor Name:** David Brooks

**Instructor Email:** [dbrooks@criswell.edu](mailto:dbrooks@criswell.edu)

**Instructor Phone:** 214-818-1324

**Instructor Office Hours:** MTWTh 12:30 – 2:30

### Course Description and Prerequisites

An advanced study of the books of Genesis through Esther, emphasizing the historical framework of the Old Testament, problems of interpretation, and the contribution of these books to biblical theology and godly living

### Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course you should be able to:

- A. Construct a timeline of the major OT events and characters in these 17 books;
- B. Locate on a map the major OT sites;
- C. Discuss the issues relating to the historical background, purpose, structure, genres, and message of each book;
- D. Evaluate and articulate in a clear and scholarly manner the critical issues of the Pentateuch and Historical Books, such as origination, composition, and unity of the books;
- E. Describe the general content and major theological emphases of the Pentateuch and Historical Books;
- F. Apply the major theological principles from these OT books to biblical theology (especially how they prepare for the advent of Christ) and systematic theology and integrate them into your worldview.

### Required Textbooks

- A. Merrill, Eugene H., Mark F. Rooker, and Michael A. Grisanti. *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011. (ISBN: 9780805440317)
- B. Charles, J. Daryl, ed. *Reading Genesis 1 – 2: An Evangelical Conversation*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013. (ISBN: 978-1598568882)

## Course Requirements and Assignments

- A. Tests** on material from the professor's presentations and Merrill, Rooker, and Grisanti's textbook (MRG). Tests will be taken on Canvas.
- B. Quiz:** Map and chronology: Identify the countries, cities, bodies of water, and topographic regions of Israel and the ANE on a map and locate on a timeline the people and events listed on the quiz.
- C. Book review** of J. Daryl Charles, ed., *Reading Genesis 1–2: An Evangelical Conversation*. The complete description and rubric are available on Canvas. Submit the review on Canvas.
- D. Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) religions.** In a 6- to 8-page paper describe the religion of either Canaan, Egypt, or Babylon during OT times. The complete description and rubric are available on Canvas. Submit the review on Canvas.
- E. The Christian and the Law** (of Moses). A 5- to 6-page paper examining the relevance of the Mosaic Law to the Christian. The details of the assignment are on Canvas. The paper is to be submitted on Canvas, also.
- F. Textbook reading report.** Report how much of the two textbooks you read. For MRG the requirement is for pp. 1-360 this semester.
- G. Critical reading report** how much of the critical reading on reserve in the library you have read.
- Read from the critical reading below. Read the chapters designated below from the books. The books are on reserve in the Wallace Library. Several of the reading selections are journal articles and can be accessed online or in the Wallace Library.
    - Read at least 200 pages from the following reading list. For each article or chapter, write two paragraphs: one summarizing the idea(s) of the scholar and one giving your reaction to those ideas. Your reaction must include evidence supporting your opinion. Paragraphs should not exceed 200 words each (so, a maximum of 400 words per article or chapter).
    - Submit your report on Canvas of the chapters/articles read, the total amount of pages read, and the paragraphs summarizing the readings. Remember: you only need to read a total of 200 pages, not all of the following.
1. Bimson, John J. *Redating the Exodus*. JSOT Supplements. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988.
  2. Childs, Brevard. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1979). "The Discipline of Old Testament Introduction," Pages 27-45.
  3. Demsky, A. "Who Came First, Ezra or Nehemiah? The Synchronistic Approach." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 65 (1994): 1-20.
  4. Fohrer, Georg, and Ernst Sellin. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Trans. David E. Green (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1968). "Joshua" There is a 1986 paperback edition.
  5. Gottwald, Norman K. *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 B.C.E.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1962. "Obstacles to a Comprehensive Understanding of Early Israel," 3-8; "Models of the Israelite Settlement in Canaan," 191-236
  6. Hess, Richard. *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007. "Narrative and Legal Strands of the Pentateuch," 141-70; and "Priestly and Cultic Strands of the Pentateuch," 171-208.
  7. Kitchen, Kenneth A. *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003. "The Empire Strikes Back—Saul, David, and Solomon," 81-158; or "Humble Beginnings—around and in Canaan," 159-240.
  8. Lemke, W. E. "The Synoptic Problem in the Chronicler's History," *Harvard Theological Review* 58 (1965): 349-63.

9. Long, V. P. *The Art of Biblical History*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. "History and the Genre(s) of the Bible: Is the Bible a History Book?" 27-57.
10. McFall, L. "Was Nehemiah Contemporary with Ezra in 458 B.C.?" *Westminster Theological Journal* 53 (1991): 263-93.
11. McKenzie, Steven L. *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History*. Atlanta: Scholars, 1984.
12. Noth, Martin. *The Deuteronomistic History*. JSOT Supplements. Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1981.
13. Payne, J. Barton. "The Validity of Numbers in Chronicles." *Near East Archaeology Society Bulletin* 18 (1978): 5-58.
14. Rendtorff, Rolf. *The Old Testament: An Introduction*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986. "The Beginnings of the Monarchy," 29-36; "Israel and Judah in the Time of the Monarchy," 37-54; "The Books of Samuel," 170-73, "The Books of Kings," 174-182; "The Deuteronomistic History," 183-87.
15. Shea, W. H. "Esther and History." *Concordia Journal* 13 (1987): 234-48.
16. Whybray, R. N. *The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study*. JSOT Supplements. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987. "The New Approach," 133-36; "The Meaning of 'Tradition'," 136-39; "The Study of Oral Tradition," 139-84.
17. Wood, Bryant. "Did the Israelites Conquer Jericho?" 16 *Biblical Archaeology Review* (March-April 1990): 44-57.
18. Wright, J. S. "The Historicity of the Book of Esther." In *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*. Edited by J. Barton Payne. Waco, TX: Word, 1970.
19. Younger, K. Lawson. *Ancient Conquest Accounts: A Study in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical History Writing*. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990. "Israelite Conquest Accounts," 197-240.

**Students can access information about Criswell College's Wallace Library at [http://www.criswell.edu/current\\_students/library/](http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/).**

**Library resources**

**You can access scholarly articles through the library online at [http://www.criswell.edu/current\\_students/library/electronic\\_databases](http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/electronic_databases)  
The Wallace Library manual is available at [http://www.criswell.edu/current\\_students/library/library\\_handbook/](http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/library_handbook/).**

**Class Attendance**

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they (1) anticipate being able to attend every on-campus class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, or (2) participating in academically related activities as identified in online-course schedules including synchronous class sessions conducted remotely by video, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any missed information. Professors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual professors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades. Professors apprise students of such information in course syllabi.

Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships must meet specified requirements of various departments at the college and should consult relevant sections of the *Academic Catalog*. To ensure such funds will not be forfeited, students are responsible for contacting the proper departments to ascertain any specific course participation requirements and consequences of not meeting such requirements. Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships should consult the Financial Aid office.

While Criswell College is a non-attendance taking institution, it nevertheless must demonstrate that students begin their courses in order to comply with Federal Aid regulations. Accordingly, students must participate in academically related activities during census periods. Failure to meet this requirement will result in students being administratively dropped from courses.

Academically related activity is defined as any course-related activity that may be used as evidence of attendance. Examples include:

- physical presence in a classroom during a class session with the instructor present,
- participation in a synchronous remote video class session with the instructor present,
- submission of an academic assignment, quiz, or exam,
- participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction,
- participation in a study group or discussion board that is assigned by the instructor,
- documentation showing that the student and a faculty member corresponded about the academic subject of the course.

**NOTE:** Logging into a Canvas course alone and logging into a Synchronous Online class session without active participation or with the camera off are not considered attendance.

**NOTE:** A census period begins on the first day of a semester/term and runs through the end of the last day to drop courses. During the census period, attendance data is collected in order to demonstrate compliance with Federal Aid regulations. There is no census period for winter terms since there is no last day to drop courses.

## Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student's Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses' objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not

have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus’s closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

## Grading Scale

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour
<b>Weighted grading for this course:</b>		
<i>Weighted grading for this course:</i>		
1. Tests		45%
2. Quiz		5%
3. Book review		10%
4. ANE religion		10%
5. Christian and the Law		10%
6. Reading report of the textbook (MRG)		10%
7. Reading/summary critical reading		10%
Total		100%

## Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An “I” may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar’s Office. The “I” must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the “I” will become an “F.”

## Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting.

Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

## **Institutional Assessment**

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college's academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student's course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student's work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

## **Institutional Email Policy**

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

## **Disabilities**

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

## **Intellectual Property Rights**

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

## **Research and Writing Standards**

The default writing style for written assignments in Criswell College Courses is the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. However, instructors are free to require alternative writing styles in their courses. These styles include but are not limited to the American Psychological

Association (APA), Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) writing guides.

## Resources and Supports

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at [studenttechsupport@criswell.edu](mailto:studenttechsupport@criswell.edu).

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or [studentservices@criswell.edu](mailto:studentservices@criswell.edu). The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, email the Wallace Library at [library@criswell.edu](mailto:library@criswell.edu). Login credentials are emailed to students near the beginning of the semester.

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence in any subject matter taught at the college. Tutors have been recommended by the faculty to ensure that the tutor(s) are qualified to serve the student body. Every tutor brings experience and expertise in an effort to provide the proper resources for the subject matter at hand. To consult with a tutor, students can schedule an appointment through Calendly (<https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter>) or by visiting the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203. For questions, call 214.818.1373 or email at [tutoringcenter@criswell.edu](mailto:tutoringcenter@criswell.edu).

## Course Outline/Calendar

Week	Date	Subject	Reading Assignments	Written Assignments
1	Aug 22	Syllabus, geography, historical overview	If using digital book, find the MRG chapters corresponding to pages on Amazon “see inside” Table of Contents	
2	Aug 29	History of OT criticism, Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch	MRG 1-70	

Week	Date	Subject	Reading Assignments	Written Assignments
3	Sept 5	Genesis	MRG 73-121	Geography and history quiz
<b>4</b>	<b>Sept 12</b>	Genesis	MRG 123-89	<b>Test 1: Prolegomena - Genesis</b>
5	Sept 19	Exodus		
6	Sept 26	Exodus	MRG 190-214	Book review
7	Oct 3	Leviticus and Numbers	MRG 217-50	
8	Oct 10	Deuteronomy	MRG 251-68	ANE religions
<b>9</b>	<b>Oct 17</b>	<b>Student Development Week—No classes meet</b>		
<b>10</b>	<b>Oct 24</b>	<b>Joshua</b>	<b>MRG 271-87</b>	<b>Test 2: Exodus - Deuteronomy</b>
11	Oct 31	Judges and Ruth	MRG 288-306	
12	Nov 7	Samuel	MRG 307-17	The Christian and the OT Law
13	Nov 14	Kings	MRG 319-29	
<b>Week of Nov 21: Reading Week and Thanksgiving—No classes meet</b>				
14	Nov 28	Chronicles	MRG 330-42	<b>Test 3: Joshua - Kings</b>
15	Dec 5	Ezra-Nehemiah, and Esther	MRG 343-60	
<b>16</b>	<b>Dec 12</b>	<b>Exam</b>		<b>Final Exam: Prolegomena - Esther; Reading reports (2)</b>

## Selected Bibliography

Archer, Gleason L., Jr. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. 4d edition. Chicago: Moody, 2007.

Beitzel, Barry. *The New Moody Atlas of the Bible*. Chicago: Moody, 2009.

Childs, Brevard S. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.

Coogan, Michael D. *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Copan, Paul. *Is God a Moral Monster: Making Sense of the Old Testament God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011

Craigie, Peter C. *The Old Testament: Its Background, Growth and Content*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1986.

Fretheim, Terence E. *The Pentateuch*. *Interpreting Biblical Texts*, ed. Gene M. Tucker and Charles B. Cousar. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996. Pp. 19-170.

Gaebelein, Frank E., ed. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Vols. 1-4. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979-88.

Gower, Ralph. *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*. 2d ed. Chicago: Moody, 2005.

Hamilton, Victor. *Handbook on the Pentateuch*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.



- Harrison, Roland K. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. 2d ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004.
- Hoerth, Alfred J., Gerald L. Mattingly, and Edwin M. Yamauchi, eds. *Peoples of the Old Testament World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999.
- Howard, David. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Historical Books*. Chicago: Moody, 1993.
- Kaiser, Walter C. *A History of Israel: From the Bronze Age through the Jewish Wars*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998.
- LaSor, William Sanford, David Allan Hubbard, and Frederic William Bush. *Old Testament Survey*. 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Livingston, G. Herbert. *The Pentateuch in Its Cultural Environment*. 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- Longman, Tremper, III, and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.
- Matthews, Victor H., and James C. Moyer. *The Old Testament: Text and Context*. 2d edition. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005.
- Merrill, Eugene H. *An Historical Survey of the Old Testament*. 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.
- Merrill, Eugene H. *Kingdom of Priests*. 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Schultz, Samuel J. *The Old Testament Speaks*. 5d edition. New York: HarperOne, 1999.
- Wegner, Paul D. *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1999.
- Wood, Leon. *A Survey of Israel's History*. 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.
- Yamauchi, Edwin M. *Persia and the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1990.
- Young, Edward J. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.