**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHRIDGE**

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**RS 101: THE BIBLE (#14842)**

**Spring 2017**

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T-Th 8:00am.– 9:15am SH 384

Office Hours-Thursday 11:0pm.-12:00pm SN 229

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Course Description:

The primary focus of this course will be on the study of major concepts represented in the Bible and religion. A special attention will be given to the critical analysis of key Biblical texts from the historical, political, ecclesiastical and theological points of view. Several approaches to the Biblical text and methods of interpretation will be discussed.

**RS. 101 Student Learning Outcomes:**

Survey of the basic content and major themes of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), New Testament, and Apocryphal writings.

1. Students will demonstrate familiarity with the basic contents and major themes in the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and Apocrypha.

2. Students will be able to describe the main events, people, and political and religious institutions (priesthood, kingship, prophecy) of the societies that produced biblical literature.

3. Students will demonstrate a basic level of proficiency in the historical, geographical, social, and political context in which biblical books were constructed.

4. Students will be able to recognize and to articulate (orally and in writing) the difference between academic approaches to the Bible and a personal, devotional approach.

5. Students will be able to demonstrate a basic level of proficiency in the dominant theories regarding the compilation of biblical texts and the literary history of the Hebrew Bible, Apocrypha, and New Testament.

**GE Student Learning Outcomes**

Goal: Students will understand the rich history and diversity of human knowledge, discourse and achievements of their own and other cultures as they are expressed in the arts, literatures, religions, and philosophy.

Students will:

1. Explain and reflect critically upon the human search for meaning, values, discourse and expression in one or more eras/stylistic periods or cultures;
2. Analyze, interpret, and reflect critically upon ideas of value, meaning, discourse and

expression from a variety of perspectives from the arts and/or humanities;

1. Produce work/works of art that communicate to a diverse audience through a demonstrated

understanding and fluency of expressive forms;

1. Demonstrate ability to engage and reflect upon their intellectual and creative development

within the arts and humanities;

1. Use appropriate critical vocabulary to describe and analyze works of artistic expression,

literature, philosophy, or religion and a comprehension of the historical context within which

a body of work was created or a tradition emerged;

1. Describe and explain the historical and/or cultural context within which a body of work was

created or a tradition emerged.

 **Notice: *Special emphasis will be given to the analytical and critical thinking of the students. All the exams will be based on the ability of students to apply their knowledge. The note- taking is absolutely crucial. All the exams will be heavily reliant on the lecture notes. The text book reading will contribute only partially to the successful completion of this course.***

Course Requirements:

 • **Tests and Exams:**

There will be two main examinations: a midterm exam and a final exam. For the dates of the exams see Moodle. All exams are on the Moodle, however students need to be present in class during the test. The final grade for the course will be calculated based on the average of online quizzes, the midterm and the final.

**Online quizzes:**

Besides the Midterm and the Final there will also be online quizzes worth 40 points total. All online quizzes will be based on the reading material from the textbook. We will have one online quiz before the midterm (20 pts.) and one before the final (20pts.). Students will take total of 2 online quizzes during the entire course.

Each online quiz will have 20 questions (1 point each question, multiple choice). All tests are online, however students need to be present in class during the test (you may use your reading notes during the test). A Study guide for the Midterm and the Final exams will be posted on the Moodle a week prior to the test.

**Grading**: your grades will be computed based on the following:

a. Your final grade will be the computed average of the online quizzes, the midterm and final tests.

b. An **extra credit** (optional) a written research paper (5 pages min.) plus an oral presentation in class will be available for the course. It will give you 20 extra points for the overall grade. Students need to submit/upload (see Moodle link for uploading) a 5 page minimum written paper on the Moodle and present the paper orally in class. You may choose a topic of your interest, (consult with the lecturer) or select one from the list of suggested topics (see Moodle: Topics).

Presentations are 15-20 minutes long, followed by a Q&A with the class. Failure to submit the written version of your presentation online will result in 0 extra credit. It is important to inform the instructor about your decision to do the presentation to get an assigned date. Those who sign up early will get the latest date possible.

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| Paper, plus Oral Presentation  | Extra Credit 20 points |
| Reading Quiz 1 | 20 points |
| Reading Quiz 2 | 20 points |
| Midterm Exam  | 60 Points  |
| Final Exam | 60 Points  |
| Attendance  | 20 points  |
| **Course total**  | **180 +20 Extra Credit**  |

**Academic Integrity:**

Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. Any form of plagiarism will result in a failing grade. The following violations of academic integrity will be addressed formally:

* Submitting the same work in whole or in part in more than one course
* Submitting as one’s own work material (s) obtained from another source;
* Unattributed quotations or ideas from published, unpublished or electronic sources;
* Unauthorized collaboration in preparing assignments;
* Cheating on exams by any means: using search engines, lecture notes etc. during the test

Grading scale: Plus/minus grading system will be implemented. There will be no A+ grade.

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| **Highest** | **Lowest** | **Letter** |
| 100.00 % | 93.00 % | A |
| 92.99 % | 90.00 % | A- |
| 89.99 % | 87.00 % | B+ |
| 86.99 % | 83.00 % | B |
| 82.99 % | 80.00 % | B- |
| 79.99 % | 77.00 % | C+ |
| 76.99 % | 73.00 % | C |
| 72.99 % | 70.00 % | C- |
| 69.99 % | 67.00 % | D+ |
| 66.99 % | 60.00 % | D |
| 59.99 % | 0.00 % | F |

Required Textbooks:



1. ***An Introduction to the Bible: A Journey Into Three Worlds****.* 8th EditionChristian E. Hauer, & William A. Young--Authors; Prentice Hall--Publishers

1. A version of the Bible that contains the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), Apocrypha and Christian Canon (New Testament)

 **TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

## Week 1

 1. Introduction

 2. Class format

 3. Introductory Lecture ***-***What Is The Bible?

Read textbook chapter 1.

 Week 2

1. Ways of studying the Bible
2. The world of the Hebrew Bible
3. The Bible and ancient civilizations: Egypt, Mesopotamia, Sumer, Babylon

Read Textbook chapter 2

Week 3

1. Genres of Biblical texts
2. The Garden of Eden and the Historical Approach.
3. The Bible and the concept of evil.

Read Textbook chapter 3

Week 4

1. Exodus: Moses and the Law.
2. Symbolism and ritual
3. The Land of Canaan and the nation of Israel.

Read Textbook Chapter 4

 Week 5

1. Kings, Prophets and Priests. The Babylonian captivity and the Messianic age.

Read Textbook Chapter 6

 Week 6

1. The *Ketuvim* (Writings) Literary analysis. Psalms and Song of Songs.
2. The wisdom literature: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes.

Read Textbook Chapter 7

Week 7

1. The Hebrew Bible and Hellenism.
2. The Hebrew Bible and the Roman World.
3. Jewish religious, intellectual and political atmosphere in the Common Era

Read Chapter 8

**Extra Credit Oral Presentations**

**Midterm Text Book Quiz (Online test)**

Extra Credit Oral Presentations

Preparation for the Midterm (Reading Quiz 1)

**Midterm Test**

Week 8

Spring Recess

Week 9

Read Chapter 9, 10

1. The Gospels and the Canon
2. The Apocrypha

Week 10

Read Chapter 11 and 12

1. The religious, political and intellectual milieu of the New Testament
2. Who is Jesus? Debates and Controversies.

Week 11

1. The quest for historical Jesus
2. Jesus’ message
3. Jesus and the Messianic prophecies

Read Chapter 13

Week 12

1. Development of early Christian doctrines
2. The Gnostic problem

Week 13

1. Christianity and Rome
2. The Historicity of the New Testament

Read Chapter 14

**Extra Credit Oral Presentations**

Week 14

1. Paul, his letters and teaching
2. Various Christian Traditions and schools of thought
3. The book of Revelation and the Apocalypse

Read Chapter 15

**Extra Credit Oral Presentations**

Week 15

 Course review and preparation for the final exam

**Final Text Book Quiz (in class)**.

 Week 16

 **FINAL EXAMINATION ON May 18, 8:00am to 10:00 am #384**