

COURSE SYLLABUS
ANCIENT ISRAEL AND THE NEAR EAST
THEO-3930 M01

PLACE: St. Louis University, Madrid Campus

TIME: Fall 2017, TR 14:30-15:45

PREREQUISITE: THEO-1000 and one 2000-level theology course

CURRICULUM: 3 credits. Fulfills theology requirement for A&S

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Carolina A. Aznar (e-mail: carolinaana.aznar@slu.edu (please, write "Ancient Israel and the NE" as subject title). Office telephone: . 91 554 58 58, ext.: 247

OFFICE HOURS: MW 11:00-13:00, TR 12:30-13:00, 16:00-16:30 in Dr. Aznar's office at SIH, 3rd floor Room 7

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of the history and religion of ancient Israel within its Near Eastern context. This examination will allow students to identify similarities and differences between texts from the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and other texts from the ancient Near East.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge

By the end of the semester students will have gained knowledge on the major stages of the historical development of ancient Israel and the Israelite religion within the context of the history and culture of the Near East. This knowledge will allow students to understand the formation of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament texts better.

Skills

By the end of the semester students:

- will have evaluated how some Hebrew Bible/Old Testament texts and some archaeological data relate to the history of the Israelites and their religion;
- will have learnt how to handle the different types of sources in order to do sound research and avoid circular reasoning;
- will have explored and gained an appreciation of the similarities and differences between ancient Israel and its neighbors, especially those regarding worship and theology.

Collection of Student Work for University-Wide Assessment

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.

REQUIRED TEXTS

A reference Bible. For study purposes I recommend *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, but any translation is fine. Bibles in English can be purchased at the campus bookstore.

The sourcebook

MAIN TEXTS USED FOR REQUIRED READINGS

Shmuel Ahituv. *Echoes from the Past. Hebrew and Cognate Inscriptions from the Biblical Period.* (Jerusalem, Carta: 2008).

John Barton. *Reading the Old Testament. Method in Biblical Study.* (Louisville, Kentucky, Westminster John Knox Press: 1996).

Michael D. Coogan. *The Old Testament. A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures.* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2006).

Michael D. Coogan (ed.) *The Oxford History of the Biblical World.* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1998) = OHBW.

Stephanie Dalley. *Myths from Mesopotamia. Creation, The Flood, Gilgamesh, and Others* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1991).

Avraham Faust. *Israel's Ethnogenesis. Settlement, Interaction, Expansion and Resistance* (London, Equinox: 2006).

David Noel Friedman (ed.) *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York, Doubleday: 1992) = ABD.

William W. Hallo (ed.) *The Context of Scripture. Vol I. Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World.* (New York, Brill: 1997) = COS I.

Richard S. Hess. *Israelite Religions. An Archaeological and Biblical Survey.* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Academic Press: 2007).

Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel.* (Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press: 2001) = LBI.

James B. Pritchard (ed.) *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament.* 2nd ed. (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press: 1955) = ANET.

Jack M. Sasson (ed.) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East.* 2 vols. (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers: 2000) = CANE.

Ziony Zevit. *The Religions of Ancient Israel. A Synthesis of Parallaxic Approaches.* (New York, Continuum: 2001).

OTHER RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Spencer L. Allen. *The Splintered Divine: a Study of Ishtar, Baal, and Yahweh Divine Names and Divine Multiplicity in the Ancient Near East* (Berlin, de Gruyter: 2015).

Hans M. Barstad. *History and the Hebrew Bible: Studies in Ancient Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography* (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck: 2008).

Amnon Ben-Tor (ed.) *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel.* (New Haven: Yale University Press: 1992).

Mark W. Chavalas (ed.) *Women in the Ancient Near East: A Sourcebook* (New York: Routledge: 2014).

Richard J. Clifford. *Creation Accounts in the Ancient Near East and in the Bible.* (Washington, D.C. The Catholic Biblical Association of America: 1994).

Michael D. Coogan (ed.) *Stories from Ancient Canaan* (Louisville, The Westminster Press: 1978).

Richard Elliott Friedman. *Who Wrote the Bible?* (San Francisco, HarperSanFrancisco: 1997)

William W. Hallo (ed.) *The Context of Scripture. Vol II. Monumental Inscriptions from the Biblical World.* (New York, Brill: 2000).

William W. Hallo (ed.) *The Context of Scripture. Vol I. Archival Documents from the Biblical World.* (New York, Brill: 2002).

- G.S. Kirk. *Myth. Its meaning & functions in ancient and other cultures*. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1970).
- Alan Lenzi, Jonathan Stökl (eds.) *Divination, Politics, and Ancient Near Eastern Empires* (Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature: 2014).
- Mario Liverani. *Israel's History and the History of Israel* (London, Equinox: 2005).
- Amihai Mazar. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000-586 B.C.E.* (New York, Doubleday: 1990).
- Jeffrey J. Niehaus. *Ancient Near Eastern Themes in Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Kregel: 2008).
- John N. Oswalt. *The Bible among the Myths* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan: 2009).
- James B. Pritchard. *The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament*. Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press: 1954).
- James B. Pritchard (ed.) *The Ancient Near East. Supplementary Texts and Pictures Relating to the Old Testament*. Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press: 1969).
- Anson F. Rainey and R. Steven Notley. *The Sacred Bridge*. (Jerusalem, Carta: 2006).
- Kenton L. Sparks. *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible. A Guide to the Background Literature* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers: 2005).
- Piotr Steinkeller and Michael Hudson (ed.) *Labor in the Ancient World* (Dresden, ISLET-Verl.:2015).
- Ephraim Stern (ed.). *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, 5 vols. (Jerusalem, Israel Exploration Society and Carta: 1993, 2008).
- John H. Walton. *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context*. 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan: 1990).
- John H. Walton. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Academics: 2006).

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The final grade will be based on the following percentages:

Class participation:	10 %
Midterm exam:	30 %
Final paper:	40 %
Final exam:	20%

1. **Class participation** is a part of the final grade. Active participation includes attending class regularly, doing the readings and/or seeing the videos assigned for each class, being able to present and discuss the assigned readings and/or videos, answering the questions posed by the professor in class (either orally or in writing), asking and discussing content-related questions when appropriate, and being considerate to one's classmates, which includes not interrupting and/or mocking them, and taking one's fair share of discussion time. Notice that students are expected to do the assigned readings for any given day *in preparation for* (that is, *before*) the class of that day so they can discuss them in class. Please note: from October 24 each student needs to bring his/her own Bible to class every day. As a general guideline, students who participate regularly and actively in a way that shows meaningful engagement with the material may receive a participation grade of A. Students with good attendance but less engaged participation may receive a grade of B. Students who are frequently absent, rarely participate, and/or show inconsiderate behavior, may receive a grade of C, D or F, depending on the case. The instructors take notes on students' participation, so after three or four weeks into the course, you can ask them how you are doing in this respect .

2. Students will write a **ten- to twelve-page research paper** studying a topic in the religion of ancient Israel and in one or more of the other ancient Near Eastern cultures. The paper will be done according to the guidelines the instructors will provide. **For this paper each student will visit with the instructor in her office during her office hours of Sept. 11-14; submit an abstract, an outline and a short bibliography of the paper on September 21; and submit a draft on October 24.** The instructor will provide feedback on these. None of them will be graded, but not submitting them at all or submitting them late will be penalized. **The final version of the paper will be due on November 21. At the end of the semester** students will make a small **oral Powerpoint presentation** of their papers. The grade for this paper will take into account the work in the development of the paper from the abstract level to the final version; the logic of the argument; the use of the textual, archaeological and iconographic evidence provided; the use of scholarly bibliography, the involvement of the student's own ideas in the argument; the quality of the academic writing; and the quality of the supplementary material provided (maps and illustrations). The oral presentation will need to address the comments made by the instructor in the final version of the paper; the grade given to it will round up the paper grade (which means, if the quality of the presentation is the same as the quality of the paper, the paper grade stays the same; if the presentation does not address the instructor's comments and/or is not well laid out, the paper grade goes down a third of a full grade; if the presentation addresses the instructor's comments and/or is well laid out, the paper grade goes up a third of a full grade).

3. Students will take a **midterm exam on October 18.** This exam will include content-based questions as well as practical exercises on the understanding of the HB/OT and the history of ancient Israel and its religion within its Near Eastern background.

4. Students will take a **final exam on December 18.** This exam will include theoretical questions and practical exercises based on the material examined in class through the semester as well as on the students' papers.

5. On Nov. 3 (Friday) **class** will take place **at the Temple of Debod** (this class substitutes the class of Nov. 16).

6. All students will **complete the on-line course evaluation at the end of the semester.**

All students in this class have a *slu* e-mail account (i.e. an e-mail address ending in *slu.edu*)—both their Banner and SLU-Global accounts are linked to it. Therefore, all e-mail communications between the instructor and the students will take place by using the *slu* e-mail system. **It is each student's responsibility to get to know his/her *slu* e-mail address, to make sure it works on the first day of class (T Sept. 5), to check it regularly (or to have the mail from this address forwarded to a preferred account which he/she checks regularly), and to speak with the people at the Registrar's Office (in Padre Arrupe Hall) if there is any problem with it.**

All written assignments must be submitted double-spaced, page-numbered, typed and printed. They must be submitted in class. **E-mail submission of assignments is not acceptable** and does not count towards the grade (i.e. an e-mailed assignment counts as not submitted) unless the instructor sends the student an e-mail explicitly saying he/she can e-mail his/her assignment. In the assignments, bibliography and attachments will be placed at the end and will not count towards the page account. Cover pages are not needed.

The visit to the Egyptian Temple of Debod (Nov. 3) is compulsory. If a student could not make it because of a justified reason, he/she will need to submit a make-up assignment. Failing to do so will be penalized.

For bibliography for the assignments, please make sure you check the SLU book catalogue as well as the **ATLA, JSTOR** and **WorldCat (FirstSearch)** databases (at <http://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics/library>). To use the databases, you will need your SLU-Madrid login and password. If you do not know or have them yet, go to the Registrar's Office at Padre Arrupe Hall and ask about them. Keep in mind that many of the articles and books found in the ATLA and WorldCat (FirstSearch) Database may be retrieved in Madrid at the libraries of the Universidad Complutense, Universidad Autónoma, Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, Instituto Arqueológico Alemán, and/or the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. But for saving time, look for bibliographic resources on the internet first. Notice you can also find useful articles at *Bible Review* and *Biblical Archaeology Review* (<http://www.basarchive.org>). These are not scholarly journals but popular magazines. However, the authors who write in them are scholars and many of the articles are summarized versions of similar, more detailed articles in scholarly journals. So you can use their articles, especially if you do not have access to the scholarly journal where the original version is published.

ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS

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 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.

GRADING SCALE

The grading scale is as follows:

93-100	= A	- Excellent understanding of subject matter and mastery of the skills of the course
90-92	= A-	
87-89	= B+	
83-86	= B	- Good understanding of the subject matter and deployment of the skills of the course
80-82	= B-	

76-79	= C+	
71-75	= C	- Minimally satisfactory understanding of the subject matter and deployment of the skills of the course
68-70	= C-	
60-67	= D	- Less than satisfactory understanding of the subject matter or less than satisfactory deployment of the skills of the course
0 -59	= F	- Basic failure in understanding of the subject matter or basic inability to deploy the skills of the course

The following are general principles concerning grading standards and criteria at SLU:

A range = *Superior, exceptional, outstanding* with evidence of critical, informed, and creative inquiry that deepens their understanding of essential concepts. This means the student demonstrates depth of insight beyond what is normally expected. Carefully nuanced reasoning and writing, free from material, structural and grammatical error are presupposed in this grade.

B range = *Good*, ready command of full range of concepts and shows some critical, informed, and creative inquiry that deepens their understanding of essential concepts. This means the student has produced an assignment that is free from material, structural and grammatical errors.

C range = *Acceptable*, satisfactory ability to describe overall picture and essential concepts. This means the student has completed the assignment in a manner involving no significant errors. Material may not be free from structural and grammatical errors. Nuanced reasoning is not demonstrated.

D range = *Below normal expectation*. Reasoning is neither carefully nuanced nor coherently presented; writing is insufficient in depth of insight and/or use of texts; presentation is not free from material error in structure, spelling and grammar. This means that the student failed to respond adequately to the assignment and its intentions.

F = *Unsatisfactory*. The student failed to respond to the assignment: 1) failed to turn in the assignment; 2) did not respond to the assignment as given; 3) submitted work so thoroughly flawed as to indicate that the student did not make a serious effort, 4) plagiarism or cheating involved.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AT SLU-MADRID

Please note that, as a student in this course, you are required to adhere to the university's Academic Integrity Policy. Cheating, falsification, and plagiarism are strictly forbidden. Plagiarism is the intentional representation of someone else's thoughts or words as if they were one's own. A violation of this policy will result in an F for the given assignment or exam where the violation is detected. In addition, the violation 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.

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.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

Laptops, tablets and mobile phones are acceptable for class work. However, the use of these tools for things such as e-mailing, chatting, text messaging and surfing sites not related to the class is not acceptable and will be penalized (see below).

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PENALTIES

- Repeated unjustified absences: one full letter of the participation grade will be decreased for each three unjustified absences (e.g. from B to C). Please, note that only medical emergencies count as justified absences.
- Being late and/or lacking knowledge of the assigned readings and/or failing to bring the Bible to class from October 24: one third of the participation grade letter will be decreased for each two days in which any of these situations takes place (e.g. from B- to C+).
- Missing the class at the Egyptian Temple of Debod and not submitting the make-up assignment: one full letter of the grade will be decreased.
- Unauthorized use of mobile phones, tablets or laptops in class: one third of the participation letter will be decreased each time this happens. Unauthorized use includes e-mailing, chatting, text messaging, and surfing internet sites not related to the class.
- Not visiting with the professor in her office on Sept. 11-14: one third of the assignment letter will be decreased.
- Submitting the paper late: one third of the assignment letter will be decreased for each day of delay in submitting any of the three written stages of the paper (abstract-outline-bibliography, draft, and final paper). One week after any part of the assignment is due, no late submissions will be accepted and the whole of the assignment will be graded as 0 (=F).
- Submitting an assignment in the middle of or at the end of the class when it is due: one third of the assignment letter will be decreased.
- Not attending the final classes when oral presentations are due: one full letter of the participation grade will be decreased for each presentation day missed.
- Students who missed the introduction on the first day of class (Sept. 5) must stay after class on Sept. 19 for fifteen minutes. Not doing so will be penalized: one third of the student's participation grade will be decreased.

Please, note: **If for any reason a student could not submit his/her assignment on time or make it to the final exam, he/she should contact the instructor BEFORE the due date** to discuss the situation (the only exception to this are justified medical emergencies).

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 Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (**mmaruri@slu.edu**; 915-54-5858, ext. 213) 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**; 915-54-5858, ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (**www.sinews.es**; 917-00-1979). 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>**

COURSE TOPICS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. General introduction. Geography of the Ancient Near East (ANE)

II. THE HEBREW BIBLE/OLD TESTAMENT (HB/OT)

2. The HB/OT, canons, text genres
3. The history of the biblical text. Biblical chronology I
4. The history of the biblical text. Biblical chronology II

III. THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL AND ITS RELIGION WITHIN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST (ANE)

5. Sources to study the past. From ca. 2100 to the 17th century BCE: the background of the Patriarchal narratives?
6. From the 16th to the 13th centuries BCE: Egypt, Canaan, and the time before the emergence of Israel
7. From the 12th to the 11th centuries BCE: the emergence of Israel
8. From the 10th to the 9th centuries BCE: the early times of the monarchy of Israel (I)
9. From the 10th to the 9th centuries BCE: the early times of the monarchy of Israel (II)
10. The 8th century BCE: the monarchy of Israel and the Assyrian conquests
11. From the 7th to the beginning of the 6th centuries BCE: the late times of the monarchy of Israel and the Babylonian conquests
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12. Midterm exam
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13. From the beginning of the 6th to the beginning of the 2nd century AD: the exile of the Israelites in Babylon, the return from the Exile, the Persian, Hellenistic and early Roman Periods

IV. TEXTS IN THE HB/OT AND THE ANE: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

14. Creation texts (1)
15. Creation texts (2)
16. Flood texts
17. Prayers (1)
18. Prayers (2)
19. Personal archives, legal texts
20. Covenants and treaties
21. Historiography and wisdom text
22. Prophetic texts
23. Apocalyptic texts
-
- 24-27. Oral presentations
-
28. Final Exam

* The instructor will post the list of required readings for each class on SLU Global. Please, remember that the readings posted for each day must be read in preparation for (that is, before) the class due that day.

COURSE GENERAL SCHEDULE*

- Week 1: - T Sept. 5
- R Sept. 7
- Week 2: - **M-R Sept. 11-14: Every student must speak with the instructor during office hours**
- T Sept. 12
- R Sept. 14
- Week 3: - S Sept. 17: Last day to Add/Drop (without "W"). Last day to choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No pass (P/NP) status
- T Sept. 19
- **R Sept. 21: Paper abstract, outline, and short bibliography due**
- Week 4: - T Sept. 26
- R Sept. 28
- Week 5: - T Oct. 3
- R Oct. 5
- Week 6: - T Oct. 10
- R Oct. 12: No class (Fiesta Nacional de España holiday)
- Week 7: - M Oct. 16: Last day to submit transfer application for Spring Semester
- **T Oct. 17. Midterm exam**
- R Oct. 19
- Week 8: - **T Oct. 24: Paper draft due**
- R Oct. 26
- Week 9: - M Oct. 30: Last day to Drop with "W"
- T Oct. 31
- R Nov. 2: Registration for Spring Semester begins
- F Nov. 3: Class at the Egyptian Temple of Debod
- Week 10: - T Nov. 7
- R Nov. 9: No class (La Almudena holiday)
- Week 11: - T Nov. 14
- R Nov. 16: No class (class on F Nov. 3 instead)
- Week 12: - **T Nov. 21: Final paper due**
- R Nov. 23
- Week 13: - T Nov. 28
- R Nov. 30: Oral presentations
- Week 14: - T Dec. 5 : Oral presentations
- R Dec. 7: Oral presentations
- Week 15: - T Dec. 12: Oral presentations. Last class
- Week 16: - **M Dec. 18: Final Exam (12:00-15:00)**

*** PLEASE, NOTE: The dates in this general schedule are tentative. They depend on class progress and circumstances and will be matched to the topics in the course topic list according to the instructor's indications**