

## **ASSOCIATED CANADIAN THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS OF TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY**

### **Graduate Course Syllabus**

**Course Number: BIB 620 OL**

**Course Name: Old Testament Theology**

**Semester and Year: Summer 2021**

**Instructor: Erich Engler**

**Contact Information: erich.engler@twu.ca**

**Semester Hours: 3 Credit Hours**

### **Course Description**

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A survey of various approaches to Old Testament theological investigation, analysis of key passages and themes in the Hebrew Scriptures, and practical experience in doing Old Testament theology, all with a view to exploring the enduring significance of this first testament.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

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By the end of this course, the student will:

- A. know and understand the structure and content of the Old Testament canon and its 'big picture'; (1, 2)
- B. be aware of the historical, cultural, and literary contexts that contributed to the shaping of the Old Testament (1, 2)
- C. understand the "big picture" of the Old Testament and how it relates to the "big picture" of the Bible as a whole. (1, 2)
- D. be able to trace major theological themes throughout the Old Testament (1, 2)
- E. exhibit familiarity with the thought and work of some important theologians (1, 2)
- F. develop skills in conducting biblical theological research through careful analysis of a selected portion of the Old Testament; (1, 2)
- G. practice creatively presenting theological knowledge to life and ministry; (2, 4, 6, 7)

## Required Texts and Materials

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- Mark Boda. *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology: Three Credal Expressions*. Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2017.<sup>1</sup>
- Richard S. Hess. *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2016.<sup>2</sup>
- Brittany Kim and Charles Trim. *Understanding Old Testament Theology: Mapping the Terrain of Recent Approaches*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Academic, 2020.<sup>3</sup>

## Course Activities/Requirements

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Assignments are due by midnight (your time) on the day they are due. I would ask that you submit your assignments in the online Moodle classroom accessible through MyCourses. When you go to the Moodle classroom, you will see assignment folders where you can submit assignments. Once I have marked your assignment, I will put it in your grade book in the Moodle classroom where you can check your grade and review the comments I made on the assignment (you will receive an automatic notification whenever I put a graded assignment in your grade book). Please note that I will typically deduct 5% of an assignment’s total possible value for each day that it is late. I will consider extensions in exceptional circumstances such as a medical emergency (when a doctor’s note accompanies the request). For the times when I allow a student to rewrite an assignment, I will generally take off 20% of the assignment’s value before assigning a grade to the rewritten assignment.

Here is an overview of all the assignments followed by a detailed description of them:

Week	Due Date	Assignments	% Final Grade	Cumulative %
1	May 3-8	Pre-reading due (May 3)		
2	May 10-15			
3	May 17-22	Forum Week #1	5%	5%
4	May 24-29			
5	May 31-June 5	Forum Week #2 Blog post/Article (June 5)	5% 15%	10% 25%
6	June 7-12	Forum Week #3	5%	30%
7	June 14-19	Forum Week #4	5% 35%	35% 70%

<sup>1</sup> Available as an e-book through [Logos](#), [Amazon](#), and other e-book retailers.

<sup>2</sup> Available as an e-book through [Logos](#), [Amazon](#), and other e-book retailers.

<sup>3</sup> Available as an e-book through [Logos](#), [Amazon](#), and other e-book retailers.

		Biblical Theology Paper (June 19)		
8	June 21-26	Reading Log (June 26)	5%	75%
		Big Picture Group Projects (Variable due dates)	25%	100%

### Course Pre-Reading Requirement

Due to the condensed nature of this course, please have the following read before the course begins on May 3, 2021:

- Boda, Mark. *The Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology: Three Credal Expressions*. Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2017.

You will be expected to integrate ideas from this reading into the forum discussions and other assignments

### Readings and Online Forum Participation (25 % of the final grade)

Foundational to this course is the expectation that students will carefully and thoroughly read the book of course textbooks. There are also videos listed on the course Moodle site. Please watch the Logos videos. As you read and watch, please take notes in preparation for participation in the online forum. At any time in the course, you may initiate or join in discussions on the online forum. For grading purposes, interaction on the online forum though, your knowledgeable and thoughtful interaction on the online forum will be divided into four segments. You should plan to invest approximately four hours into crafting forum posts and responding to forum discussions during each two-week forum segment, for a total of approximately 16 hours during the course. Each two-week forum segment is worth 5% of your final grade. Although it is impossible to interact knowledgeably in the forums if you have not completed the readings and watched the videos, I will also grant an additional 5% will be given for completion of the reading log that records your readings. **The reading log is due June 26 @ 11:59 pm.**

Students are expected to contribute to the forum discussions by posting a minimum of four conversational (worth up to 10 points each) and three substantive contributions (worth up to 20 points each) per forum week. Please make sure that you spread out your contributions over at least three days during the designated forum weeks so that you engage in the forum conversations at different points.

By conversational contributions, I mean simply joining the flow of discussion with shorter responses (e.g. questions, affirmations, quick thoughts about what someone has said).

By substantive responses, I mean responses that show a deep processing of relevant ideas (this usually takes 200-300 words). We have a tremendous opportunity to build upon one another's knowledge, insights, and experience. Our goal is to collaborate in the forum. At times, we will respectfully challenge each other. We anticipate that this will be a rich time of dialogue. To create a safe environment for this to take place, we must build a supportive subculture that encourages one another. Disagreeing and challenging can be stimulating if done in an edifying manner.

**Substantive participation may include (among other things):**

- Providing and developing a new thought, idea, or perspective.
- Citing an experience or example of what we are learning and showing how it applies.
- Adding a new twist on a perspective.
- Critically reflecting on an idea/concept.
- Questioning or challenging a principle/perspective and giving reasons for your questioning.
- Integrating Scripture and other sources in a meaningful way

**What Substantive Participation is NOT:**

- Very basic comments such as “I agree” or “I disagree.”
- Restating what someone has said (*unless there is a direct purpose in doing so*).
- Disrespectfully disagreeing.
- Pat answers that are not thought-provoking.

**Below are examples of how to stimulate your own and others’ thinking:**

- What would happen if...
- Other times it may be helpful to...
- It is my understanding...what is your experience with this?
- You might approach this from...
- Is it possible that...
- Would you consider...
- Maybe...
- Possibly...
- Sometimes...
- I'm wondering if...
- Do you think...

Have fun!

Note: You can use any of your forum posts in other papers for this course. I would also encourage you to view the posts of others as resources that you can cite in your papers. Everyone brings a wealth of insights into the class!

**Blog Post/Article (15%)**

*“Theologia a Deo docetur, Deum docet, et ad Deum ducit”*  
(‘Theology is taught by God, teaches God, and leads to God’)  
- Thomas Aquinas (13<sup>th</sup> C. AD)

Ultimately, we study theology because we yearn to know God and to make God known in the world. For this assignment each student will compose a ca. 1500-2000 word blog post or article that could be used in a ministry, church, or denominational website or publication. It must interact with a major theme/issue/approach addressed in Kim and Trim, *Understanding Old Testament Theology* and apply it to the lives of people to whom you have ministered or will minister in either a past, a current, or a

hypothetical future ministry setting. It must be well-researched and thought out, highly informative, and engaging and must address the issue in language and in a manner that ‘average’ people can understand. In addition to Kim and Trim, please use at least 5 excellent scholarly sources for this blog post/article. Creativity and applicability to life and ministry just as important as quality of content for this assignment. Remember: dry, boring and uninteresting are not acceptable options for this assignment! Due June 5 @ 11:59 pm.

**“Big Picture” Group Project (25% of the final grade)**

In a group of 2-3 students, each student will participate in the preparation of a creative project that presents the “big picture” of the Old Testament in a fun and engaging manner. The final project should include a ca. 15-20 minute video/narrated PowerPoint video and a 2-3 page accompanying handout. The project will also be presented to the class online during Forum weeks 2, 3, or 4. The presentation will include the video, the handout, and several excellent discussion questions. Please also post your video, handout, and discussion questions by Monday @ 9am on the week of your presentation. Feel free to use your creativity to make this memorable. Please sign up for group and week on the course website. Complete details will be posted on the home page of the course website. Due date varies depending on chosen Forum Week.

**Biblical Theology Paper (35% of final grade)**

The student will write one paper (ca. 3500-4000) that examines the biblical theology of one book of the Old Testament. At the heart of this paper is your own in-depth study of the Old Testament. The more evidence you give of original work and personal thoughtful reflection, the better the grade you will receive. Complete assignment details will be posted on the home page of the course website. Due June 19 @ 11:59 pm.

**Course Evaluation**

Course Requirement	Grade Value	TWU Student Learning Outcome(s)	BIB 620 Learning Outcome(s)
<i>Readings and Online Forum Participation</i>	25%	Knowledge and its Application Cognitive Complexity Inter and Intra-personal wellness Spiritual Formation	A, B, C, D, E, F
<i>Blog Post/Article</i>	15%	Knowledge and its Application Cognitive Complexity Spiritual Formation	E, G
<i>“Big Picture” Group Project</i>	25%	Knowledge and its Application Cognitive Complexity	A, B, C, D, E, F, G
<i>Biblical Theology Paper</i>	35%	Knowledge and its Application Cognitive Complexity Spiritual Formation	A, B, C, D, E, F, G
	<b>Total: 100%</b>		

Near the conclusion of this course, you will be asked to complete a course evaluation. Because feedback is very important, the course evaluation is a required part of the course and is tied to the submission of your last assignment. The course evaluation will be integrated into the Moodle classroom in Week 8.

## Grading System

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description	Grade Point	Meaning in Graduate Work
A+	97-100	Superior	4.30	Exceptionally well-reasoned, compelling development of position. Outstanding incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Strikingly appropriate examples. Extraordinary insight, critical analytical and evaluative ability, and creativity. Superlative style and language usage. Makes an original contribution and is potentially publishable.
A	93-96.99	Excellent	4.00	Well-argued and convincing development of position. Insightful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Notably appropriate examples. Excellent insight, critical analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Impressive style and language use.
A-	90-92.99	Very Good	3.70	Thorough and plausible development of position. Skilful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Very good examples. Very good insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Commendable and fluent style and language usage.
B+	87-89.99	Proficient	3.30	Proficient development of position. Appropriate incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Relevant examples. Good quality insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Clear and correct style and language usage.
B	83-86.99	Good	3.00	Competent development of position, but possibly with some gaps and/or limitations. Good incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Good examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally good style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
B-	80-82.99	Average	2.70	Average development of position, but with obvious gaps and/or limitations. Satisfactory incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Satisfactory examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally satisfactory style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
C+	77-79.99	Adequate	2.30	Adequate development of position with significant gaps and/or limitations. Some incorporation of personal vision as well as references and resources. Adequate use of examples. Very little creativity. Considerable number of issues related to coherence and style.

C	73-76.99	Acceptable	2.00	Limited development of position with a noticeable lack of consistency with personal vision or references. Limited integration with external sources. Acceptable analytic and evaluative ability. Numerous weaknesses in terms of clarity, coherence, and grammar.
C-	70-72.99	Needs Work	1.70	Passable but unimpressive development of position. Position not completely consistent with personal vision <i>or</i> references and resources not taken fully into account <i>or</i> examples are basic or not completely convincing <i>or</i> barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with weaknesses in some respects (e.g., clarity, coherence, grammar). Overall quality shows noticeable deficiencies.
F	Below 70	Below Standard	0.00	Unacceptable work at graduate level. Shows lack of understanding and/or competence in several of the criteria described above. This grade is a failing grade at the graduate level.

## Course Policies

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### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AT TWU

One of the core values of Trinity Western University is the integration of academic excellence with high standards of personal, moral, and spiritual integrity. The University considers it a serious offence when an individual attempts to gain unearned academic credit. It is the student's responsibility to be informed about what constitutes academic misconduct. For details on this, and on identifying and avoiding plagiarism go to the [University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar](#) (p. 47).

<https://prezi.com/od62fxnkbmxh/plagiarism-how-to-get-it-out-of-your-life/> (Prezi presentation)

<http://bit.ly/1p00KX3> (Google Slide presentation offering more comprehensive information)

### STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

Students with a disability who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Equity of Access Office upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and include the educational impact of the disability along with recommended accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Equity of Access Office on their website at:

<http://www.twu.ca/student-life/student-success/disabilities-and-equity-access>.

### HOSPITALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

TWU is committed to an ethic of inclusion centred on the principles of Christian hospitality, reciprocity and reconciliation. We seek to cultivate generous learning spaces that are based on respect for differences and are open to diverse views, opinions, and identities that are thoughtfully expressed in a collegial manner. We welcome and value all voices, including those from under- represented groups or those who have been marginalized.

The following policies are optional but recommended, to allow you to efficiently respond to student challenges to the syllabus. *Click on these fields and press delete if you do not wish to use them:*

#### **CAMPUS CLOSURE AND CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY**

In the event of extreme weather conditions or other emergency situations go to the <https://www.twu.ca/campus-notification>.

#### **COURSE GRADE APPEALS**

Students can appeal their grade to the course instructor by stating in writing their reasons for contesting the grade. Deadline for such appeals is one week after the student has receipt of grade. Formal course grade appeals can be made with the ACTS Office.

#### **PAPER FORMATTING**

The preferred manner for citations is the Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format. For information and accuracy you may wish to reference the following style guide: Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 9th ed. Students may find the following website helpful: [http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian\\_citationguide.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html)