

UCOR 141-02: BIBLICAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Online (Zoom) – 10:00-10:50AM – M / W / F, Spring 2021

Instructor: Greg Jones · Email: jonesg3@duq.edu · Time for Students: All Online on Zoom, T: 9-10:30am; R: 12-2pm

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome! This is an introductory course on the Bible. Some call the Bible a living and life-giving conveyor of divine reality. The Bible conveys this divine reality through words – both read and heard – which call for more than the passive reception of a static text. It is also *participatory*; its words are meant to be read, heard and *kept* in one's church, school, home, play, work, faith, skepticism – wherever one goes – as the psalmist writes, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105).

This dynamic interactivity with the text has been described with artistic terms that conveys its divine reality as sacred picture, theater, cinema, and even video game. Such descriptions ground the claims that the Bible is, arguably, the most influential text in history, and a very important text to study. Thus, we will use readings, lectures, sacred texts, presentations, films and games to develop an understanding of the overarching story, structure and main themes of the Bible. This approach will also cultivate a deeper knowledge of key biblical texts, their historical, social and religious contexts, and an exploration of their contemporary relevance. The course does not presume any previous familiarity with the biblical writings.



A Brief Description of the Bible:

The Bible has two major sections. There is a collection of writings from ancient Israel known as the Old Testament, Hebrew Bible, or, in Jewish tradition, the TaNaK. There is also a collection of 27 writings produced by the early Christians known as the New Testament. The Bible is a single book, which is itself a collection of many smaller books. The biblical books, which mediate God's revelation to human beings, were composed over nearly 1,000 years by human authors living in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean world. Therefore, we will bring our knowledge about the historical, literary, and social settings in which the biblical books were composed to learn about what the Bible teaches.

2. COURSE PROCESS

Most class meetings will be interactive lectures; we will discuss the course readings through both large and small group reading and discussions. The lectures will point out important themes in the texts. Yet, you are also encouraged to share your observations and questions on the readings and issues that are raised in class. This will make for a more interesting class, and allow you to articulate what you are learning about different approaches to the texts and the ways in which the Bible is interpreted with your own words.

3. COURSE GOALS

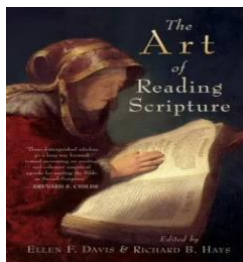
This course will hone your *abilities, skills, knowledge, and attitudes* related to the Bible:

Ability: Describe the Bible's overarching story and the historical and social contexts in which it developed

Skills: Identify major biblical persons, events, and theological themes

Knowledge: Understand principles of Biblical interpretation and ways of carefully receiving biblical texts

Attitudes: Develop a friendly appreciation for reading biblical texts with traditional and non-traditional voices



4. COURSE TEXTS

- [Catholic Study Bible, 2nd edition](#) (<<< Click this link to access the online version!)
- [Migliore, Daniel L., Faith Seeking Understanding : An Introduction to Christian Theology, Third Ed. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014.](#) (<<< Click this link to access the Gumberg e-reserves version! Password: bible)
- Davis, Ellen F., and Richard B. Hays. *The Art of Reading Scripture*. Eerdmans, 2003. (available in print and Kindle format on Amazon)
- Various readings available on Blackboard, in the Course Content folders