***OLD TESTAMENT FOUNDATIONS I***

### RLGN 5350

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY**

**WBU Online**

**RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY**

# Fall 2018

## Instructor Dr. David W. Howle

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**Course Number and Title:** RLGN 5350 VC01, Old Testament Foundations I

**Class Time and Location:** Online via Blackboard, August 20-November 3, 2018

**Catalog Description:** This course is an introduction to the ancient Near Eastern background and canon of the Old Testament, including the contents of Genesis 1 through 1 Kings 11 (and 1 Chronicles) with emphasis on pertinent historical issues, theological interpretation, and contemporary application.

**Wayland Mission Statement:** Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

**Method of Instruction:** Online: printed lectures, video, discussion board, internet links

**Prerequisite/ Co-requisites:** None

#### Required Text:

#### Hill, Andrew E., and Walton, John H. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2009. ISBN 9780-3102-80958

**Additional Resources:**

*Theological Research and Writing Manual*. WBU School of Religion and Philosophy (available online)

**Course Outcome Competencies:** Students will

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the nature and canon of the Old Testament.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the content and significance of the books of Genesis through 1 Kings 11 (1 Chronicles).
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the cultural, social, and historical background from Abraham to Solomon.

**Course Calendar**

(Reading of weekly lecture notes is expected)

Reading Key: Assignments key:

**H&W:** Hill and Walton **LGD**: Large group discussion board

**B:** Bible **SGD**: Small group discussion forums

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Topic | Reading | Assignment |
| Week 1 8/20–8/25 | The nature and history of the Old Testament  Primeval history | **B:** Genesis 1-11  **H&W:** pp. 35-81 | **LGD1** |
| Week 2  8/27-9/1 | Patriarchs and matriarchs  Abrahamic covenant | **B:** Genesis 12-50  **H&W:** pp. 82-96 | **LGD2**  **SGD1** |
| Week 3  9/4-9/8 | Exodus and wandering | **B:** Exodus 1-40  **H&W:** pp. 101-120 | **LGD3**  **SGD2** |
| Week 4  9/10-9/15 | Priests and Levitical codes | **B:** Leviticus 1-27  **H&W:** pp. 125-140 | **LGD4**  **SGD3** |
| Week 5  9/17-9/22 | Rebellion and response | **B:** Numbers 1-36  **H&W:** pp. 143-160 | **LGD5**  **SGD4**  Critical reviews |
| Week 6  9/24-9/29 | History and future | **B:** Deuteronomy 1-34  **H&W:** pp. 163-177 | **LGD6**  **SGD5** |
| Week 7  10/1-10/6 | Settling in Canaan | **B:** Joshua 1-24  **H&W:** pp. 205-233 | **LGD7**  **SGD6** |
| Week 8  10/8-10/13 | Unsettled in Canaan | **B:** Judges 1-21; Ruth 1-4  **H&W:** pp. 235-253 | **LGD8**  **SGD7** |
| Week 9  10/15-10/20 | Becoming a nation | **B:** 1 Samuel 1-31  **H&W:** pp. 181-192 | **LGD9**  **SGD8**  Research paper |
| Week 10  10/22-10/27 | King David | **B:** 2 Samuel 1-24  **H&W:** pp. 257-275 | **LGD10**  **SGD9** |
| Week 11  10/29-11/3 | King Solomon | **B:** 1 Kings 1-11; 1 Chronicles 1-29  **H&W:** pp. 279-288 | **SGD10**  Summary |

Because online learning requires significant self-discipline, the following is a suggested approach to a typical week in Old Testament Foundations I. It is critical to study this syllabus carefully and be sure that you understand the requirements and figure out how you will fit them into your schedule. The various components are explained below.

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| --- | --- |
| Day | Activity |
| Monday-Tuesday | Complete reading assignments (Bible, textbook, lecture) |
| Wednesday | Post small group discussion questions |
| Thursday | Start responding in large group discussion |
| Friday-Saturday | Complete responses to classmates; make summary notes |
| Sunday | TAKE A DAY OFF! |

**Course Requirements**

### Large Group Discussions (LGD) 30%

Online discussions require the student to dialog with classmates and the instructor on subjects related to the learning materials for that week. Participation includes both initial posts as well as replies to posts by other participants and must comprise at least five posts per week for full credit. Active participation in an online forum is measured by posting messages which conform to the following guidelines: substantial (relates to the course material), concise (two or three paragraphs), provocative (encourages others to respond), analytical (expands concepts or connects ideas in new ways), timely (occurs when the topic is under discussion), logical (supports point of view with reasons and evidence), and grammatical (is well written). The topics discussed in the large group discussion forums will relate to the posted lectures and supplementary readings. Postings are due the Tuesday following the week’s discussion. For example, all comments for the Week 3 LGD must be posted by September 11.

### ****Small Group Discussions (SGD) 30%****

Students in this class will be divided into small groups consisting of five or six members each. There will be ten weeks when each group will be expected to post a discussion regarding the assigned topic for that week. Topics will be drawn from the assigned textbook readings. In each small group, a preselected discussion leader will post questions for the other members of the group. Each person in the group will have the opportunity to lead the discussion two times during the semester (10% of final grade); all members of the group will be graded on participation in the ten SGDs (20% of final grade). A signup sheet will be provided for each group at the beginning of the semester; each student should select two topics (with dates) on which he or she will lead the discussion. **Within a week of the end of each discussion, leaders are expected to send to the professor a summary of the key points of the topic, including references to sources, as an attachment to email.** It is to your advantage to mark a calendar with the dates you have chosen so that you will be prepared to post questions for your small group. In fact, preparing questions at least a week before you are scheduled to lead the discussion will save you and your group a lot of grief. Postings are due the Tuesday following the week’s discussion. For example, all comments for the SGD 1-Week 2 must be posted by September 4.

### ****Critical reviews 10%****

Each student will write a brief descriptive analysis of five journal articles, 400-650 words per article. For this exercise, you are to (1) clearly describe/summarize the content of the article (no more than fifty percent of your review) and (2) offer a critique of the effectiveness of the article. The articles may be selected from scholarly (peer-reviewed) journals in the Wayland Baptist University library available online. The paper should be type-written, double-spaced, no greater than 12-point font, in Arial, Verdana, Tahoma, or Candara font. Papers should be formatted in Word (.doc or .docx), Rich Text Format (.rtf), or Open Office (.odt) only--no PDFs. This collection of reviews must be submitted by midnight (Central Time) September 22 in order to qualify for full credit.

The student should especially attempt to answer the following basic questions:

1. What is the core topic/issue addressed in the article?

2. What main claim or thesis (or claims/theses) was made by the author? How effectively did the author support the thesis?

3. What are some positive insights offered in the article? How did the author clarify biblical issues?

4. What are some difficulties or poorly communicated ideas presented in the article? Did the author ignore evidence which might have helped?

### ****Summary 10%****

Each student will submit a learning summary at the end of the semester. This document will summarize your learning experiences in this class. I recommend that you make notes each week about the things you are learning in this class. If you keep your notes in a Word (.doc or .docx or .rtf) document, all you will need to do the last week of the term is to edit the notes into a cohesive report. Please note that the emphasis of this report is **not** a summary of the biblical passages but of what you individually have learned as a result of studying the passages closely.

### ****Research Paper 20%****

Each student will write a research paper, 10-12 pages, typed, double-spaced, sans serif (Verdana, Tahoma, Arial, or Candara) font, 12-point, concerning one of the difficult texts listed on the last page of the syllabus. Papers should be formatted in Word (.doc or .docx), Rich Text Format (.rtf), or Open Office (.odt) only--no PDFs. The paper is due no later than Saturday, October 20, by midnight CST. Students will submit their papers to the professor via the link in Blackboard.

Ten (10) primary academic sources are required. The Bible, lexicons, one-volume commentaries, and dictionaries are not considered primary sources. Multivolume commentaries (those published after 1950), academic periodicals, and books on the subject of the paper are acceptable as primary sources. Online articles must come from peer-reviewed journals.

For style, the School of Religion and Philosophy has developed a *Theological Research and Writing Manual* (available online). Please do not hesitate to ask the librarians for assistance in finding materials for research papers. Don’t wait until the last second.

## Goals of assignments

The assignments for this class have various learning objectives consonant with the School of Religion and Philosophy’s Course Outcome Competencies (listed above, p. 1). Each will be important for your graduate work and your ministry.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Assignment | Skills | Goals |
| Large Group Discussion | written communication;  application of knowledge;  reading comprehension | Gain appreciation for wide variety of perspectives  Apply academic understanding of the OT to contemporary life |
| Small Group Discussion Leadership | organization; team building;  written communication; teaching skills; interpersonal skills | Strengthen communication skills  Sharpen analytical faculties  Identify significant issues in OT studies  Lead small groups in discussion |
| Small Group Discussion Participation | written communication; application of knowledge; focus on details; interpersonal skills | Gain appreciation for varying perspectives  Apply academic understanding of the OT to contemporary life |
| Critical Reviews | reading comprehension; analytical ability; succinct, lucid writing (academic) | Increase confidence in handling scholarly writing  Sharpen analytical faculties |
| Summary | self-awareness; organization of data | Appreciate learning experience  Grasp overall knowledge of OT |
| Research paper | written communication; application of knowledge; focus on details; organization; biblical understanding | Apply academic understanding of the OT to contemporary life  Sharpen analytical faculties  Gain appreciation for varying perspectives  Identify significant issues in OT studies |

###### Attendance

* Participation will be checked each week of class. No student missing morethan 25% of the class meetings (including both excused and unexcused absences) can pass the course. Students who will be unable to participate in the class for more than a week must make every effort to contact the professor *in advance*.
  + - * All absences must be explained to the instructor, who will then determine whether the omitted work may be made up. When a student reaches that number of absences considered by the instructor to be excessive, the instructor will so advise the student and file an unsatisfactory progress report with the campus dean. Any student who misses 25 percent or more of the regularly scheduled class meetings may receive a grade of F in the course. Additional attendance policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the university's attendance policy. A student may petition the Academic Council for exceptions to the above stated policies by filing a written request for an appeal to the provost/academic vice president.

**Course Evaluation (Method of Determining Grade)**

##### University Grading System

A 90-100 I INCOMPLETE\*\*

B 80-89 Cr FOR CREDIT

C 70-79 NCr NO CREDIT

D 60-69 WP WITHDRAWAL PASSING

F BELOW 60 WF WITHDRAWAL FAILING

W WITHDRAWAL

\*\*A grade of incomplete is changed if the deficiency is made up by midterm of the next regular semester; otherwise, it becomes "F". This grade is given only if circumstances beyond the student's control prevented completion of work during the semester enrolled and attendance requirements have been met. A grade of "Cr" indicates that credit in semester hours was granted but no grade or grade points were recorded.

* **Procedure for computations of final grade**

Assignment # of items % per item % of final grade

Large Group Discussion 10 3% 30%

Small Group Discussion leadership 2 5% 10%

Small Group Discussion participation 10 2% 20%

Critical reviews 1 10% 10%

Summary 1 10% 10%

Research paper 1 20% 20%

TOTAL 100%

**Academic Honesty (Plagiarism): University students are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with penalties associates with plagiarism stated in the catalog.**

Services for the Disabled

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291-3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

**Research paper passages**

Genesis 1:26ff (What does the “image of God” mean?)

Genesis 3:14-19 (How have the punishments of humankind been interpreted?)

Genesis 14:18-19 (Who exactly was Melchizedek?)

Genesis 38:11ff (Tamar and Judah—right or wrong?)

Exodus 4:24-26 (What is going on here?)

Exodus 9:12 (hardening the heart of pharaoh—Did God really do that?)

Numbers 22:20-22 (Balaam—Why was God angry if God commanded Balaam to go?)

Deuteronomy 20:10-20 (God commands killing)

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 (stoning of the rebellious son)

Joshua 7 (Achan’s sin and punishment—Why did everyone suffer?)

Judges 3:12 (Ehud—What is the point of the story?)

Judges 10:6ff (Jephthah’s daughter—Did he really kill her and why did God not forbid it?)

Judges 19 (the Levite and his concubine—What is the point?)

1 Samuel 16:1-3 (anointing of David—Did God have Samuel lie?)

1 Samuel 15:18ff (God ordered the death of all Amalekites)

1 Samuel 29 (Did David actually work for the Philistines?)

2 Samuel 6:6-7 (What did Uzzah do that was so wrong?)

2 Samuel 6:16-23 (Was Michal's disgust over David justified?)

1 Kings 9:4-9; cf. 2 Samuel 7:8-16 (Did God change his covenant with David?)