

SAMPLE SYLLABUS: CURRENT USERS
A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible: Second Edition
John J. Collins

INSTRUCTOR	Todd Hanneken 
INSTITUTION	St. Mary's University
COURSE TITLE	TH3301: Introduction to the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament
SEMESTER	Fall 2014

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will survey the historical contexts, literature, debates, and ideas of the Hebrew Bible, which became the Christian Old Testament. Special attention will be paid to the variety of methods of interpretation applied to the texts, including historical-critical (modern), traditional theological (pre-modern), and contemporary-critical (post-modern) methods.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. A Bible with footnotes based on the NAB (New American Bible), JPS (Jewish Publication Society), or NRSV (New Revised Standard Version) translation.
2. Collins, John J. *A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*. Second Edition. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014.
3. Other texts will be available from Blackboard.

OUTCOMES

By the end of the course the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical context in which the books of the Hebrew Bible first took shape.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic history and themes presented in the Hebrew Bible.
3. Distinguish the variety of perspectives expressed in the Hebrew Bible.
4. Distinguish the variety of methods of interpretation applied to the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of theological approaches to the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament as Scripture, particularly in the Catholic tradition.

6. Demonstrate knowledge of the variety of ways communities of readers have found significance of the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament in the world today.

COURSE CALENDAR

Date	Class Description	Reading Assignments
Tuesday, August 19	Introductions, Early Interpretation	Syllabus
Thursday, August 21	Modern and Postmodern Interpretation	Collins 1–13, “Introduction”
Tuesday, August 26	Views of Scripture	Genesis 1–11 Optional: Daniel J. Harrington, “The Bible in Catholic Life” (PDF)
Thursday, August 28	The Documentary Hypothesis, Etiology	Collins 41–49, “The Primeval History”
Tuesday, September 2	Augustine	Handout on Eden in the New Testament (PDF) Augustine, <i>City of God</i> Book 14, Chapters 1, 11–14 (pp. 547, 568–574); skim Chapters 15–18 (pp. 574–580) (PDF)
Thursday, September 4	Abraham and Family	Collins 51–62 “The Patriarchs” Genesis 12 Genesis 22 Genesis 25:19–34 Genesis 27
Tuesday, September 9	Hagar and Isaac	Genesis 16; 17:15—18:15; 21:1–21 (i.e., all of chapter 16; then start at chapter 17 verse 15 and read through chapter 18 verse 15; then the first 21 verses of chapter 21) Renita J. Weems, “A Mistress, a Maid, and No Mercy.” From <i>Just a Sister Away: Understanding the Timeless Connection Between Women of Today and Women</i>

		<i>in the Bible</i> , 1–19. New York: Warner, 1988, 2005. (PDF)
Thursday, September 11	Moses and the Exodus	Collins 63–72, “The Exodus from Egypt” Exodus 3–4; 11; 14–15 Optional: skim Genesis 39–Exodus 18
Tuesday, September 16	Historical Critical Read of the Red Sea	Handout on Sea Battle Passages (PDF) Optional: Frank Moore Cross, <i>Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel</i> , 112–144. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973. (PDF)
Thursday, September 18	Decalogue and Laws	Collins 73–83, “The Revelation at Sinai” Exodus 19–20 Matthew 5:17–48
Tuesday, September 23	Priesthood and Priestly Source	Collins 85–96, “The Priestly Theology: Exodus 25–40, Leviticus, and Numbers” Exodus 32 Leviticus 10 Numbers 16
Thursday, September 25	Deuteronomy	Collins 97–108, “Deuteronomy” Deuteronomy 22–24
Tuesday, September 30	Joshua, Conquest	Collins 111–127, “The Deuteronomistic History” and “Joshua” Joshua 7—8:29
Thursday, October 2	Midterm Exam	
Tuesday, October 7	Archaeology	Video: Nova, <i>The Bible’s Buried Secrets</i>
Thursday, October 9	Judges	Collins 129–138, “Judges” Judges 19–21

Tuesday, October 14	Trible on the Woman from Bethlehem	Phyllis Trible, "An Unnamed Woman." From <i>Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives</i> . Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984. (PDF)
Thursday, October 16	Kings	Collins 139–148, "First Samuel" (Optional: 131–140, "Solomon") 2 Samuel 11–12 1 Kings 8
Tuesday, October 21	Davidic Literature	Collins 149–157, "Second Samuel" (Optional: 236–244, "The Psalms") 2 Samuel 7:1–17 Psalm 89
Thursday, October 23	Solomonic Literature	Collins 307–316, "Proverbs" (Optional: 245–246, "The Song of Songs" and Song of Songs 1–2) 1 Kings 3 Proverbs 8–10
Tuesday, October 28	Elijah and Prophecy in General	Collins 173–184, "Tales of Prophets and the End of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah" 1 Kings 18–19
Thursday, October 30	Amos, Hosea, Isaiah	Collins 187–212, "Prophecy," "Amos and Hosea" and "Isaiah" Recommended: Hosea 1–2; Isaiah 6–7
Tuesday, November 4	Jeremiah	Collins 213–224, "The Babylonian Era: Jeremiah and Lamentations" Jeremiah 20
Thursday, November 6	Ezekiel	Collins 225–237, "Ezekiel" Ezekiel 1–3

Tuesday, November 11	Second Isaiah	Collins 239–251, “The Additions to the Book of Isaiah” Isaiah 52:13—53:12
Thursday, November 13	Third Isaiah and Daniel	Isaiah 65–66 Isaiah 24–27 Daniel 7 Daniel 9 Daniel 12
Tuesday, November 18	Job and Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes)	Collins 317–328, “Job and Qoheleth”
Thursday, November 20	Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon	Collins 355–364, “The Deuterocanonical Wisdom Books”
Tuesday, November 25	No Class Meeting—SBL	
Thursday, November 27	No Class Meeting—Thanksgiving	
Tuesday, December 2	Study week, class meets	
Thursday, December 4	Study week, class meets	