

**Texas College
Division of Humanities and Education
Department of Religion**

SYLLABUS FOR:

Survey of the Bible

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00 – 9:50 pm

Course #RELI 13540

Course Description: A study in the fundamental elements of the Bible as sacred writing.

Attention is given to the process of canonization and biblical source.

Selections from the Old Testament and the New Testament

Credit Hours: 3

Professor: Garth Baker-Fletcher

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Office: Glass Building rm 109

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 8:00-8:50am and 12:00-2:30pm

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Attendance Policy:

Students may not have more than 3 unexcused absences before running the risk of an automatic lowering of their grade. Students are to be promptly seated no later than *5 minutes past*

the hour, or the door will be locked! Many students do not recognize or believe that regular

attendance is an indication of their respect for the course, the teacher, and most importantly, their own

commitment to getting an education. When they do not attend this reflects poorly on their character, and

they will be graded down as a result. Prepared by:

Dr. Garth Baker-Fletcher
professor

date

Dr. Herbert Coleman
Division Chair

date

Required Text

1. The Key Word Study Bible (NIV) or (NASB) This is the only acceptable Bible for this course as we are studying the Bible in its original Hebrew and Greek.
2. Understanding the Bible by Stephen Harris

Goal: To empower students by having a general knowledge of the Sacred Bible insofar as it relates to their education and life choices.

Performance/ Learning Objectives:

- 1 A general survey of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures and writings.
- 2 Laying due emphasis on the ancient Hebrew community's, religious practices, national practices, proverbs and prophetic correctives, the life and ministry of Jesus, the Pauline epistles, development of the early church, and the formation of the canon.
- 3 Helping students to come to a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the redemptive purpose of God as revealed through Jesus Christ in the Bible.
- 4 Finally, aiding students in their individual journeys to plumb the profound truths and rich insights resident in Scriptural witness that they might gain the courage to apply biblical truth in their real life situations

Course Requirements :

1. 10 WEEKLY REFLECTION PAPER

ASSIGNMENTS. [all together they will be 100% of grade ==1,000 points all together, each paper is worth 100 points] **These papers are the most important for your grade, and must be turned in on time.**

REFLECTION PAPERS are: A **1 page, 3 paragraph writing assignment.** The format for the *Reflection Paper*: is very simple, easy to follow, and ought to be strictly followed: **Paragraph One: Exegesis** --"Exegesis" is finding out the translation and meaning of an original biblical word in Hebrew and English. It is a *descriptive way of researching key words in a Scripture Passage-- as they are notated in the Key Word Study Bible* Answer the the following questions. What is **the original word** in Hebrew or Greek that is key to understanding the text? What is the **main question** this biblical passage is trying to answer? What is the **answer** that the Bible has provided? What are the **Translation Choices** from which the biblical writer has chosen **Paragraph Two: Theology and Ethics.** What is the **significance**, or the **importance** of this Scriptural passage to our understanding about: God, Christ, the Church, the World, and Human Sin and Salvation ? How does this passage help us to know what is moral, right, and good --or bad, evil, and wrong? **Why? Paragraph Three: Application.** How does the exegesis and theology of a Scripture relate to your life, beliefs, and choices? How can this passage help you to transform your life for the better?

In our society you will find it very easy to do paragraph three, but difficult to write a convincing paragraph two. Work on making all three about the same length. Remember that you have **only one page** to work on, **double spaced, using a 12 point size.**

ALL PAPERS ARE TO BE TYPED--NO EXCEPTIONS

2. MEMORY PRESENTATIONS OF SCRIPTURE [May be chosen in place of some Reflection Papers]. Graded on whether you have successfully “translated” the words of the Bible into your own memory. Creativity counts *only if accuracy is first!*

6. MID-TERM QUESTIONS AND FINAL EXAM ESSAYS [These will be counted as TWO OF YOUR REFLECTION PAPERS --100 points each] Both the Mid-Term and the Final will consist of turning in Two- (2) to Three (3) pages of essay questions that I will hand out one week before they are due. **Class will not be held on Mid-Term and Final Days --but students must all turn in their work or be graded down.**

SYLLABUS SCHEDULE

August

Friday	8/25	Classroom Discussion on Biblical Interpretation and Syllabus Introduction to Biblical Interpretation *Make sure to bring Bibles 8/30
Monday	8/28	Introduction to Biblical Interpretation
Wednesday	8/30	Biblical Scholarship -- Overview of Genesis
Friday	9/1	In Class Essay -- "What are the types of Bible Interpretation that Make Sense to Me?"
Mon	9/4	<i>Labor Day No Class</i>
Weds.	9/6	<i>Making Sense of Those First Books</i> Bible - Read: Genesis 1-3 Pay attention to the stories of Creation; Adam and Eve; . What are the morals of each story? What is important about each? What do they say about God, about human beings?
Fri	9/8	Early Genesis (cont.)
Mon	9/11	<i>Murder, A Flood, a Rainbow, and a Tower</i> Bible Read Genesis 4-10
Weds.	9/13	<i>Patriarchs and Matriarchs</i> Bible - Read: Genesis 12 - 50 Pay attention to the narratives of Abraham and Sarah; Isaac and Rebekah; Jacob, Leah, and Rachel; and Joseph. What does each story represent in the biblical narrative to you? How would you apply this insight?
Fri.	9/15	<i>Patriarchs and Matriarchs</i> <u>First Weekly Assignment: Reflection Paper:</u> Choose a character in Genesis upon which to focus. Then exegete a representative Scripture concerning this character

Mon. 9/18 **Torah**--God Frees Slaves, Promised Land.

Bible - Read: All of Exodus, focus on chapters 1-15; Numbers 10-14. What happens when the spies check out the Promised Land?

What does this say to us about God's promises?

- Does God oppose oppression? What does this tell us about God?
- How do faithfulness, trust in God's promises, and knowing God's character act together

Weds. 9/20 *Exodus* (Cont).

Fri. 9/22 **Torah**-*Clean and Unclean*

Leviticus 11, 13-14;16 (Day of Atonement); 25 (Year of Jubilee) - 27)

Second Weekly Assignment:Reflection Paper

Choose a favorite passage from Exodus –Do the exegesis, Theology, and Application

Mon. 9/25 **Torah** **Deuteronomy, the Second Law**

Deuteronomy 5 ;The Shema 6:4-9; 7:1-6; 12-18; and 22-27

Weds. 9/27 *More Deuteronomy*

Bible - Read: Deuteronomy 10-11 (10 Commands); *12:2-7 (Demolish Idols

Fri 9/29 *Mid-Term Review*

Hand Out Mid-term Essay/ Third Assignment Questions

October

Mon. 10/2 **Mid-Term Exams/**
Third Assignment Due

Bring in answered Essay Questions to the classroom

Weds. 10/4 *Nevi'im*

The Early Prophets: Joshua, Holy War, and "the Ban"

Bible: Deuteronomy 7:1-6; Joshua 6:15-21; 10:28-33;38-39; 11: 1-20.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION: Is there such a thing as a "Holy War?" Why do you think God commanded Moses and Joshua to exterminate peoples other than the Hebrews?

Fri. 10/6 *Early Nevi'im* (cont.)

Disuss the Book of Joshua

Mon. 10/9 *Nevi'im* The Prophets I

Bible - Read: Judges 1-5; 13-16 (Samson); I

Samuel (David);

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION: Do the prophecies of ancient times have any meaning for us today?

- What is the story of Samson really about? How does it apply to our lives?

Fourth Weekly Assignment Due: Memory Presentation of Box 4.10 “Deuteronomy’s Proclamations of Faith,” and Box 4.12 “The Torah’s Three Versions of the Law of Retaliation”. The classroom discussion will elaborate the Box assignments and its Scriptures. Do you agree that worshipping God entails destroying idols? Is the *lex talionis* applicable to Christians

Weds 10/11 *Kings: Saul, David, and Solomon*

I & II Kings (Solomon, Decline, Division, Fall, and Exile)

- Even though King David was an adulterer and murderer, God still loved him, and blessed him. What does this mean for us, and how do we translate this story into our lives?
- When the ancient Hebrew peoples had lost everything, and went into exile, many thought that God had abandoned them. This is true for many people today. Is it true that God sometimes abandons people? If so, why? If not, then how do we know that God still is *there* when we cannot *feel His Presence*?

Fri. 10/13 *More Kings* (cont.)

Mon 10/16 *Nevi'im II The Prophets II*

Bible - Read: Amos 1-5; Micah 6:8; Jeremiah 5:26-29; 31: 21-31; Isaiah 6:11-12; 40:27-31; (Suffering Servant Passages --Isaiah 42; 52:13-53:12) Isaiah 55; 60. Special attention to Isaiah 9:6-7; and 61

- Why did the Prophets tie economic and social justice concerns to obedience to God? Do you believe that they is a fundamental connection Between the two? If so, then do most Christians practice this, or are Christians too wrapped up in issues of faith?
- How do we integrate the prophetic into contemporary faith?

Fifth Weekly Assignment Due: Reflection Paper What is the Proper Way to Live as one Worships God? Based on Boxes 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 - Choose your favorite prophetic passage, exegete it. Do you agree that God is the sole and proper object of our worship? How did the Prophets interpret living “holy” in everyday life? What is the connection between our economic practices and being holy?

Weds. 10/18 *Nevi'im II More Prophets*

Fri 10/20 *The Writings Kethuvim*

Bible: read Psalms 1, 3,4, 8, 10, 11, *14(53), *19, *23, 40, 42, *84, 92-98;*100, 104, *119, 146, 149, 150.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION - Psalms were the most honest, forthright, and down-to-earth expressions of being human and a believer in God. Discuss what each one proclaims

Mon. 10/23 *More Psalms*
 Weds. 10/25 Chapter 7 *Kethuvim* - Proverbs Job
Bible: read Proverbs: 3, 5, *8,*15, 17, 19, 20, *31

Fri 10/27 *Kethuvim Job*
Bible:Job: *1-2, 5, 8, 11-13, *15-19; and *38-42.

Sixth Weekly Assignment: Reflection Paper or Memory

Presentation Choose a favorite passage to memorize, or exegete in the Paper. Keep the following questions in mind: **How does the Bible deal with suffering? Is God the Author of Suffering -Does God control who suffers? If so, then why does a loving God permit or cause human suffering? If not, then why does the all-powerful God allow suffering to happen? What are your positive responses? Do you ever blame God for bad things happening in your life?**

New Testament

Mon. 10/30 *The Gospel of Mark*
Bible: read the entire Gospel of Mark focus especially on the Scriptures found in Box 10.7 p.410, and Box 10.8 p.413

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION - Mark is the earliest Gospel to be written. What is Mark's Gospel particularly interested in portraying? What is the *messianic secret*? What does it mean to call Jesus the "Son of Man" and the "Son of God?"

November

Weds 11/1 *Gospel of Mark (continued)*

Fri. 11/3 *The Gospel of Matthew*

Bible: read the entire Gospel of Matthew focus especially on the Parables in Box 10.9 p.422, and Matt. 5-7 the Beatitudes

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION -What is the *parousia*? What are *parables* and how does Jesus use them? What are the *Beatitudes* (p. 433)?

Seventh Weekly Assignment Reflection Paper or Memorization --take a parable and either memorize a complete section [at least 5-7 verses] , or in a Reflection Paper discuss how a parable is *halakah* or *haggadah* (For Definitions look on p. 424). Answer Question #3 on p.440 How to define a *parable*. What are your feelings about parables?

Mon. 11/6 *The Gospel of Luke*

Bible: read the entire Gospel of Luke focus especially on the Parables found in Box 10.11 --I.e., the prodigal son in Lk. 15:11-32

Weds. 11/8 *Synoptic Gospels: Mark, Matthew & Luke*

Fri. 8/10 *The Gospel of John*

Bible: read the entire Gospel of John, focus especially on Chapters: 1,3, 8 10, 20, and 21. Find the "I AM..." sayings

Mon. 11/13 – 11/26 *Thanksgiving Vacation*

Mon. 11/27 *Pauline Epistles*

Bible: read –I Thessalonians, I & II Corinthians,

Eighth Weekly Assignment: Reflection Paper

Choose a section of Luke or John that has personal significance for your faith-walk with Jesus Christ. Carefully exegete the passage, etc....

Weds. 11/29 *Paul's most Significant Letters*
Galatians, Romans, Philippians,

December

Fri. 12/1 *General Epistles*
Colossians, Ephesians,

Ninth Weekly Assignment: Either a Reflection Paper or Memory Presentation

Presentation. Topic is :Present Your Christology.

Do you believe that Jesus is subordinate to God, or equal? Do you tend to stress Jesus' humanity, or His divinity? Why? How can Jesus be the "Christ"? Be creative!

Mon 12/4 *Practical Faith*
Bible: read Hebrews - * Heb. 11; James

Weds. 12/6 *Vision of the End Time- Revelation*
Bible: Revelation 1-3; 19, 20, 21, and 22.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION - Name and discuss the powerful symbols in the Book of Revelation (i.e., the dragon, the Beast, the Lamb, etc)

Fri. 12/8 *Final Class*

General Review of the New Testament

- ***Hand out Final Essays/Tenth Reflection Paper, to be turned in on Tuesday, June 21***

Wednesday 12/13 Final Essay/Tenth Reflection Paper Due