NOTE to prospective students: This syllabus is intended to provide students who are considering taking this course an idea of what they will be learning. A more detailed syllabus will be available on the course site for enrolled students and may be more current than this sample syllabus.

ENG 275: The Bible as Literature

Oregon State University
Extended Campus
Spring 2015
4 Credits

This course combines approximately 120 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 4 credits.

Instructor: Gilad Elbom
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Course Description
Emphasizing variety rather than unity, the Bible is a vast collection of literary genres: stories, poems, genealogies, biographies, prophesies, aphorisms, laws, letters, and many other styles and strategies. This class will focus on narrative, key characters, and biblical scholarship. We will try to broaden and deepen our understanding of biblical literature through a careful reading of specific stories and a close inspection of biblical commentary, looking at Scripture from different perspectives: literary, political, social, theological, linguistic, historical, psychological, feminist, and other points of view. We will focus on some famous male characters—God, Joseph, Moses, Jesus, Paul—and examine them in relation to notable women: Samson’s wife, Jephthah’s daughter, Abimelech’s killer, and other interesting, controversial, or marginalized characters. Paying attention to a variety of literary techniques, we will try to address the complexity and richness of the Bible rather than reduce it to one truth, a single message, or important lessons. In other words, our approach will be critical and analytical, not didactic.

Learning Outcomes
This is a Baccalaureate Core course in the Perspectives categories of Literature & the Arts and Western Culture. According to the learning outcomes for courses in these categories, students will:
-- Recognize literary and artistic forms/styles, techniques, and the cultural/historical contexts in which they evolve.
-- Analyze how literature/the arts reflect, shape, and influence culture.
-- Reflect critically on the characteristics and effects of literary and artistic works.
-- Identify significant events, developments, and/or ideas in the Western cultural experience and context.
-- Interpret the influence of philosophical, historical, and/or artistic phenomena in relation to contemporary Western culture.
-- Analyze aspects of Western culture in relation to broader cultural, scientific, or social processes.

**Required Texts**

-- Excerpts from biblical scholarship (to be scanned and uploaded to Canvas).

**NOTE:** For textbook accuracy, please always check the textbook list at the [OSU Bookstore website](http://www.oregonstate.edu). Sample syllabi may not have the most up-to-date information.

Students can also click the OSU Beaver Store link associated with the ENG 275 course information in the [Ecampus schedule of classes](http://www.oregonstate.edu) for course textbook information and ordering.

**Assignments**

-- 5 short essays (4-5 pages each).
-- Active participation on the discussion board. Comment intelligently on posts and comments made by your classmates. Feel free to raise additional questions, suggest different interpretations, or propose other directions to explore and discuss. Articulate your ideas in coherent, insightful, fully developed paragraphs. Be critical but civilized. In other words, feel free to disagree with comments made by other people, including your instructor, but remember that arguments delivered in a polite and respectful manner are often more effective than outbursts of passionate refutation.

**Requirements**

-- Read our biblical texts and secondary sources carefully. Follow our reading schedule and plan ahead.
-- Take notes while you read: underline or highlight key passages, write comments or annotations in the margins, identify important or difficult sections, make a list of questions about the text and raise them in your essays and on the discussion board.
-- When writing your essays, please remember to avoid plot summary. Pay close attention to the complexity of the text and focus on analysis rather than description. Your goal would be to examine the text from multiple points of view. Respond to the assignments as accurately as you can while registering as many perspectives as possible.
-- Turn in all assignments on time. Late work may not be accepted.
-- Retain copies of all assignments.
-- If you need help, contact me as soon as possible. If you feel you are falling behind, act immediately. Send me an e-mail. I will respond in 48 hours or less.

**Grading**

-- Essays: 75 points (15 points each).
-- Participation on the discussion board: 25 points (5 points per forum).
Course Schedule
-- Week 1: Introduction.
-- Week 2: Essay 1 due: Moses.
-- Week 3: Discussion: Moses. Reading: Judges.
-- Week 4: Essay 2 due: Judges.
-- Week 5: Discussion: Judges. Reading: Jesus.
-- Week 6: Essay 3 due: Jesus.
-- Week 7: Discussion: Jesus. Reading: Paul.
-- Week 8: Essay 4 due: Paul.
-- Week 10: Essay 5 due: Joseph.
-- Week 11: Discussion: Joseph.

Student Conduct and Community Standards
Please review carefully the information provided on the following webpage, including the various definitions of academic dishonesty:
http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/
http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/rules/oars_500/oar_576/576_015.html

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense that could result in a failing grade for the course or suspension from the university. Do not use outside sources other than the ones posted on Blackboard. If you have questions about the topic in general or a specific assignment, please contact me.

Students with Disabilities
Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability and Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.

Technical Assistance
If you need assistance using Canvas, access 24/7 help through the Help link at the top right within Canvas. If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, or require assistance logging into the course, contact the OSU Help Desk. You can call 541-737-3474, email osuhelpdesk@oregonstate.edu, or visit the OSU Computer Helpdesk online.

Student Evaluation of Teaching
We encourage you to engage in the course evaluation process each term – online, of course. The evaluation form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions through ONID. You will login to “Online Services/MyOSU” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.