



BIBL 5230 OLD TESTAMENT 3: WISDOM & ISRAEL'S PRAISE

North Park Theological Seminary Course Syllabus *Fall 2026, Hybrid/Hyflex Format*

Tuesday evenings 7:30-9:00 pm (CST)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Sophia A. Magallanes-Tsang, Assistant Professor of Old Testament
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Office: Nyvall Hall 317

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the historical books and the poetic traditions of psalms and wisdom, beginning with Israel's origins and continuing through the united monarchy, exile, and return. The course will also include an introduction to Biblical Hebrew (consonants, vowels, and some key words).

The Old Testament books covered include *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes*.

The power and passion of the books we will examine together are essential parts of the Scriptures to which 2 Timothy 3:16 refers. As such, affirming these 16 Old Testament books as a fundamental part of God's revealed and authoritative Word represents a key value in the approach of this course. The ultimate focus of the course is to prepare students to faithfully and effectively teach and preach from this portion of the Old Testament Scriptures within the ministry of the Church.

REQUIRED TEXTS

An English **Bible** (your preferred translation).

Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011. (433 pages)

Hamilton, Victor P. *Handbook on the Historical Books*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2001. (430 pages; the chapters on 1-2 Kings are *not* required reading for this course, as 1-2 Kings is covered in the Old Testament 2 NPTS course)

Options (including e-books) for purchasing the textbooks are available at [this North Park textbook link](#).

Several chapters/essays are also required reading—these are available as PDFs posted on Canvas:

Two chapters from:

Pratico, Gary D., and Miles **Van Pelt**. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019. (25 pages)

- Chapter 1: "Hebrew Alphabet."
- Chapter 2: "Hebrew Vowels."

Two chapters from:

Philip E. **Satterthwaite** & J. Gordon **McConville**. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Historical Books*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007. (68 pages)

- Chapter 1: “What are the Histories? A Survey of Recent Scholarship.”
- Chapter 2: “The Ancient Near East, 1550-63 BC.”

One essay from:

D. Brant Sandy and Ronald L. Giese, Jr. *Cracking Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament*. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1995.

- Ronald L. **Giese**, Jr., “Literary Forms and the Old Testament.” (28 pages)

4 short essays from:

Newsom, Carol A., and Sharon H. Ringe. *Women’s Bible Commentary*. Expanded ed. with Apocrypha. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998. (24 pages)

- Danna **Nolan Fewell**, “Joshua,” and “Judges.”
- Amy-Jill **Levine**, “Ruth.”
- Renita J. **Weems**, “Song of Songs.”

2 short essays from:

Newsom, Carol A., Sharon H. Ringe, and Jacqueline E. Lapsley. *Women’s Bible Commentary*. 3rd Edition. Revised and Updated. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2012. (12 pages)

- Kathleen M. **O’Connor**, “Lamentations.” J. Cheryl **Exum**, “Song of Songs.”

Two essays from:

Howard, David M., and Andrew J. Schmutzer, eds. *Reading the Psalms Theologically*. Studies in Scripture & Biblical Theology. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Academic, 2023. (27 pages)

- May **Young**, “The Art of Lament in Lamentations.”
- J. Nathan **Clayton**, “Perceptions of Divine Presence in the Levitical Psalms of Book II: The Paradox of Distance and Proximity.”

Important notes on course reading & instructional format:

For a 3-hour course at NPTS, the maximum standard is 1,000 pages of required reading, which the above represents approximately. Students do not have any *required* Bible reading, but it is *strongly* recommended that students also read through the Old Testament books covered in this course, as we progress through these OT books.

This hybrid & hyflex course usually includes both synchronous (1.5 hours) and asynchronous (1.5 hours) instruction on a weekly basis. Additionally, students should plan to devote about 3 hours each week per credit hour for coursework *outside* of instructional hours. See further the select annotated bibliography posted on Canvas.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The major North Park Theological Seminary degree learning outcomes this course intends to address are:

MACF: “Interpret Scripture with historical and theological integrity in relation to Christian formation.”

MACM: “Interpret Scripture with historical and theological integrity in relation to one’s ministry.”

MATS: “Interpret Scripture with historical and theological integrity for diverse communities and contexts.”

MDIV: “Interpret Scripture with historical and theological integrity for diverse churches, communities, and contexts.”

IDEA OBJECTIVES

North Park University uses the IDEA course rating system to measure student progress towards learning objectives and to measure student satisfaction with their overall learning experience. These course evaluations are administered at the end of the term, and you will be notified by email when they are ready for you to complete. The results of these evaluations are very important to us, and we use them for ongoing efforts to improve the quality of our courses.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Knowledge & Comprehension: By engaging with course lectures and required readings, students will be able to recognize, recall, and identify: the main historical periods, the key geographical areas, the basic literary structures, the central people, places, and events, and the major interpretive issues of the Old Testament books covered in this course. Students will demonstrate these skills by completing a midterm exam study guide and a final exam study guide. Students will also be responsible for Hebrew vowels, consonants, and 30 key Hebrew words. [Knowledge, Comprehension]

2. Application & Analysis: Through a written exegetical assignment, students will describe, summarize, and explain the key exegetical issues and principal scholarly views of a selected text from the OT books covered in this course, and apply these insights to their current or anticipated ministry setting.[Analysis, Application]

3. Analysis & Synthesis: In a written research assignment, students will carefully analyze and synthesize contrasting scholarly perspectives on a chosen text from the OT books studied, integrating textual evidence, secondary sources, and theological reflection.[Analysis, Synthesis]

4. Evaluation: Through a critical writing assignment, students will evaluate differing scholarly interpretations of a selected OT passage and articulate a concise, well-reasoned personal position that engages both the academic discussion and the theological/pastoral implications for today.[Evaluation]

GRADING

The final grade for this course will be computed according to the following percentages:

1. Midterm Exam:	15%
2. Final Exam:	15%
3. Exegetical Paper	30%
a. <i>Paper topic & bibliography</i>	2%
b. <i>Exegetical issue essay</i>	5%
c. <i>Submitted exegetical paper</i>	20%
d. <i>Summary outline & presentation</i>	3%

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| 4. Two Readings Reports: | 20% |
| 5. Two Video Lectures Reports: | 15% |
| 6. Two sets of Discussion Board Posts: | 5% |

Late turn-in policy for the exegetical paper:

The final exegetical paper is due on Canvas by **Wednesday 11/25**, midnight central time. I will accept the exegetical paper, with a late penalty, up until **Wednesday 12/9**, midnight central time. For each day that the paper is late after 11/25 (and up until 12/10), I will **deduct 2%** from the paper's grade. I will **not** accept the paper after 12/10.

Attendance policy:

Only two synchronous class sessions can be missed without penalty to your final grade. The impact of three to four missed sessions is at my discretion as the course instructor. Five absences will result in failure. As such, **attendance** at the Thursday evening sessions will be taken. *Thus, Students should notify the instructor in advance when possible. All absences beyond two may impact the final grade.*

North Park Theological Seminary grading scale:

A	95-100	C	80-83
A-	93-94	C-	78-79
B+	91-92	D+	76-77
B	88-90	D	72-75
B-	86-87	D-	70-71
C+	84-85	F	0-69

Unless otherwise indicated, the following criteria apply:

A to A- *Exceptional work.* The quality achieved through excellence of performance, not merely the fulfillment of the course requirements.

B+ to B- *Above average.* This grade applies to meritorious work, above average, applied to more than the fulfillment of requirements.

C+ to C- *Average.* This grade applies to average work that still fulfills the course requirements.

D+ to D- *Unsatisfactory.* This grade, while indicating the student has completed a course, is to be understood as reflecting below average work. Course work receiving this grade will not be counted toward a degree.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

1. Midterm Exam and Final Exam:

a. Midterm Exam: 15% of final grade

A midterm exam study guide is posted in the Canvas Week 1 module. The study guide covers the lecture material from the first half of the course: Lectures 2-14.

The midterm exam will be available on Canvas at the Week 9 module at 8 am central time on Tuesday 10/21. The completed midterm exam is due by midnight CST on Thursday 10/23, posted on Canvas.

The midterm exam will consist of objective questions: short answer, matching, fill-in-the-blank. The test will be out of 100 points. Every question will flow directly from the study guide. Please take the time to carefully work through the midterm exam study guide in preparation for this exam. No notes or Bible will

be allowed when taking the midterm exam (students will be asked to sign a brief statement to this effect at the top of the exam). There is no time limit for taking the exam, but it should be done in one sitting.

b. Final Exam: 15% of final grade

A final exam study guide will be posted at the Canvas Week 10 module. This study guide will cover the lecture material from the second half of the course: Lectures 15-20

The final exam will be available on Canvas at the Week 16 module at 8 am central time on Monday 12/8. The completed final exam is due by midnight CST on Wednesday 12/10 posted on Canvas.

The final exam will also consist of objective questions: short answer, matching, fill-in-the-blank. The test will be out of 100 points. Every question will flow directly from the study guide. Please take the time to carefully work through the final exam study guide in preparation. No notes or Bible will be allowed when taking the final exam (students will be asked to sign a brief statement to this effect at the top of the exam). There is no time limit for taking the exam, but it should be done in one sitting.

2. Exegetical Paper: 30% of final grade

For detailed instructions on the exegetical paper, please see the separate course handout and overview video, posted at the Home Module on Canvas. A detailed bibliography is also provided on Canvas.

3. Reading Reports: 25% of final grade

Students should keep a record of the completion of their weekly reading requirements, using the reading reports. See below for copies of the reading reports, and the instructions for filling them out. Blank digital copies of the reading reports are posted at the Week 1 and Week 10 Canvas modules.

The completed reading report is due in two stages: the first one (for weeks 1-7) is due posted at the Week 7 Canvas module by class time that week; the second one (for weeks 10-14) is due posted on Canvas at the Week 14 module by Wednesday 11/26.

4. Asynchronous Video Lectures: 15% of final grade

This course is delivered hybrid/hyflex mode, as noted above: most weeks consist of 1.5 hours of weekly live *synchronous* lectures and class discussion time, and also, about 1.5 hours of weekly *asynchronous* lecture time. So, many of the course lectures will be delivered *asynchronously* via recorded videos posted on Canvas, according to the schedule below. Students will receive credit for carefully working through these video lectures.

Blank video lectures reports are posted on Canvas at the Week 1 and at the Week 10 Canvas modules (and included below in the appendices). Video lectures report #1 is due posted on Canvas by class time on Week 7. Video lectures report #2 is due posted on Canvas by Wednesday 11/25 on Week 14.

a. Two Sets of Online Discussion Posts: 5% of final grade

On September 8 (Immersion Week), we will **not** have a synchronous class session. As such, for that week, in addition to the regular weekly course work, there will also be online discussion posts due, following this pattern:

For these three weeks, an **initial reflection** of 400-450 words on a topic of the student's choice from the week's lecture and/or reading material will be due by **Wednesday midnight central time**. Additionally, there will be discussion prompts on Canvas that students can choose to work from. (Students should include the word count with this post)

- b. **Two responses** to two other students' post will then be due by *Saturday midnight central time*. Each response should be at least 200 words. (Students should also include the word counts with these posts)

Each set of weekly posts (1 initial post + 2 responses) will be graded on a 10-point scale following the rubric found in the appendices below.

HYFLEX FORMAT GUIDELINES

In hyflex classrooms, our learning community combines in-person students and students joining the classroom live online. Toward cultivating a respectful, accessible environment for mutual learning, we observe the following: All students come prepared for active, informed participation. Students joining live online: think of your physical space as an extension of the classroom. Ensure that you are in a private, stable location that is free of visual and audio distractions. It's important that we all respect the integrity of classroom discussion. (For this same reason, please do not record class sessions.) Please keep your camera and microphone on through the class session. Consider purchasing a quality microphone or headset to improve the quality of your sound. (Attendance in class assumes that you are present in this way.)

Students joining in the classroom: Remember that the class and classroom extend to colleagues joining by live online; it's important to remain visible as well. Please engage the full learning community.

Registering for the campus section entails a commitment to joining the class in person. If you are too sick to come in person, or if you have an unavoidable scheduling conflict, please use one of your excused absences for the semester.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

Plagiarism – the use of another's work as one's own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet. Copying another's answers on an examination. Deliberately allowing another to copy one's answers or work. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present. Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments. For additional information, see the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#), pp. 25–26.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, **please email the Disability Access Specialist (ada@northpark.edu) or contact by phone (773-244-5737)**. Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes accommodations. [This is the webpage](#) for Disability Resources.

TITLE IX

Students who believe they may have experienced sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking should contact the Title IX Coordinator (773) 244-5664 or TitleIX@northpark.edu to learn more about reporting options, resources, and support services.

As members of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty members are private resources meaning we are legally obligated to share information about the behavior reported above with the University's Title IX coordinator. If you are unsure whether you want your concerns disclosed to the Title IX Coordinator, we encourage you to contact Counseling Support Services at (773) 244-4897 or counseling@northpark.edu. Please refer to North Park's [Safe Community](#) site for reporting, contact information, and further details.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as "I" until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of "I" will automatically be changed to "F." For the full policy, see page 15 of the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1—8/25: Course Introduction

By Tuesday class time:

- **Read:**
 - Satterthwaite & McConville, "What are the Histories? A Survey of Recent Scholarship,"
 - "The Ancient Near East, 1550-63 BC"
 - Giese, "Literary Forms and the Old Testament"

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Lecture 1: Course Introduction & Overview
 - Interactive Discussion
-

Week 2—9/1: Some Biblical Hebrew Basics

By Tuesday class time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 2: Hebrew Vowels & Consonants
- **Read:**
 - Pratico & Van Pelt, "Hebrew Alphabet," "Hebrew Vowels."

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Lecture 3: 30 Biblical Hebrew Key Word
- Interactive Discussion

Week 3—9/7-11: Backgrounds and Joshua

Important note: *No Thursday evening synchronous class meeting this week because it is the fall on-campus immersion week*

The *asynchronous* work due for this week:

By Wednesday 9/9, midnight central time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 4: The World Behind the Text
 - Lecture 5: Joshua—Beginning Life & Worship in the Land
- **Read:**
 - Hamilton, “Joshua”
- **Write:**
 - At discussion board #1 (online Canvas module for Week 2) **post a reflection (400-450 words)** on a topic of your choice from the lecture and/or the readings due for this week. (Include the word count with your post)

By midnight central time, Saturday 9/12:

- **Write:**
 - At discussion board #1 **post two responses** to two other students’ reflections. **Each** response should be at least **200 words**. (Include the word counts with your posts)

Week 4—9/15: Joshua and Ruth

By Tuesday class time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 6: Joshua—Literary Structure & Key Themes
- **Read:**
 - Hamilton, “Ruth,” “Judges”
 - Nolan Fewell, “Joshua,”
 - Levine, “Ruth”

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Interactive Discussion
- Lecture 7: Ruth

Week 5—9/22: Judges and Samuel

By Tuesday class time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 8: Judges
- **Read:**
 - Hamilton, “1 Samuel,” “2 Samuel”
 - Nolan Fewell, “Judges”

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Interactive Discussion
- Lecture 9: 1-2 Samuel

Week 6—9/29: Chronicles

By Tuesday class time:

- **Read:**
 - Hamilton, “1-2 Chronicles”

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Lecture 10: 1-2 Chronicles
 - Interactive Discussion
-

Week 7—10/6: Ezra-Nehemiah and Esther

By Tuesday class time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 11: Ezra-Nehemiah
- **Read:**
 - Hamilton, “Ezra-Nehemiah,” “Esther”
- **Post:**
 - **Reading report #1**
 - **Video lectures report #1**

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Interactive Discussion
- Lecture 12: Esther

By Saturday by midnight:

- **Post:**
 - **Your paper passage choice and your annotated bibliography** as a PDF at the Canvas Week 7 module.
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Week 8—10/12-16: Reading Week

No Class

Week 9—10/19-23: Midterm Exam

No Tuesday evening synchronous class session this week.

Monday, 10/19, 8 am, central time:

Midterm exam posted on Canvas.

Saturday, 10/19-24 (midnight, central time):

Completed midterm due, posted on Canvas

Students should also be working on their **exegetical papers** during this week.

Week 10—10/27: Poetry and Job

By Tuesday class time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 13: Introduction to Hebrew Poetry
- **Read:**
 - Estes, “Job”

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Interactive Discussion
 - Lecture 14: Job
-

Week 11—11/6: Psalms

By Tuesday class time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 15: Psalms in General
- **Read:**
 - Estes, “Psalms” and Clayton “Perceptions of Divine Presence”
- **Post:** Your exegetical issue essay as a PDF at the Canvas Week 11 module.

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Interactive discussion
 - Lecture 16 Supplement: Reading the Psalms as a Book
-

Week 12—11/13: Psalms & Proverbs

By Tuesday class time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 16: Psalms—Types & Canonical Shape
- **Read:**
 - Estes, “Proverbs”

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Interactive Discussion
 - Lecture 17: Proverbs
-

Week 13—11/20: Lamentations & Ecclesiastes

By Tuesday class time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 18: Lamentations
- **Read:**
 - O’Connor, “Lamentations”
 - Young, “The Art of Lament in Lamentations”
 - Estes, “Ecclesiastes”

Tuesday synchronous session:

- Lecture 19: Ecclesiastes

Week 14—11/25-26: Song of Songs

By Tuesday 11/25, midnight central time:

- **Watch** online videos for:
 - Lecture 20: Song of Songs
- **Read:**
 - Weems, “Song of Songs,” Exum, “Song of Songs,” Estes, “Song of Songs”
- **Write:**
 - At discussion board #2 (online Canvas module for Week 14) **post a reflection (400-450 words)** on a topic of your choice from the lecture and/or the readings due for this week. (Include the word count with your post)
- **Post:**
 - **Reading report #2**
 - **Video lectures report #2**

By Wednesday 11/26, midnight central time:

- **Write:**
 - At discussion board #2 post **two responses** to two other students’ reflections. **Each** response should be at least **200 words**. (Include the word counts with your posts)

Week 15—12/3-4: Exegetical Paper & Student Presentations

By Monday 11/30, midnight central time:

- **Post** on Canvas:
 - **Your exegetical paper**
 - **The short summary of your exegetical paper**

Tuesday 12/1 synchronous session:

- Student exegetical paper presentations

Week 16—12/7-10: Final Exam

Monday 12/7, 8 am central time:

- Final exam posted on Canvas.

Wednesday 12/9, midnight central time:

- Completed final exam due, posted on Canvas
- **Last day** that the exegetical paper can be turned in *late* (see late policy stated above)