

**The College of the Humanities
Religion Program: RELI 2121; Late Summer Term**

Hebrew Bible

Instructor: Simon Zeldin

Instructor email: simon.zeldin@carleton.ca

Lectures: Mon/Wed 10:05-12:55 (synchronous)

Office hours: Wed 1:05-2:00; also available online (Big Blue Button/Zoom) by request

Please email to schedule an appointment

Course Description:

This 2000-level online course serves as an introduction to the Hebrew Bible. Participants will learn how to analyse key documents from the biblical literature using literary and historical critical modes of analysis, to apprehend them as products of their socio-religious contexts. While the Hebrew Bible continues to be a sacred text for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, our goal will be to understand it from the perspectives of its original authors and audiences, rather than adopting the lenses of the later history of interpretation.

Course Objectives:

- To develop an academic approach to the study of ancient religious writings
- To apprehend how different genres and source texts in the Bible operate – both independently and in conversation with each other
- To understand the interaction between text and context in determining religious meaning
- Familiarity with hermeneutics and ability to recognise different modes of interpretation
- Ability to construct an argument and back up that argument with evidence, communicated coherently in English prose
- Ability to distinguish primary and secondary sources

Course Delivery Methods:

The course will be delivered *synchronously*, with live class sessions. Attendance and active participation are expected, and will be facilitated through such platforms as Zoom and Big Blue Button. In-class attendance is mandatory for full marks in the course; while lectures and multimedia presentations will be the primary method for course delivery, each class session will also incorporate groupwork.

A significant portion of each class (~ 35 mins to an hour, as needed) will be allotted to group exercises, in which students will be expected to engage with course content, as well as produce short written responses to guided questions and prompts. While students will be working in groups, each student will be responsible for contributing to group output (which will be shared on CULearn); the expectation is that all students will participate equally. (*If that is not the case, this will be reflected in individual grades.*) All students must also engage meaningfully with at least one other group's post on the discussion board for individual marks within 24 hours of class. (2-3 sentences required for the responses). In-class group work will comprise **30% of the final grade** (3% for each of the first ten sessions). More detailed instructions will be provided each class.

There will also be short multiple choice (comprehension) quizzes at the start of each class on CULearn to ensure that participants are up to date on the readings. Each quiz will be comprised of 5 questions (shuffled among students), and will be worth 1%, for a total of **10% of the final grade**.

Required Readings:

No hard-copy textbooks are required. Biblical readings can be accessed free of charge at either www.sefaria.org or www.biblegateway.com (for the latter, you MUST select the NRSV translation). If you own a Bible and would like to use it, please ensure it is one of the following two translations: NRSV (New Revised Standard Version) or JPS (Jewish Publication Society). The task of translation is itself a form of interpretation, and reading disparate translations can alter your comprehension of the material. These two translations are preferred for their accuracy and academic rigor. For this reason, absolutely no other Bible translations are permitted for this course. All other (non-biblical) course readings will be either links or attachments, posted on the syllabus and/or on CULearn.

Assessment Methods and Weighting of Grades

5%: Short intro video introducing yourself (1-2 mins, instructions below)*

Due on CULearn WEDNESDAY JULY 8, by or before 6 PM EST

10%: In-class quizzes (10 quizzes x 1% each, during class time)

30%: In-class group work (3% x 10 sessions; 2% for groupwork; 1% for individual responses)

To be completed in allotted class time and shared on the class discussion forum.

Each student is also responsible for responding to at least 1 question from another group's post.

25%: Short (250-300 word) weekly reflective pieces (5 reflections x 5% each)

Due on CULearn EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT, by or before 8 PM EST. Rubric available on CULearn. **

20%: Written assignment (850-1000 words), on either the book of Jonah or Ruth (with prompts)

Due on CULearn MONDAY AUG 10, by or before 11:59 PM EST. Rubric available on CULearn.

10%: Take-home examination, due at the end of the examination period (SUNDAY AUGUST 23)

****Video instructions:***

During the first week of class (by or before 6 PM EST on WEDNESDAY JULY 8), please submit a short video* introduction on CULearn, no more than 2 minutes. (Videos will NOT be shared publicly with the class – they will only be viewed by the instructor.) Videos should include the following details:

- Your name and program
- What drew you to this course
- One thing (idea/concept/association) that you think about when you hear the term "Bible"
- One question you have about the Bible and/or the study of religion

Note: all students should ideally have access to some kind of video recording software, given that this is a synchronous online course. If recording video is an issue for you, please email me and we can make alternate arrangements.

** Weekly reflections will be evaluated according to a rubric, which will be posted on CULearn for students to consult ahead of time. Each reflection will be graded out of 5, on the basis of:

- a) Critical engagement with course material (3 points)
- b) Response relevancy (i.e., does it answer the question) (1 point)
- c) Spelling, grammar, style (1 point)

A note on readings:

The biblical readings for this course will be extensive, but hopefully not too intimidating. From these readings, I expect you to have familiarity with main events and characters in narratives, concepts, themes, etc. (You will be quizzed on basic comprehension, but you will have 2 attempts per quiz.) Read as much as you can, but I recommend reading strategically for an *overview*, vs. trying to memorize each detail. The Bible Odyssey links provide an important context for the biblical material, and must be read alongside the HB texts (especially if you are having a hard time getting through the rest).

Course Calendar:

Dates:	Topic / Theme:	Requirements:
Class 1: Mon July 6	Introduction to course <i>What is the academic study of religion? What is the Hebrew Bible? What are the Jewish scriptures?</i> Ancient cosmology (creation and flood) in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East <u>Group exercise:</u> Israelite vs. Mesopotamian myth	Gen 1-9 http://www.bibleodyssey.net/tools/bible-basics/how-do-biblical-scholars-read-the-hebrew-bible.aspx http://bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/first-creation http://bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/second-creation https://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/bible-basics/what-is-reception-history
Class 2: Wed July 8	Genesis: from universal to covenantal history <u>Group exercise:</u> Greenlighting Genesis (the movie)	Gen chs. 11-22:19, 24, 25:19-34, 27-31:42, 32, 34-35, 37-39 (If possible, skim the rest of Joseph story: chs 40-50) https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/tools/bible-basics/who-wrote-the-bible-test http://bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/circumcision http://bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/binding-and-sacrifice-of-isaac
Class 3: Mon July 13	Exodus: Moses, Sinai, and covenant <u>Group exercise:</u> The Song of Miriam and victory hymns	Exod 1-25, 31-35:29, 40 http://www.bibleodyssey.net/en/people/main-articles/moses https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/passages/related-articles/exodus-tradition-in-the-bible http://bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/the-decalogue Bonus (not mandatory): http://www.bibleodyssey.net/en/people/related-articles/moses-and-the-quran http://www.bibleodyssey.net/passages/related-articles/exodus-tradition-in-the-bible

Dates:	Topic / Theme:	Requirements:
Class 4: Wed July 15	Biblical law Selections from Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy <u>Group exercise:</u> Law in the ancient vs. modern world	Lev 1, 6-7, 10-13, 15-20, 22, 25 Num 19 http://bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/priests-and-levites-in-the-first-century-ce http://bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/sacrifice-in-ancient-israel http://bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/love-your-neighbor-as-yourself-lev-19-18
Class 5: Mon July 20	Deuteronomy, Documentary Hypothesis, catchup <u>Group exercise:</u> <i>Bible's Buried Secrets</i> (film) and questions	Deut 1-7, 10-14, 17-18, 22, 26-32 http://www.bibleodyssey.net/en/tools/video-gallery/l/law-and-the-bible-anderson.aspx
Class 6: Wed July 22	Deuteronomistic History: Samuel <u>Group exercise:</u> Biblical religion and Pagan Yahwism	1 Sam 1-3, 7-10, 12-13:15, 15-20, 24, 28:3-29, 31 2 Sam 1, 5-13, 22-23:7 https://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/main-articles/david https://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/related-articles/kingship-in-the-ane https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/rights-and-duties-of-kingship-in-israel
Class 7: Mon July 27	Kings <u>Group exercise:</u> Grading kings	1 Kgs 1-13, 17-19; 2 Kgs 2-4, 8-9:15, 17-25 https://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/main-articles/solomon https://www.bibleodyssey.org/places/main-articles/first-temple https://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/main-articles/elijah
Class 8: Wed July 29	Biblical prophecy: Selections from Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel <u>Group exercise:</u> Celebrities and charismatic leadership today	Isa 1-11, 35-40, 42, 45, 49-53 Jer 1, 3, 7, 11, 23 Ezek 1-5, 18, 23, 37 https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/prophets-as-performers
Monday August 3 Civic Holiday – NO CLASS TODAY		
Class 9: Wed Aug 5	Biblical wisdom texts: Proverbs & Ecclesiastes <u>Group exercise:</u> Debating biblical wisdom	Prov 1-10, 22-23 Eccl (all: chs. 1-12) https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/passages/related-articles/what-is-wisdom-literature

Dates:	Topic / Theme:	Requirements:
Class 10: Mon Aug 10	Prayer and other modes of religious experience: Psalms and Song of Songs <u>Group exercise:</u> Egyptian love poetry comparison	Psalms 1, 18, 23, 25, 34, 113-118, 137 Song of Songs (all) https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-book-of-psalms/ https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/passages/related-articles/sex-in-the-song-of-songs https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/love-as-strong-as-death https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/song-of-songs/
Class 11: Wed Aug 12	Job <u>Group exercise:</u> N/A (No groupwork in final class)	Job (all – can skip middle section of extended speeches by Job’s friends. Focus on opening and closing chapters) https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/people/main-articles/job https://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/related-articles/job-and-woman-wisdom



University Regulations for All College of the Humanities Courses

Copies of Written Work Submitted

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

Academic Integrity at Carleton

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the internet. More information can be found [here](#).

Academic Accommodation Policy

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to the instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Religious obligation: write to the instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at

613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Grading System at Carleton University

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points and the percentage conversion is below. Grade points indicated are for courses with 1.0 credit value. Where the course credit is greater or less than one credit, the grade points are adjusted proportionately.

[Grading System](#)

Course Sharing Websites and Copyright

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or

distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

Statement on Class Conduct

The Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures affirm that all members of the University community share a responsibility to:

- promote equity and fairness,
- respect and value diversity,
- prevent discrimination and harassment, and preserve the freedom of its members to carry out responsibly their scholarly work without threat of interference.

Deferred Term Work

In some situations, students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, which forces them to delay submission of the work.

Students who claim illness, injury or other extraordinary circumstances beyond their control as a reason for missed term work are held responsible for immediately informing the instructor concerned and for making alternate arrangements with the instructor and **in all cases this must occur no later than three (3.0) working days after the term work was due.**

The alternate arrangement must be made before the last day of classes in the term as published in the academic schedule. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of term. More information is available [in the calendar](#).

Deferred Final Exams

Students who are unable to write a final examination because of a serious illness/emergency or other circumstances beyond their control may apply for accommodation. Normally, the accommodation for a missed final examination will be granting the student the opportunity to write a deferred examination. In specific cases when it is not possible to offer a deferred examination, and with the approval of the Dean, an alternate accommodation may be made. [More information.](#)

The application for a [deferral](#) must:

1. be made in writing or online to the Registrar's Office no later than **three working days** after the original final examination or the due date of the take-home examination; and,
2. be fully supported by appropriate documentation and, in cases of illness, by a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination, or by appropriate documents in other cases. Medical documents must specify the date of the onset of the illness, the (expected) date of recovery, and the extent to which the student was/is incapacitated during the time of the examination. The University's preferred medical form can be found at the Registrar's Office [forms and fees page](#).

Any questions related to deferring a Final Exam or Final Assignment/Take Home Examination should be directed to the [Registrar's Office](#).

Withdrawal From Courses

Withdrawn. No academic credit, no impact on the CGPA. WDN is a permanent notation that appears on the official transcript for students who withdraw after the full fee adjustment date in each term (noted in the Academic Year section of the Calendar each term). Students may withdraw on or before the last day of classes.

Important dates can be found [here](#).

Financial vs. Academic Withdrawal

Make sure that you are aware of the separate deadlines for Financial and Academic withdrawal!

Making registration decisions in Carleton Central involves making a financial and academic commitment for the courses you choose, regardless of attendance. If you do not attend – you must withdraw in Carleton Central within the published deadlines to cancel your registration. [More information](#)

Department Contact Information

College of the Humanities 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for CLCV, HUMS LATN GREK Term Papers and assignments is outside 300 P.A.

Greek and Roman Studies 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop Box is outside of 300 P.A.

Religion 2A39 Paterson Hall (613)520-2100

Religion@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for RELI and SAST Term Papers and assignments is outside of 2A39 P.A.

Registrar's Office 300 Tory (613)520-3500

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/>

Student Resources on Campus

[CUKnowHow Website](#)

[Academics: From registration to graduation, the tools for your success.](#)