


## SAMPLE SYLLABUS: CURRENT USERS

*The Bible: An Introduction, Second Edition*

Jerry L. Sumney

INSTRUCTOR	Jesse Hoover 
INSTITUTION	Baylor University
COURSE TITLE	REL 1310.46: The Christian Scriptures
SEMESTER	Fall 2014

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Christian Scriptures serves as an introduction to the Old and New Testaments. The course will focus on four interrelated questions:

1. **Canon:** How and when did the books that comprise the Old and New Testaments come into being? What processes were involved in their production?
2. **Milieu:** What social or cultural backgrounds undergird these books? What literary genres are present within the biblical texts, and how do they help us understand the writer's purpose? How does the larger historical backdrop influence these books?
3. **Theme:** What themes or narratives bind together the text, either within a specific book or spanning several books?
4. **Interpretation:** How have these books been interpreted by the Christian Church(es) from the earliest times up to the present? How do these interpretations differ or interact with each other?

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

1. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version*. Fourth Edition. Ed., Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). ISBN: 978-0800663742
2. Sumney, Jerry L. *The Bible: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014. ISBN: 9781451469240 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)
3. Supplementary articles will be posted on Blackboard.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

**Goal:** My goal is for you, the student, to develop a cultural and critical familiarity with – and interest in – the biblical texts we will be covering in this course.

By *cultural familiarity*, I mean that you'll acquire a basic grasp of the immense cultural and literary significance that the Christian Bible has had within the Western tradition. You should be able to recognize and evaluate the contemporary interpretations of the Bible you may encounter, from the public arena to religious institutions.

By *critical familiarity*, on the other hand, I expect that you'll understand the deeper mechanisms at work within the biblical texts: from literary devices and historical backgrounds to the overall plot and structure that undergirds both individual books and the Bible as a whole.

**Measurable Outcomes:** In order to measure your attainment of these goals, your in-class assignments, quizzes, exams, and semester paper will assess your ability to:

1. Understand how the different books of the Bible came into being in terms of their source critical, historical, and canonical milieus.
2. Recognize the different literary and cultural backgrounds that influence the interpretation of the biblical texts.
3. Be familiar with biblical geography and sequences of events.
4. Explain the content of the Christian Bible's major sections: Torah, Deuteronomistic History, Prophets, Wisdom Literature; Apocrypha; Gospels, Pauline Letters, General Letters, Revelation.
5. Discuss the interpretive issues surrounding biblical passages that have particular contemporary significance.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Date		Class Description/ Due Dates	Reading Assignments
Week 1	T – 8/26	1. Course Intro	○ [Blackboard]: Course Syllabus
	TR – 8/28	2. Metanarrative: what is the Bible? • Quiz 1 (Syllabus)	○ [Blackboard]: Harris, 1-10 ○ [Blackboard] Hauer & Young, 18-23
Week 2	T – 9/2	3. Canon: How did we get the Bible? ○ Quiz 2 (Map)	○ Sumney: 3-16 ○ [Blackboard]: Muratorian Fragment
	TR – 9/4	4. Hermeneutics: How do we interpret the Bible?	○ [Blackboard]: Defending Scripture Literally? ○ Sumney: 33-44
Week 3	T – 9/9	5. Creation: Ancient Accounts ○ Quiz 3	○ Sumney: 49-59 ○ NRSV: Genesis 1.1-2.25 ○ [Blackboard]: Enuma Elish ○ [Blackboard]: Lamoureaux, "Evolutionary Creation"
	TR – 9/11	6. Corruption: Fall and Flood	○ Sumney: 60-67 ○ NRSV: Genesis 3.1-24; 6.1-9.17; 11.1-9 ○ [Blackboard]: Epic of Gilgamesh

<b>Week 4</b>	T – 9/16	<b>7. Covenant: The Patriarchs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Quiz 4</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Sumney:</b> 67-75</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Genesis 11.27-12.7; 15.1-21 (<i>Abraham</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Genesis 21.1-7; 22.1-18 (<i>Isaac</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Genesis 25.19-34; 28.1-5; 28.10-17 (<i>Jacob</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Genesis 37.1-4; 37.12-28; 41.14-40; 42.1-23; 45.1-10; 45.25-46.4; 50.1-3; 50.13-26 (<i>Joseph</i>)</li> </ul>
	TR – 9/18	<b>8. Exodus: The Formation of Israel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Sumney:</b> 79-84</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Exodus 1.1-3.17; 7.1-12.42</li> <li>○ <b>[Blackboard]</b> Qur'an, Sura 20.9-101</li> </ul>

Date	Class Description/ Due Dates	Reading Assignments	
<b>Week 5</b>	T – 9/23	<b>9. Law and Covenant</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Quiz 5</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Sumney:</b> 84-95, 99-102</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Exodus 13.3-16; 19.1-20.21; 21.1-21; 22.21-23.9</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Leviticus 11.1-12.8</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Deuteronomy 28.1-24; 30.1-20</li> </ul>
	TR – 9/25	<b>10. Exam I</b>	

<b>Week 6</b>	T – 9/30	<b>11. Rise of the Israelite State</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>First Extra Credit Essay Due</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Sumney:</b> 105-116, 117-123</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Joshua 1.1-11; 10.40-11.23 (<i>Conquest</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Judges 2.6-3.6; 3.15-30 (<i>Judges</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> 1 Samuel 7.15-8.22; 10.17-25; 15.1-16.13 (<i>Saul</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> 2 Samuel 5.1-12; 11.1-12.25 (<i>David</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> 1 Kings 2.1-4; 4.20-34; 8.1-21; 11.1-13 (<i>Solomon</i>)</li> <li>○ <b>[Blackboard]</b> Defending Genocide</li> </ul>
	TR – 10/2	<b>12. The Northern Kingdom: Israel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Quiz 6</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Sumney:</b> 124-130</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> 1 Kings 11.26-13.6; 14.1-20; 16.8-33; 17.1-5; 18.1-45; 21.1-22.40</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> 2 Kings 17.1-41</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Amos 2.6-16</li> </ul>

<b>Week 7</b>	T – 10/7	<b>13. The Southern Kingdom: Judah</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Semester Paper I Due: Evolutionary Creation</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>[Blackboard]:</b> Harris, 184-187</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> 2 Kings 18.1-19.37; 20.12-21.18; 22.1-25.12</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Micah 3.1-4.4</li> </ul>
	TR – 10/9	<b>14. Prophets of the Exile</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Quiz 7</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>[Blackboard]:</b> Hauer &amp; Young, 132-148</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Isaiah 1.1-20; 5.1-17</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Jeremiah 1.1-2.13; 5.1-19; 37.1-39.14</li> <li>○ <b>NRSV:</b> Habakkuk 1.1-2.8</li> </ul>

Week 8	T – 10/14	15. The Return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ [Blackboard]: Hauer &amp; Young, 186-189</li> <li>○ NRSV: Jeremiah 29.1-14; Ezekiel 37.1-14;</li> <li>○ NRSV: 2 Chronicles 36.15-23 Isaiah 40.1-11; 45.1-13; Psalm 126.1-6</li> <li>○ NRSV: Ezra 3.1-13; Haggai 1.15-2.5</li> <li>○ [Blackboard]: The Legend of Zerubbabel</li> </ul>
	TR – 10/16	16. The Maccabees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Quiz 8</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sumney: 195-203</li> <li>○ NRSV: 1 Maccabees 1.1-2.28; 3.27-4.59; 6.1-63; 8.1-30; 2 Maccabees 2.19-32; 6.1-8.28; 9.1-10.9</li> </ul>

Date	Class Description/ Due Dates	Reading Assignments	
Week 9	T – 10/21	17. The Writings: Hebrew Poetry and Wisdom Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sumney: 173-179, 187-193</li> <li>○ NRSV: Psalm 13; 139; 148</li> <li>○ NRSV: Song of Solomon 1.1-11; 4.1-16; 8.6-7</li> <li>○ NRSV: Proverbs 1.1-33; 10.1-12</li> <li>○ NRSV: Job 1.1-3.26; 3.1-26; 11.1-20; 16.1-17; 38.1-21; 42.1-6</li> </ul>
	TR – 10/23	18. 'Apocryphal' Wisdom Literature and Novellas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Quiz 9</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ [Blackboard]: Harris, 296-297, 301-302</li> <li>○ [Blackboard]: Shea, "5 Myths about 7 Books"</li> <li>○ NRSV: Judith 1.1-2.20; 4.1-15; 7.1-8.36; 10.1-11.23; 12.10-13.17; 14.11-15.10; 16.19-25 (<i>or just read the whole book!</i>)</li> <li>○ NRSV: Wisdom of Solomon 1.1-3.8; 7.15-9.12</li> </ul>

Week 10	T – 10/28	19. Apocalypse Then! Hebrew Eschatology and Messianism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Second Extra Credit Essay Due</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ [Blackboard] Hauer &amp; Young, 193-197</li> <li>○ NRSV: Zephaniah 1.1-7, 14-18; Malachi 4.1-6; Micah 4.1-5 (Day of the Lord)</li> <li>○ NRSV: Isaiah 42.1-9; 49.1-6; 52.13-53.12 (Servant Songs)</li> <li>○ NRSV: Daniel 2.1-45; 11.1-4; 11.20-12.13</li> <li>○ [Blackboard]: Baxter, "Is the United States in Bible Prophecy?"</li> </ul>
	TR – 10/30	20. Exam II	

Week 11	T – 11/4	21. New Testament Backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sumney: 203-220</li> <li>○ [Blackboard]: Josephus: The Four Jewish Sects</li> </ul>
	TR – 11/6	22. The Life of Christ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Quiz 10</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sumney: 226-236</li> <li>○ NRSV: Mark 1.1-28 (<i>birth</i>); Luke 4.12-44 (<i>miracles</i>); Matthew 5.1-48, Luke 5.17-49 (<i>sermons</i>); Matthew 13.1-35 (<i>parables</i>); Mark 14.1-15.39 (<i>death</i>); Luke 23.50-24.52 (<i>resurrection</i>)</li> <li>○ [Blackboard]: Josephus: Christ in Context</li> </ul>

Date		Class Description/ Due Dates	Reading Assignments
Week 12	T – 11/11	<b>23. The Four Gospels</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>Semester Paper II Due: Apocrypha</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>Sumney:</b> 239-274</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> Matthew 1.1-2.23, Luke 1.1-2.21 (<i>birth narratives</i>)</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> Mark 16.1-19 (<i>multiple endings</i>)</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> John 1.1-18; 7.37-52, 8.12-59; 13.1-20; 18.33-19.22</li> </ul>
	TR – 11/13	<b>24. Early Christian Reflections: Jewish Christianity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>Quiz 11</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>Sumney:</b> 277-286, 346-351</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> Acts 1.1-11; 2.1-3.26; 15.1-29</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> James 1.1-3.12; 5.1-19</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> Hebrews 1.1-3.6; Genesis 15.17-20; Hebrews 6.19-8.13</li> </ul>
Week 13	T – 11/18	<b>25. Pauline Christianity: The Theology of Paul</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>[Blackboard]:</b> NT Wright video: “The Theology of Paul”</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> Acts 9.1-18; Galatians 2.1-16</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> Romans 1.18-2.16; 3.19-31; 5.6-21</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> Galatians 3.1-29; Philippians 2.5-11; 1 Corinthians 15.1-56; 1 Thessalonians 4.13-18</li> </ul>
	TR – 11/20	<b>26. Pauline Christianity: The Ethics of Paul</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>Quiz 12</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> 1 Corinthians 5.1-6.20; 7.10-16; 11.1-14.39</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> Ephesians 5.21-6.9</li> <li>◦ <b>[Blackboard]:</b> Plantinga, “How I Changed my Mind about Women in Church Leadership”</li> </ul>
Week	T – 11/25	<b>SBL Conference – No Class</b>	
	TR – 11/27	<b>Thanksgiving – No Class</b>	
Week 15	T – 12/2	<b>27. Early Christian Reflections: Pastoral Epistles and the ‘problem’ of Pseudonymity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>Third Extra Credit Essay Due</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>Sumney:</b> 329-330, 338-342</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> 1 Timothy 1.1-11; 2.1-4.10; 2 Timothy 4.1-22; Titus 1.1-3.3.15</li> <li>◦ <b>[Blackboard]:</b> Did Paul Write the Pastorals?</li> <li>◦ <b>[Blackboard]:</b> The Function of the Pastorals</li> </ul>
	TR – 12/4	<b>28. Apocalypse Now! Early Christian Eschatology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Teacher Evaluations</li> <li>◦ <b>Semester Paper III Due: Paul and Women</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <b>Sumney:</b> 363-381</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> 2 Thessalonians 2.1-12</li> <li>◦ <b>NRSV:</b> Revelation 1.1-20; 4.1-11; 6.1-17; 12.1-13.8; 17.1-18.5; 20.1-21.11</li> <li>◦ <b>[Blackboard]:</b> Apocalypse Now</li> </ul>
Week 16	Tuesday – 12/16 9:00-11:00 AM	<b>Final Exam (Draper 207)</b>	