

Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.

Prophecy in the Bible and Post-Biblical Literature

Hebrew 2703 / Jewish Studies 2703 - Fall 2017

Meeting Time/Location:

Instructor:

Office and office hours:

Course Description

An intensive investigation into the dynamics of Israelite prophecy and apocalyptic in the context of ancient Near Eastern culture.

General Education

This course fulfills the University's General Education ("GE") requirement for both "Literature" and "Diversity: Global Studies." Below are the university-defined goals and expected learning outcomes for each.

Literature

Goals: Students evaluate significant texts from the 2nd-1st millennium BCE ancient Near East in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; and critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students analyze, interpret, and critique significant literary works from this period and locale.
2. Through reading, discussing, and writing about literature, students appraise and evaluate the personal and social values of their own and other cultures.

Diversity: Global Studies

Goals: Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of the ancient Near East in the 2nd-1st millennium BCE.
2. Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

All of the above will be fulfilled by students' critical engagement of the phenomenon of Israelite prophecy and ancient near eastern prophetic contexts through reading, writing, and discussing biblical literature in the diverse contexts of ancient near eastern culture.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Articulate the essential features of Israelite prophecy as a distinctive social phenomenon in the context of ancient Near Eastern culture.
2. Trace the evolution of the phenomenon in Israel from its rise to its decline and ultimate transformation into apocalyptic.
3. Identify some of the nuances and idiosyncrasies of certain individual prophets.
4. Identify the primary contributions of the prophetic phenomenon to Jewish, Christian, and Islamic religions.

To achieve these objectives, class lecture coupled with class discussion will form the core of this course, supplemented by outside readings and written assignments. The readings will include primary and secondary sources, providing the student opportunity for exposure to the prophetic literature at first hand while also supplying input from contemporary scholarship.

Measuring Achievement of the Objectives

- 20%—Homework and Daily Quizzes
- 20%—Writings Assignments
- 20%—Midterm I (Thursday, Sept 21)
- 20%—Midterm II (Thursday, Oct 26)
- 20%—Final Exam (Monday, Dec 11, 12:00–1:45pm)

Homework

Guides to the assigned readings and questions on these readings will be posted for each class period on Carmen. Both items are designed to make assigned reading more rewarding and more focused. Before coming to class each day, students are expected to:

1. Read the assignment listed for that date.
2. Read the supplementary notes and materials as posted on Carmen.
3. Answer the reading questions posted on Carmen, and have the answers ready to turn (hard copy) in at the start of class. Since a large portion of the Midterms and Final exam are taken directly from them, it is in each student's best interest to answer all reading questions thoroughly.
4. Be prepared to take a daily quiz at the beginning of class. The remainder of class will be spent discussing the assigned reading and other related topics.

Quizzes

Daily quizzes will be based directly on the homework questions assigned for that day, which in turn are based on the readings and supplementary notes posted on Carmen. The purpose of the quizzes is to make sure the student is doing the assigned reading. They are designed neither to be picky nor to focus on minor details. If a student reads the material carefully and answers the questions thoroughly, there is no reason the student should not do well on every quiz. These daily quizzes will average between two to four questions and will be graded 0 to 10 where 10 is an A (all correct), 9 is a B (one item wrong), 8 is a C (two items wrong), etc.

Writing Assignments

There will be a series of short formal written assignments at intervals throughout the course. Specific expectations for each assignment will vary and will be posted on Carmen. The written assignment must be typed, DOUBLE-spaced, 12-point font, with 1-inch margins (no fancy fonts - please use standard fonts such as Times New Roman, Cambria, Calibri, and Arial). Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date. These assignments will be graded and returned to the student for possible revision. If the student's written work requires a revision - particularly with regard to spelling, grammar, syntax, and style - the professor will indicate if further work is needed. This aspect of the course is designed to help students improve their skills in written communication.

Exams

Exams are for the most part NOT cumulative. The content of each exam will derive from the daily readings, reading guides, and questions in addition to material from class discussions.

The final exam is set by the university as Monday, Dec 11, 12:00–1:45pm. While I do not foresee the university changing the scheduled time, feel free to check their website (<https://registrar.osu.edu/scheduling/SchedulingContent/AU17Finals.pdf>). *If a student is unable to take the final exam at the specified time, he or she must make other arrangements the first week of class, if possible, or drop the class.*

Absences

The student is responsible for all information, materials, and class discussion that occur, even in his or her absence. The absent student must make arrangements with other class members to obtain notes or to be apprised of class developments or changes when absent.

No late assignments will be accepted and no quizzes may be retaken if missed. Since absences are often unavoidable, 10% of all quizzes and assignments will be dropped before computing the student's grade (if all quizzes are taken by the student, the lowest 10% will be dropped).

Textbooks

Required—Bible (a hard-copy, printed Bible is required during class sessions).

- a. Most translations are acceptable (e.g., Revised English, New English, [New] Jerusalem, New International, [New] Jewish Publication Society, New American, [New] Revised Standard, New American Standard, [New] King James, English Standard Version, Young's Literal). However, paraphrases are not acceptable for the purposes of this course (e.g., New Living, Message, Common English, Good News). Hopefully there will be a sufficient variety in the class so that the different features of various translations will become apparent during the course of the semester.
- b. For those who do not own a Bible and who are unfamiliar with the options available, note that Bibles are readily available at used book stores and that a number of websites can provide brief introductions to the distinctive features of available options, such as <http://www.bible-researcher.com/versions.html>. Please feel free to consult me with any further questions about this.

Recommended—Meier, Samuel A. *Themes and Transformations in Old Testament Prophecy*.

There is more in this book than we will cover in class, and we will be covering much in

class that is not in this book, but some students in the past have found the book to be a helpful supplement to class discussion.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors are required to report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc>).

Disabilities

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Ave. Telephone: 292-3307 || TDD: 292-0901 || www.ods.ohio-state.edu

FOR YOUR SAFETY: the OSU Student Safety/Escort Service is available after 7pm by dialing 292-3322.

Provisional Schedule of topics and readings

The following schedule is tentative and designed to provide an overview of the course. Specific assignments and discussion topics will be posted on Carmen. While discussion topics may differ slightly from what appears below, the dates on which assignments and readings are due should remain as printed below.

Week One - Prophetic Speech Forms (Covenant Lawsuit, War Oracle; Prose and Poetry) - Zephaniah.

Aug 22 First day of class

Aug 24 Assignment due: Zephaniah 1-3

Week Two - Prophetic Speech Forms - Continued (Divine Council and Messenger Speech; Lament; Allegory, and others) - Amos and Hosea

Aug 29 Assignment due: Amos 1-4

Aug 31 Assignment due: Amos 5-9

Week Three - Prophetic Forms – Conclusion - Amos and Hosea

Sept 5 Assignment due: Hosea 1-7

Sept 7 Assignment due: Hosea 8-14

Week Four – Deuteronomistic (Dtr) Historian's presentation of prophets (terms: *nabi'*, *'ish 'elohim*, *ro'eh*, *hozeh*, etc.) - Elijah and Elisha narratives.

Sept 12 Assignment due: 1 Kings 17-2 Kings 2

- Sept 14 Assignment due: 2 Kings 3-11
- Week Five - Dtr Historian's presentation of prophets (continued) - Samuel.
 Sept 19 Assignment due: 1 Samuel 1-3, 7-12
 Sept 21 First Midterm Exam
- Week Six - Extra-biblical prophets (Mesopotamia, Egypt, Canaan) - Balaam
 Sept 26 Assignment due: Mari letters, Neo-Assyrian oracles, Northwest Semitic inscriptions
 Sept 28 Assignment due: Numbers 11-12, 22-24
- Week Seven – Eighth Century Prophets in Judah – Isaiah and Micah
 Oct 3 Assignment due: Isaiah 1-11
 Oct 5 Assignment due: Micah 1-7
- Week Eight – Seventh Century Prophets (The Problem of the "False" Prophets; Jeremiah)
 Oct 10 Assignment due: Jeremiah 1, 13, 16, 18-20, 24, 26-29
 Oct 12 Break
- Week Nine - Seventh Century and Sixth Century Prophets (Jeremiah [cont], Habakkuk, Ezekiel; the decline of prophecy; relative social status of prophet and king; shifting social contexts)
 Oct 17 Assignment due: Jer 32, 36-43
 Oct 19 Assignment due: Habakkuk 1-3; Ezekiel 1-5
- Week Ten – Sixth Century Prophets Exilic Crisis (Ezekiel conc)
 Oct 24 Assignment due: Ezekiel 8-12, 16-19
 Oct 26 Second Midterm
- Week Eleven – Exilic and Post-exilic Crisis (Second Isaiah, rise of sectarianism; rivalry among competing social/power structures), Messianism - Ezekiel, Haggai Zechariah, and Malachi
 Oct 31 Assignment due: Isaiah 40-48
 Nov 2 Assignment due: Haggai 1-2; Zechariah 1-8
- Week Twelve – Post Exilic Crisis and Rise of Apocalyptic (Malachi, Daniel)
 Nov 7 Assignment due: Malachi 1-3
 Nov 9 Assignment due: Daniel 1-2, 4-5, 7-12
- Week Thirteen – Second Temple Prophecy and Apocalyptic
 Nov 14 Assignment due: Selected Qumran texts
 Nov 16 Assignment due: Selected Second Temple texts (Josephus, Greco-Roman world)
- Week Fourteen - Second Temple Prophecy and Apocalyptic (conc)
 Nov 21 Assignment due: New Testament (selections)
 Nov 23 Thanksgiving Break
- Week Fifteen – The Zenith of Apocalyptic (Revelation, II Ezra)
 Nov 28 Assignment due: Revelation 1-2, 4-9, 19-22
 Nov 30 Assignment due: 2 Ezra (selections)
- Week Sixteen – The Heritage of Prophecy and Apocalyptic
 Dec 5 Assignment due: Lucian's "Alexander the False Prophet"