

Saint Louis University, Madrid Campus  
Course Syllabus, Fall Semester 2017  
**THEO 3115 – OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS – MO2**

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Credits: 3 (*prerequisite*: THEO-1000 and one 2000-level theology course)

Professor: Sergio Rosell Nebreda, PhD

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Phone: 915-545-858

Class Hours: Tuesday & Thursday: 9:30 - 10:45

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00 – 12:00: (SIH 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Room 5) or by appointment

Class Location: PAH 24

### **Required Books**

- *The Bible*: Any translation may be used. It is recommended that students bring the Bible along, as we will often read key texts during class.
- David L. Petersen, *The Prophetic Literature: An Introduction* (Louisville, Westminster/John Knox Press: 2002).

### **Other Recommended Texts (in Library)**

- Joseph Blenkinsopp. *A History of Prophecy in Israel. Revised and Enlarged* (Louisville, Westminster/John Knox Press: 1996).
- Michael D. Coogan. *The Old Testament. A History and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2006).
- Christine Hayes. *Introduction to the Bible* (New Haven/London, Yale University Press: 2012).
- Christopher R. Seitz. *Prophecy and Hermeneutics: Toward a New Introduction to the Prophets* (Grand Rapids, Baker Academic: 2007).

### **Course Description**

This course studies the phenomenon of prophecy in ancient Israel and the prophetic literature in the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament. It provides an introduction to prophecy and the prophetic literature of the Near East and surveys the biblical prophetic books and their main topics in chronological order (as far as we can do it), paying special attention to the political and socioeconomic contexts in which these prophetic utterances took place. The course aims to recapture the relevance of prophetic themes for modern society, bridging the gap between the then and the now.

### **Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the semester students should have acquired the following knowledge and skills:

- Become acquainted with the documents that compose the prophetic corpus, as well as with the historical background in which they were produced.

- Critically interpret texts of the Old Testament taking into consideration both their meaning in their original context and the messages that they can convey for individuals and communities in the XXI century.
- Reflect on major theological topics such as faith, covenant, law, idolatry, community and individual, justice and righteousness, mission, etc., both in the context of the Near East and Israel.
- Begin to understand how biblical exegesis is done as well as appreciate its complexity, conversing with different scholars to enrich their own understanding of key prophetic texts.
- Understand the importance of the prophetic corpus and the relevance of theological questions in the history of Western civilization and in the present global world.

Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus is committed to excellent and innovative educational practices. In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to relevant accreditation requirements, the Campus regularly assesses its teaching, services, and programs for evidence of student learning outcomes achievement. For this purpose anonymized representative examples of student work from all courses and programs is kept on file, such as assignments, papers, exams, portfolios, and results from student surveys, focus groups, and reflective exercises. *Thus, copies of student work for this course, including written assignments, in-class exercises, and exams may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes.* If students prefer that Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus does not keep their work on file, they need to communicate their decision in writing to the professor.

## Course Evaluation

### 10% Class Participation.

You are expected to come to class on time and actively participate in class discussions. Please be prepared to comment on course material, assigned readings and relevant worksheets in class. This means that assigned readings must be read before class so be ready to engage in meaningful dialogue. Usage of laptops or other electronic devices is limited to accessing relevant class material and taking class notes. Surfing the web or checking emails during class might result in grade penalization.

### 20% First assignment.

You are to write a three (3) page paper as commentary to a prophetic text provided by the instructor. This research should account for the specific background of the prophet, knowledge of the situation the prophet is addressing in Israel as well as showing how it fits within the overall context/structure of the book. At least three scholarly sources need to be used. **Due date: October 5.**

### 30% Second assignment. Project: relevance of prophetic message.

*Two options:*

a) Students will work in groups of 2-3 to help create and build a web-page (*OldTestamentProphets-SLUM*) with a didactic purpose in mind: to describe for future students -and others- not only the importance of the prophetic material, but its

relevance for our world today. Each group is responsible for the creation of a section for a particular prophet/book. The first part describes the context and message of the prophet/book, focusing on history, background, themes, etc. The second section tries to project such themes into our present age by providing similar situations in which the prophetic word seems relevant.

b) students can enroll on a community service project of their choice and then write a three-page paper reflecting both on their own service project action in relation to the prophetic message we have so far learned: social justice, seeking the welfare of the poor, etc. At least two academic sources need to be used.

Content, creativity, and maturity of thought will be evaluated for both options. Due date: November 7.

### **30% Third assignment: exegesis paper.**

You are to write a four (4) to five (5) page research paper. The essay will research one Old Testament prophetic text among those provided by the instructor. You must consult at least three different academic sources and follow university guidelines for formatting your research papers. Specific guidelines will be provided in due course by the instructor. **Due date: December 5.**

### **10% Final Exam.**

The final exam is schedule for **December 19<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday, 8:30-11:30)**. The final exam will consist of the identification of the main topics in three prophetic texts as well as the explanation of the main characteristics of the prophets and/or the prophetic books to whom these three texts are attributed. This exam will allow students to synthesize the course contents.

### ***On Written Assignments:***

All written assignments must be submitted typed, page-numbered, with the name of the students and the reference to the course. They are to be submitted printed and in class. **E-mail submission of assignments is not acceptable** unless the instructor allows the possibility to a student as an extraordinary measure. In the assignments, bibliography and attachments will be placed at the end and will not count towards the page count. Cover pages are not needed.

### **On-Line Course Evaluation**

All students are **required** to complete the on-line course evaluation at the end of the semester. The time when it will be available on-line will be announced in class.

### **Grading System**

<b>93-100</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>90-92</b>	<b>A-</b>
<b>87-89</b>	<b>B+</b>
<b>83-86</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>80-82</b>	<b>B-</b>
<b>76-79</b>	<b>C+</b>

71-75	C
68-70	C-
60-67	D+
0-59	F
AF	Failure due to excessive absence

### Attendance Policy

If students miss classes, their final grade will be lowered, unless the absence is justified. If you cannot be in class, please email me or call me at my home or office. Consistent attendance is important to meet the learning objectives of this course. More than three unexcused absences will drop a student's grade by 10%.

### Academic Accommodation

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/campus-life/student-services/disability-services>.

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations **must** contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also **must** notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at [disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu) or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.

**Title IX Statement:** Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Mauri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 ([mmaruri@slu.edu](mailto:mmaruri@slu.edu); [915-54-5858 ext. 213](tel:+915545858)) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator will then be available to assist you in

understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLU-Madrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall ([counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu); 915-54-5858 ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid ([www.sinews.es](http://www.sinews.es); 91-700-1979) To view SLU-Madrid's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campus-life/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.

### **St. Louis University's Policy on Academic Honesty**

*Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors.* The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at <https://www.slu.edu/the-office-of-the-provost/academic-affairs-policies>. Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online: <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics/student-resources/academic-advising/policies-and-procedures#43>. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

The professor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

Violations of academic integrity will be handled in this way:

- A sanction: e.g., an F for the assignment in which plagiarism has been documented, an F for the Midterm/Final where a student is caught copying.
- All violations of academic integrity will be reported to the chair. In consultation with the professor, the chair will write a report, which will then be sent to the Madrid Campus Committee on Academic Honesty.

### **St. Louis University's Commitment to Excellence**

In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to accreditation requirements, SLU-Madrid regularly assesses its teaching, services and programs for evidence of student learning. For this purpose, SLU-Madrid keeps representative examples of student work from all courses and programs on file, including assignments, papers, exams, portfolios and results from student surveys, focus groups and reflective exercises. Copies of your work for this course may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes. If you prefer SLU-Madrid not to retain

your work for this purpose, you must communicate this decision in writing to your professor.

## **Course Outline (*tentative course themes*)**

***(Please, be aware that "Reading Due" assignments are to be completed for [that is, before] the class period shown in this course outline)***

### **SEPTEMBER**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION TO PROPHECY. THE BIBLICAL PROPHETS AND PROPHETIC LITERATURE IN THE BIBLE**

**Session 1:** (9/5)- Course Introduction. What is prophecy and who is a prophet?

**Homework:** a short personal reflection on your expectations/interests in the course.

**Session 2:** (9/7) - The prophetic literature in the ancient Near East and in ancient Israel. The prophet and his/her relation to the divine.

**Reading Due: Petersen 1-18**

**Session 3:** (9/12)- The prophet in ancient Israel and the prophetic literature in the Old Testament. Prophetic ways of communication.

**Reading Due: Petersen 18-45**

**Session 4:** (9/14)- Early prophets.

**Reading Due: Petersen 215-226; 1 Samuel 1-15; 2 Samuel 12**

*Sunday 17: Last Day to Drop a Class without a Grade of W and/or Add a Class.  
Last Day to Choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No Pass (P/NP) Options*

**Session 5:** (9/19)- Elijah and Elisha.

**Reading Due: Petersen 226-234; 1 Kings 17-22; 2 Kings 1-9**

#### **II. PROPHETS IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY BCE**

**Session 6:** (9/21)- The prophets and social justice. Introduction and historical background. Amos (I)

**Reading Due: Petersen 169-176, 184-189; book of Amos**

**Session 7:** (9/26)- Amos (II). Biblical exegesis. Practical exercise in class.

**Session 8:** (9/28)- Amos (III). Hosea (I).

**Reading Due: Petersen 176-181**

### **OCTOBER**

**Session 9:** (10/3)- Hosea (II).  
**Reading Due: Book of Hosea**

**Session 10:** (10/5)- First Isaiah (I).  
**Reading Due: Book of Isaiah 1-12; Petersen 47-55**  
**First Assignment Due (October 5<sup>th</sup>)**

**Session 11:** (10/10)- First Isaiah (II).  
**Reading Due: Book of Isaiah 13-39**

*October 12. Spanish National Holiday. University Closed.*

**Session 12:** (10/17)- First Isaiah (III). Micah.  
**Reading Due: Petersen 193-196**

### **III. PROPHETS IN THE 7<sup>TH</sup>-BEGINNING OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY BCE**

**Session 13:** (10/19)- Historical background. Zephaniah and Nahum.  
**Reading Due: Petersen 203-205; 196-200; books of Zephaniah and Nahum**

**Session 14:** (10/24)- Habakkuk. Jeremiah (I).  
**Reading Due: Petersen 200-202; 97-103-125; book of Habakkuk**

**Session 15:** (10/26)- Jeremiah (II).  
**Reading Due: Book of Jeremiah 1-30**

*Monday 30: Last Day to Drop a Class and Receive a Grade of W*

**Session 16:** (10/31)- Jeremiah (III).  
**Reading Due: Petersen 125-135; book of Jeremiah 31-52**

## **NOVEMBER**

### **IV. PROPHETS DURING THE TIME OF THE EXILE**

**Session 17:** (11/2)- Historical background. Obadiah.  
**Reading Due: Petersen 189-191; book of Obadiah**

**Session 18:** (11/7)- The Book of Ezekiel (I).  
**Reading Due: Petersen 137-168; book of Ezekiel 1-2**  
**Second Assignment Due (November 7<sup>th</sup>)**

*November 9. Spanish National Holiday. University Closed.*

**Session 19:** (11/14)- The Book of Ezekiel (II).  
**Reading Due: Book of Ezekiel 3-25; 37; 40-43**

**Session 20:** (11/16)- Second Isaiah.

**Reading Due:** Petersen 56-96; book of Isaiah 40-55; Coogan 404-415

## **V. PROPHETS DURING THE PERSIAN PERIOD**

**Session 21:** (11/21)-Historical background. Third Isaiah.

**Reading Due:** Book of Isaiah 56-66

**Session 22:** (11/23)- Haggai. First Zechariah (I).

**Reading Due:** Petersen 205-207; book of Haggai

**Session 23:** (11/28)- Historical background. First Zechariah (II), Malachi

**Reading Due:** Petersen 207-211; book of Zechariah 1-8; book of Malachi

**Session 24:** (11/30)- Second Zechariah and Joel.

**Reading Due:** Petersen 181-184; book of Zechariah 9-14; book of Joel

## **DECEMBER**

## **VI. PROPHETS DURING THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD**

**Session 25:** (12/5)- Jonah.

**Reading Due:** Petersen 191-193; book of Jonah

**Third Assignment Due (December 5<sup>th</sup>)**

*December 6 & 8. Spanish National Holydays. University Closed.*

**Session 26:** (12/7)-Daniel: From prophecy to Apocalyptic. (7<sup>th</sup> of December we have class!)

**Reading Due:** Coogan 536-546; book of Daniel 1-6; 7

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

**Session 27:** (12/12)- The biblical prophets and their message.

**Tuesday 19: Final Exam: 08:30-11:30**