



Online Course Syllabus  
OTS 501 O1  
OT Introduction I: Genesis - Esther  
Spring 2025

### Contact Information

**Instructor Name:** David Brooks

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**Instructor Phone:** 214-818-2134

**Instructor Office Hours:** When you want a video meeting, email me and I'll set it up on Zoom

### 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

By completion of the course, the student should be able to...

- A. Construct a timeline of the major OT events and characters in these seventeen books;
- B. Describe the general content and major theological emphases of the Pentateuch and Historical Books;
- C. Discuss the issues relating to the historical background, purpose, structure, 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. Identify the major theological principles from these OT books and apply them to biblical and systematic theology and integrate them into your worldview; and
- F. Apply biblical principles from the OT to contemporary situations.

### 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)

C. Canvas written presentations by the professor: from *Old Testament Story*

## Course Requirements and Assignments

Note: all **due dates are Sunday nights** at midnight, except original threads of discussions—see below.

A. **Tests** on material from the professor’s written presentations and Merrill, Rooker, and Grisanti’s textbook (MRG).

B. **Discussions** over five issues about theology and critical issues. The complete descriptions and rubric are available on Canvas.

C. **Quiz** on the geography of the ancient Near East and Israel.

D. **Research paper** on a critical issue in the Pentateuch or Historical Books. The list of suggested topics, rubric, and a full description of requirements for writing are available on Canvas.

E. **Topic and Bibliography** for the research paper. This is preliminary to the research paper above. The instructions and rubric are on Canvas. The instructions include suggested paper topics.

<p><b><u>Library resources</u></b></p>	<p>Distance education students can access information about Criswell College’s Wallace Library at <a href="http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/">http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/</a>. The Wallace Library manual is available at <a href="http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/library_handbook/">http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/library_handbook/</a></p>
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F. **Timeline** on PowerPoint of the major OT characters and events. The complete description and rubric are available on Canvas.

G. **Reading report** how much of the textbooks and lectures have been read.

H. Watch the **Video Recordings** weekly for each of the biblical books. They range from about 20 to 45 minutes each.

## Online Course Information

In an online course at Criswell College:

1. To meet 25–30% of the direct faculty interaction required by the college’s Credit Hour policy, instructors and all students enrolled in an online course will meet at scheduled class times throughout a semester/term using the video conferencing app, Zoom, found in the left-hand global menu in Canvas.

Student cameras must remain on during the entirety of these video-conferencing sessions. (In order to be properly identified, students must upload a picture ID to their Canvas Account Profile *prior to the first online meeting.*)

2. The remaining direct faculty instruction is delivered using other means such as:
  - Lectures/instruction for students to watch at their convenience but in accordance with assignment due dates
  - Online content modules in which instructor provides feedback to student work
  - Tests/quizzes on which instructor provides feedback
  - Discussion boards on which instructor provides feedback

Canvas: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based Learning Management System (LMS). In online courses at Criswell College, instructors use Canvas to:

- organize course content on a module basis using organizational tools within Canvas,
- control the timing of course requirements through module control or assignment due dates to ensure that students are engaged for the full length of the semester or term,
- accept assignments from students only inside the Canvas course (emailed assignments are not acceptable),
- provide written feedback on assignments only within Canvas, preferably through Speedgrader,
- use the Announcement or e-mail feature in Canvas to communicate with the students rather than by broadcasting to a class email listserv outside of Canvas.
- use Zoom in Canvas for all “live” (synchronous) class sessions.

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.

## **Identity Verification**

Students enrolled in online courses must verify their identity through the term for each course. Identity confirmation occurs through scheduled video conference calls, scheduled submission of assignments, quizzes or exams, participation in online discussions, student/instructor communication, and a picture ID submitted in the Canvas profile. For instructions on how to upload a profile picture, [click here](#).

## **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 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 “live” (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 an online 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.

## Grading Scale

(Assigning grade definitions [i.e., above average, average, below average] is optional. Please delete the last column below if not assigning definitions. Additionally, delete these instructions when completing syllabus.)

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><i>Weighted grading of assignments for course grade:</i></b>		
1.	Tests	30%
2.	Discussions	20%
3.	Quiz	5%
4.	Video recordings	10%
5.	Research paper	15%
6.	Topic and bibliography	3%
7.	PowerPoint timeline	7%
8.	Reading report	10%
	Total	100%
<b><i>Grades are not penalized for being late if the cause of the lateness is technological problems. However, the professor must be notified as soon as possible.</i></b>		

## 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."

**NOTE:** No end-of-semester extensions (i.e., "Incompletes") will be granted for students taking Criswell College courses through Acadeum.

## Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is essential to the integrity of the College's academic programs and to the success of its students. Defining and addressing academic dishonesty helps to ensure the maintenance of academic honesty among students.

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/her own,
- 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.

**NOTE:** Acadeum students should have their Home Institution contact Criswell's Acadeum Student Contact and [acadeum@criswell.edu](mailto:acadeum@criswell.edu)

## **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 Support

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 can be found 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). Offsite login information is available in Canvas in the “Criswell Student Training Course” under “Library Information.”

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

*\*Weekly videos are assigned relative to each assigned biblical book*

SESSION	DATES	CONTENT		READING ASSIGNMENT	WRITING OR VIDEO ASSIGNMENT
1	Jan 21-26	Prolegomena		MRG 1-70 OTS Prolegomena	Video Introduction
2	Jan 27 – Feb 2	Gen 1 – 11		MRG 123-62	Discussion 1: Synchronic and Diachronic methods
3	Feb 3-9	Gen 1 – 11 (continued)		OTS Gen 1 – 11	
4	Feb 10-16	Gen 12 – 50		MRG 163-89 OTS Gen 12-50	Quiz: Geography

SESSION	DATES	CONTENT		READING ASSIGNMENT	WRITING OR VIDEO ASSIGNMENT
5	Feb 17-23	Exodus		MRG 190-214 OTS Exodus	<b>Test 1: Prolegomena – Genesis</b>
6	Feb 24 – Mar 2	Leviticus		MRG 217-30 OTS Leviticus	
7	Mar 3-9	Numbers		MRG 232-50 OTS Numbers	Discussion 2: The Mosaic Law
8	Mar 17-23	Deuteronomy		MRG 251-68 OTS Deuteronomy	Discussion 3: Authorship of the Pentateuch
<b>MAR 11-17      SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES, NO ASSIGNMENTS DUE</b>					
9	Mar 24-30	Joshua		MRG 271-87 OTS Joshua	<b>Test 2: Exodus - Deuteronomy</b>
10	Mar 31 – Apr 6	Judges – Ruth		MRG 288-306 OTS Judges – Ruth	Paper topic and bibliography
11	Apr 7-13	1 – 2 Samuel		MRG 307-17 1 – 2 Samuel	Discussion 4: Value of the Historical Books
12	Apr 14-20	1 – 2 Kings		MRG 319-29 1 – 2 Kings	PowerPoint: History
13	Apr 21-27	1 – 2 Chronicles		MRG 330-42 1 – 2 Chronicles	<b>Test 3: Joshua – 2 Kings</b>
14	Apr 28 – May 4	Ezra-Nehemiah		MRG 343-53 OTS Ezra- Nehemiah	Research Paper
15	May 5-11	Esther		MRG 354-60 OTS Esther	Discussion 5: Providence and Sovereignty
16	May 12-15*				<b>Final exam; reading report</b>

\*A student may take the test until midnight May 18, but Canvas will be closed. So, if taken after May 15, the test should be submitted by email to the professor.

## Selected Bibliography

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

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

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- 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.
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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.