Instructor: Terry Briley

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will equip students to become competent and responsible interpreters of Old Testament texts so that they may aid their Christian community in hearing the word of God from these texts. In addition, this course will prepare students to move from the meaning of individual Old Testament texts to develop a broader theological understanding of God, as well as the relationship of humanity to God and God’s redemptive purpose.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THE COURSE
Students completing this course will be able to:

1) Assess the role of contextualization in understanding and applying OT texts;
2) Assess the role of literary genre in understanding and applying OT texts;
3) Appreciate the contributions of the diverse voices and tensions within the OT text;
4) Trace the developing role of humanity in God’s redemptive purpose in the OT;
5) Recognize the OT’s independent witness, as well as its foundational relationship to the NT.

REQUIRED TEXTS


*Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading*, Eugene Peterson (Eerdmans, 2009), ISBN 0802864902


A book I have written for our Story of Israel course at Lipscomb. It is currently being revised and republished, so I will let you know as soon as it is available.

Materials uploaded to Blackboard

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
1) Timely, thoughtful, and appropriate participation in reflections on the material being studied, including interactions with fellow students (see below for more details) – 25%
2) Mid-term and final exams - 25% each
3) Final paper/project - 25%
The reading responses are not intended primarily as summaries or personal reflections. The goal is not to indicate how much the student liked or disliked the reading, but an understanding of the content of the reading, insights and challenges it raises, and its relevance for the course objectives. Responses may include questions prompted by the reading that might be pursued in further class discussion. The response should typically consist of roughly one page (double spaced) in length, but on occasion that amount may be longer.

Appropriate participation has the following characteristics: A) Respectful of fellow students and the teacher; B) Openness to differing views from fellow students and the teacher; C) Relevant to the subject at hand; D) Not so lengthy or frequent as to inhibit the progress of the class or the participation of others.

More details will be provided regarding the nature of critical reflection in responses.

Detailed guidelines for the final paper/project will be provided after we have covered some basic material to prepare you for it.

I will communicate with you primarily through your Lipscomb email account, but most of the content other than readings from your textbooks will be uploaded to Blackboard. You will post your responses on Blackboard, but other assignments may be requested in the form of email attachments in Microsoft Word format (pdf is an acceptable alternative).

**GRADING SCALE**

A  90-100  
B  80-89  
C  70-79  
F  Below 70

**Course Outline**

**Introduction**

- The nature of and relationship between interpretation and theology
- The challenges for practicing interpretation and theology

**Interpretation**

- The goals of and approaches to reading Scripture, including not only critical analysis, but also spiritual reading (*Eat This Book*, pp. 1-118)
- Foundations of interpretation
- Genre analysis
  - Narrative
  - Law
  - Prophecy
  - Psalms
  - Wisdom Literature
Theology
An introduction to missional theology
Themes and issues raised by Walter Brueggemann (excerpts from Old Testament Theology: An Introduction, as well as The Prophetic Imagination)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY
Because Lipscomb's primary mission is to integrate Christian faith and practice with academic excellence, integrity is important in this course. As your instructor, I will deal with each student fairly and honestly. As students, you are expected to do your own work on all tests, labs, and assignments unless I indicate that collaboration is allowed on a specific assignment. Penalties for integrity violations will range from failure on the assignment involved to failure in the course. The instructor also reserves the right to report violations to members of the administration. For clarification, refer to the university's Code of Conduct (http://campuslife.lipscomb.edu/content.asp?SID=41&CID=306) and the Academic Integrity Policy (http://academics.lipscomb.edu/content.asp?CID=5329&SID=12).

STUDENTS REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS
If you require classroom accommodations for a documented disability, please discuss your circumstances with me immediately. If you are entitled to accommodations but have not yet registered with the Counseling Center, contact that office at 966-1781 immediately.

DROPPING THE COURSE
A decision to stop attending class does NOT constitute dropping the course. A drop/add form (available in the Registrar's Office) must be signed by the teacher and processed in the Registrar's Office before the drop is official. If your name appears on the roster at grading time and you have not officially dropped the course, a grade will be assigned based upon the policies outlined in this syllabus.

INCOMPLETES
Requests for an “Incomplete” should not be made except in cases of unforeseen emergency for the student or his/her immediate family.

CLASS SCHEDULE DISRUPTION POLICY
Except in the rarest of instances, Lipscomb University does not cancel classes or close offices. However, should an event (weather-related or otherwise) occur that requires disruption of the entire Lipscomb University class schedule, students will be notified via multiple venues including the Lipscomb homepage (www.lipscomb.edu), a text message sent through LU ALERT (http://lualert.lipscomb.edu), and the Lipscomb Weather Information Line (966-1836). For information on possible snow-related closures or “late starts,” students should consult local television stations (2-WKRN, 4-WSMV, 5-WTVF and 6-WZTV, and Channel 9 on campus). Students should look for information regarding “Lipscomb University,” not “Lipscomb Academy.”