



**OTS 502-30: Theories and Practice of Old Testament Exegesis
(Pre-requisite OTS 501)
Semester: Spring 2009
Time: 7:30am-10:00am
Location: High Point CAPE**

Instructor: Andrew M. Mbuvi, Ph.D.
1301 Lincoln Dr.
Off. # 144
High Point, NC

OFFICE HOURS
Tuesday 2:00pm – 6:00pm
Saturday 1:30-2:30; 5:00pm-6:00pm
(All other times by appointment only)

Office Tel: 336-886-4974 (Ext. 6603)
Email: ambuvi@shawu.edu

WELCOME!

Students at Shaw University Divinity School are driven and mature learners, who are committed to learning for the sake of Jesus Christ and the Church. This class will invite you to broaden and deepen your understanding of the Old Testament Exegesis, as we learn together what God's Word has to say to us in the contemporary world.

DIVINITY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Shaw University Divinity School provides Christian theological education dedicated to the preparation of clergy and laity for clinical, pastoral, and teaching/research ministry professions. The Divinity School is committed to the development of a research institute whose focus is leadership in the “practice of ministry” in the African American community, particularly in the African American church.

M.DIV MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Master of Divinity degree is to prepare persons for ordained ministry, for chaplaincy, general pastoral and religious leadership responsibilities in congregations and other settings, and to prepare some students for admission to advanced programs oriented to theological research and teaching. The purpose is consistent with the mission of Shaw University Divinity School; the Master of Divinity program focuses on leadership in the “practice of ministry,” particularly in the African American church.

MRE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Master of Religious Education degree is to equip persons for competent leadership in Christian Education to serve congregational ministries and other religious institutions. This purpose is consistent with the mission of Shaw University Divinity School; the Master of Religious Education program focuses on leadership in the “practice of ministry,” particularly in the African American Church.

Program Goals

MRE Program Goals	MDiv Program Goals
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to equip students with the capacity for critical and constructive theological reflection regarding the content and processes of educational ministry; 2. to help students understand the educational, social, and behavioral sciences that undergird educational practice, as well as the cultural contexts in which educational ministry occurs; 3. to assist students with personal growth and spiritual maturity; and 4. to provides skills in teaching and in design, administration, and assessment of educational programming. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to provide students with an intellectual atmosphere and a comprehensive, discriminating understanding of our religious heritage; 2. to enhance student training for Christian ministry, mindful of global, and diverse cross cultural, and non-American Christianities, and interaction with other faith traditions; 3. to support students' development in the personal and spiritual capacities necessary for pastoral and religious leadership, advancing growth in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness; 4. to expand programmatic activities, services, and academic programming to enhance student capacity for ministerial and public leadership.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The focus of this course is learning the methods of interpretation of the books of the Old Testament. In complementing the OT Survey class that introduced students to history of ancient Israel, this course will introduce the students to the critical methods employed in studying the text, with a primary emphasis on “literary analysis.”

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:	Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (Assessment Tools)	Linkage to MDiv Program Learning Outcomes	Linkage to MRE Program Learning Outcomes
1. identify the different <i>genre</i> found in the OT.	Exam Questions, Reflection Papers	1, 2	2, 3
2. recognize the distinguishing features of each <i>genre</i> and how to read and interpret each of the <i>genres</i> .	Exam Questions, Reflection Papers	1, 2	2, 3
3. distinguish between the different “critical methodologies” that are used today in the interpretation of the OT	Exam Questions, Reflection Papers	1, 2	2, 3
4. identify the benefits and drawbacks of each of the different methods of OT interpretation	Exam Questions, Reflection Papers	1, 2,3	2, 3
5. know the different presuppositions that underlie the different interpretation methods applied to the OT	Exam Questions, Reflection Paper	1, 2, 3	2, 3
6. show a clear understanding of the history and state of African and African-American interpretations of the OT	Exam Questions, Reflection Papers	4	1

7. demonstrate ability to write an exegesis paper that reflects a good grasp of the background of the biblical text and its meaningful present application	Reflection Papers	1, 2, 3, 4	2, 3, 4
--	-------------------	------------	---------

SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

This is a writing intensive class and the student is strongly encouraged to review **Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*** to familiarize him/herself with the footnoting styles, correct citation of sources and format of writing a research paper. The instructor also provides supplementary documents available on Blackboard to aid the student in this regard.

With the main objective of this course being to develop the skill of doing exegesis in the Old Testament, by the end of the course students should accomplish it by:

1. become familiar with the diverse approaches for interpreting the OT
2. know the different Genre of the OT and what method of interpretation best fits each Genre
3. becoming familiar with the best books and resources for the work
4. be able to understand the significance of language in interpretation
5. develop mechanism that will aid in meaningful expositions of the text

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. **Bible - Please bring a Bible to class each week.** I require that you have a study Bible in a recent translation for this class. Among the best are the New Interpreter's Bible Study Bible (New Revised Standard Version), HarperCollins Study Bible (NRSV), the New Oxford Annotated Bible (NRSV), and the Zondervan NIV Study Bible (New International Version). For the purposes of study in this course, **please avoid using the Authorized Version (King James or New King James), any paraphrase (the Living Bible), or a paraphrase-like translation (Today's English Version, New Living Translation).**
2. Michael Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis; A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001)
3. D. Brent Sandy and Ronald L. Giese, *Cracking the Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament* (Nashville:

Broadman and Holman, 1995)

4. Richard Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* (3rd ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001)

Or W. Randolph Tate, *Interpreting the Bible: A Handbook of Terms and Methods* (Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 2006)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

5. Douglas Stuart, *Old Testament Exegesis: A Primer for Students and Pastors* (3rd ed. Philadelphia; Westminster, 1980)
6. Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth* (3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993)

WEBSITE

There will be a website component in this course. Students will be enrolled in the University Blackboard course site. Some of the required readings will be posted in the Blackboard site for the students to download and/or print at their convenience. Some of the assignments will also be posted in the Blackboard site. Students are expected to participate in all Blackboard components of the course which can be accessed from any internet connection anywhere. <http://www.shawuniversity.edu>

ATTENDANCE

The University's rule on absences will be observed in this course. During the semester, no student may have **unexcused absences** in excess of the number of times the course meets in a week (1). **Excused absences** will be granted only in extraordinary circumstances. In order to get the most out of the course, students must keep excused absences to a minimum. It will be very difficult for a student to complete the course if he or she misses more than three class meetings.

Please see the instructor **before you miss a fourth class meeting**. It is the responsibility of the student to turn in assignments on or before the due date if he or she must be absent on the due date. It is also the responsibility of the student to secure class notes and any handouts from any missed class meeting.

GRADING SCALE

The following grading scale will be used for all assignments:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	below 60

I An incomplete is given only when extraordinary circumstances (extended illness, death in the family, etc.) prevent the student from completing all the assignments before the end of the semester. An incomplete must be made up before the end of the following semester, or the grade will automatically change to F, and the course must be repeated.

Please note: Any student who receives an incomplete, regardless of the reason, will **not** be able to receive an A in the course. The highest grade possible for a student who receives an incomplete will be a B.

All written assignments should conform to the guidelines in the Divinity School's "Guidelines for Written Assignments," available in the Divinity School Office. The following criteria will be used in evaluating all written assignments.

A Indicates the student has significantly exceeded the minimum expectations for the assignment. The student has consulted the relevant scholars and has consistently entered into dialogue with these scholars, offering his/her critique of the relevant sources. All the required parts of the assignment are present, and the written presentation is consistently above average, with no errors in spelling or grammar.

B Indicates the student has exceeded the minimum expectations for the assignment. The student has consulted relevant scholars and has entered into dialogue with most of them, offering his/her critique of the sources. All the required parts of the assignment are present, and the written presentation is above average, with no errors in spelling or grammar.

C Indicates the student has met the minimum expectations for the assignment. The student has consulted relevant scholars and has represented their views well, at least occasionally offering a critique of the sources. The required parts of the assignment are present, and the written presentation is acceptable, with minimal errors in spelling or grammar.

D Indicates the student has not met the minimum expectations for the assignment in one or more of the following ways: significant critical scholarship is not consulted; significant segments of the assignment are missing or inadequate; or the written presentation is inadequate in grammar, spelling, or format.

F Indicates the work is not acceptable for graduate-level study.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Preparation, Attendance, Participation

It is expected that the student will have read the assigned texts before coming to the class each week. As evidence of the reading, a **ONE PAGE SUMMARY OF THE ASSIGNED READINGS will be due at the beginning of each class session.** It is also expected that the student will participate regularly in class discussion. Students are expected to attend every class meeting, arrive on time, and remain the entire class session.

Dates: Each Week – **Assigned 1 Page summary due.**

Total Weight: **10%**

2. Response Papers

There will be **THREE response paper assignments** (5 pp each) due for this class. Each assignment will deal with a specific *genre* and its interpretation. Each assignment will consist of a select passage or text from the OT that the student will use in applying a given method of interpretation. Paper styles (footnotes, citations, references, etc) will follow the Chicago style as laid out in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Seventh Edition: University of Chicago Press Staff, 1996, 2007) and will be evaluated on this basis also.

Dates: See Below

Weight: **20% each** (60% total)

3. Oral Presentation

There will be **ONE, 3pp orally presented Final exegetical paper DRAFT** in the class (10 min max per student).

Date: See Below

Weight: **5%**

4. Final Exegetical Paper

There will be **ONE Exegetical Sermon paper** (10-15pp) based on the passage presented orally in class earlier. (See Gorman, *Elements*, ch.2 on choosing a passage and see Sandy and Giese, ch.14)

Date: See below

Weight: **25%**

Due Dates

All assignments are due on the dates indicated in the course schedule below. Late assignments without excused reason from the instructor will result in a reduction of grade points. For every day a paper is late, it will lose a grade point. **After 7 days, no paper will be accepted** and student will end up with a zero grade for that assignment.

- Mar 7 Worldviews, Postmodern values and Interpretation
Reading: Sandy and Giese, ch.7 (**Summary**)
Sandy and Giese, ch.8
- March 14 Meaning- “In Front of”, “Behind” or “In” the Text?
Reading: Sandy and Giese, ch. 6 (**Summary**)
Gorman, *Elements*, ch. 4. Due: **Response Paper #2**
(Synchronic and Diachronic Analysis of
Genesis 11:1-9)
- March 21 Interpreting Apocalyptic Literature
Daniel, Isa 24-27, Ezek 38-39, Zech 9-11; 12-14, Amos 5:16-20
Reading: Sandy and Giese, ch.9 (**Summary**)
Soulen and Soulen, “Apocalyptic.”
- March 28 Emerging Strategies of Reading the OT
Global Perspective – African, Asian, African-American, Latino, etc
Reading: Levison and Pope-Levison, “Global Perspective,” in Joel Green, *Hearing* (ch.16) B/b
(**Summary**)
- April 4 Emerging Strategies of Reading the OT (*Cont.*)
Reading: Green, ch.17 (B/b) (**Summary**)
Due: **Response Paper #3**
(Interpretation of Wisdom Literature -
Proverbs 8)
- April 11 **EASTER BREAK (No Class)**
- April 18 **Class Oral Presentations and Discussions**
(3pp Draft of final exegetical paper)
- April 25 OT and Pastoral Preaching
Reading: Sandy and Giese, ch.14 (**Summary**)
- May 2 Role of the Holy Spirit In Interpretation
Reading: Gasque & LaSor, *Scripture, Tradition and Interpretation*, (B/b)
(**Summary**)
Due: **Final Exegetical Paper**
- May 9 Commencement

Response and Final Exegetical Papers Explained

Choose from one of passages in the three response papers and develop a complete exegetical paper that shows how the passages is interpreted by the different methods and how the passage can be applied to today's situation in a faithful rendering of it original situation – application.

1. **Narrative Plot** – Do a narrative plot outline for the book of Jonah showing the points at which you identify the different aspects – Introduction, Crisis, Intensification, Climax, Unraveling, Denouement, Resolution, and Normal. Make sure that you explain the reasons why you choose to identify the points of transition in the narrative.
2. **Synchronic Vs Diachronic Interpretation of Genesis 11:1-9** – While the former deals with the final form of the text and its present context, the latter seeks to figure out what the historical origin of the text is. It also seeks to find parallels with similar documents from a similar period of the text's origin.
3. **Exegeting Wisdom literature** (Proverbs 8) – this paper will reflect the students grasp of the nature of non-literal language and the use of symbolic and poetic language in the Wisdom literature.
4. **Oral Presentation -- This is NOT a sermon.** Choose of one of the three passages, and work on the exegetical aspects that looks at, i) the history of interpretation of the passage, and ii) the application of the different forms of criticism on chosen passage(Form, Redaction, Source, Literary, etc.), iii) role of original context (of text, narrative, psalm, etc) in helping to understand the text.

A written copy of the paper (3pp max) on which the oral presentation is based will be turned in for grading after the presentation. This will follow the format in M. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis*, 26.

5. **Final Exegetical Paper – Based on your exegetical findings above, this will be** the application of the methods of OT interpretation to the passage, an interpretation of the text in light of the present while paying careful attention to the original Biblical context. This is where **implications/insights for preaching from the text are highlighted.**

A minimum of **5 scholarly sources** (journals, textbooks, etc) will be expected to be cited for this assignment. While scholarly websites do exist, such sites as *Wikipedia* do NOT count as scholarly sources for this class. Also such commentaries as *Matthew Henry's* do NOT count for this for this class. If you are uncertain that a source is of a scholarly nature consult the professor before using it. You can also check on the “Electronic Resources” on the Shaw University Library website.