General Information

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Alt. Contact: Joyce Sisler (jsisler@rts.edu)

These are the best ways to communicate with me.
Please do not try to contact me through the email function on IQWeb.

Class hours:
Thursdays 3 – 4:50 p.m.

Office hours:
Monday 1– 3 p.m.
Tuesday 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Thursday 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Friday 1 – 2 p.m.

Course Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to deepen our experience and understanding of God’s Word found in the Old Testament so that we can more faithfully articulate it to ourselves, our churches, and the world around us. This purpose will be pursued through an intermediate level study of Biblical Hebrew (BH), focusing on matters of syntax and lexicon, and the exegesis of selections from the BH corpus. During class gatherings, we will discuss the features of BH syntax while reading through the portions of the book of Deuteronomy. While translation will be necessary for the student’s participation in class discussion, it is not intended to be the end-product of our class work. Translation, rather, is an important by-product of interpretation, and interpretation has to do with meaning. To this end, students will be expected to engage in the linguistic, literary, historical and theological world of the biblical text and draw application from it.

The product of this class will be a deeper engagement of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament as well as a short research assignment which can provide the groundwork of a larger exegetical paper.

Course Prerequisites

Biblical Hebrew 1 and 2
Course Materials


ISBN: 978-3438052223 (paperback)
978-3438052193 (hardback)

- or -


ISBN: 978-1598561982


ISBN: 978-0802834133


ISBN: 978-0687091140


ISBN: 978-1930566682


ISBN: 978-1850758563

Professor’s Note: I realize that the financial cost of these books is high. Please note, however, that these resources are reference materials and, if properly evaluated, will serve a student of the Hebrew text for many years to come, not only in future courses but as a part of a personal library.

Optional Course Materials on Reserve in Library


Due Dates

Weekly Quizzes
- September 23  Paper Topics Due
- October 21  Mid-term Exam
- November 18  Student Paper and Presentation (750 words)
- December 10-15  Final Exam Period

Course Assignments

- Prepare for and participate in the readings for each class by analyzing, translating, and reading the passages for each day. Pay special attention to difficult verb forms, rare words, argument flow, and story logic (how the stories make sense). (10%)
- Weekly quizzes will test verb parsing, vocabulary, and grasp of syntax. (30%)
- Mid-term and final exams will test the same type of material as quizzes, though in an expanded format. (30%)
- Student papers will treat a passage from the book of Deuteronomy not discussed in the class readings, aiming to explain its meaning and significance with the book of Deuteronomy and the Scriptures as a whole. Treatments will rely on scholarly research, and a close reading of the Hebrew text. Papers will be presented in class. (30%)

Class Schedule

- Class 1, Aug. 26:  Introduction
- Class 2, Sept. 2:  Deut 1:1-8
  Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #1
- Class 3, Sept. 9:  Deut 1:9-18
  Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #2
- Class 4, Sept. 16:  Deut 1:19-33
  Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #3
- Class 5, Sept. 23:  Deut 1:34-46
  Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #4
- Paper Topic Due
- Class 6, Sept. 30:  Deut 2:1-12
  Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #5
- Class 7, Oct. 7:  Deut 2:13-25
  Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #6
- READING WEEK
- Class 8, Oct. 21:  Mid-term Exam
  Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #7
- Class 9, Oct. 28:  Deut 2:26-37
  Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #8
- Class 10, Nov. 4:  Deut 3:1-7
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class 11</td>
<td>Nov. 11</td>
<td>Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #9</td>
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<td>Deut 3:8-17</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Studies in Syntax and Lexicon #10</td>
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<td>Class 12</td>
<td>Nov. 18</td>
<td><strong>Student Presentations</strong></td>
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<td>Class 13</td>
<td>Nov. 25</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</td>
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<td>Class 14</td>
<td>Dec. 2</td>
<td>Deut 3:18-29</td>
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<td>Course Review</td>
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Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

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<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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