

Luther College is a federated college at the University of Regina. Grounded in the liberal arts tradition, Luther College is committed to personalized education in a community of scholars who value excellent teaching and engaged learning. Luther courses are student-centred and open to students from all faculties and federated colleges at the University of Regina.

Luther College respectfully acknowledges that it is situated on Treaty Four lands and on the traditional homeland of the Métis people. Our College considers this shared history to be especially significant as we seek ᑭᓯᓪᓂᓪᓈᓴᑦ miyo-wâhkôhtowin “good relationships”. We are reminded that we are all treaty people and are aware of the responsibility we have to one another.

RLST 245-L01 Bible: Old Testament/Tanakh Winter 2024 CRN 12601

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

In person (Luther College Room 202) and via Zoom accessed through the course website on UR Courses

Pre-Requisites: Completion of 12 credit hours or RLST 100 or permission of the head of the Department of Gender, Religion and Critical Studies.

If you choose to attend classes via Zoom, you will need a reliable computer with a digital camera, microphone and speakers (or headset), word-processing software, and a high-speed internet connection.

For further details see: <https://www.uregina.ca/remote-learning/technical.html>

Instructor: Dr. Franz Volker Greifenhagen, Professor of Religious Studies

<https://www.luthercollege.edu/university/academics/faculty-profiles/volker-greifenhagen>



Pronouns: He, him, his

Location: Luther 226 Phone Number: 306.206.2109

Personal or virtual (via Zoom) office hours will be available by appointment.

Email: Please contact the instructor through the email on the UR Courses website for this course.

Only in exceptional circumstances use the following email: franzvolker.greifenhagen@uregina.ca (Please put “RLST 341” in the subject heading!)

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations should discuss these with the course instructor, and contact the Centre for Student Accessibility at 306.337-2200 and/or <https://www.uregina.ca/student/accessibility/centre-Accessibility/index.html>

Course Description:

In this course we will examine the book called the Old Testament by Christians, the Tanakh by Jews, and the Hebrew Bible by scholars. You will discover this book to be many things: a collection of documents written in the ancient past, a literary compilation, and a conversation partner, or revelation for some readers, on deep societal and spiritual issues, such as identity, family, gender, ethnicity, politics, and ideas about God. You can expect careful reading of biblical texts with attention to historical origins and context, different translations, literary structure, and various interpretations.

We will focus on different perspectives, approaches and issues because the questions we address to a text like the Hebrew bible influence the type of answers we find. Part of the reason for introducing you to this variety is to enable you to discern some of the (often implicit) purposes behind various ways in which the

Hebrew bible is read and used, and to provide you with the opportunity to shape, test and understand your own reading of the Hebrew bible.

We will touch briefly on most parts of the Hebrew bible but will focus in greater detail on certain sections. It should go without saying that you are expected to read large sections of an English translation of the Hebrew bible during this course.

Learning Objectives and/or Outcomes:

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Provide an outline of the general structure and content of the Hebrew bible in its various versions.
2. Examine a text from the Hebrew bible from at least three perspectives: historical, literary, and contemporary/theological.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of different genres found in the Hebrew bible.
4. Give examples of how the Hebrew bible both portrays, and is itself used in, various strategies of identity and power, both in the past and today.
5. Find reliable scholarly resources to research aspects of the Hebrew bible.

Meta-skills and/or Capabilities:

This course will help you to work on certain skills and capabilities that employers look for in university graduates. These skills will be developed by specific parts of the course:

1. Written communication: the quizzes, and various written assignments. .
2. Religious literacy: course content.
3. Critical thinking and analysis: course content, quizzes, class discussion, assignments.
4. Information literacy and research skills: readings, assignments.

Required Texts:

1. *An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible: A Thematic Approach*, by Sandra L. Gravett, Karla G. Bohmbach, F.V. Greifenhagen, & Donald C. Polaski. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008 ["Gravett et. al." on the class schedule below]. This textbook is unfortunately not available as an e-text, but numerous copies are available for loan from the Luther College library, and, of course, you can buy it from your favorite on-line bookstore – it is often available as a used book.

This introduction to the Hebrew Bible begins with the most basic questions: from where and when did the Hebrew Bible originate, how was it written, and how did people read it? In focusing on the fundamental question of the canon--Who are we?--it first gives much attention to the issue of identity. Then it explores how the ancient Israelites organized themselves in terms of power and state, and finally, delineates the larger questions of God and ideology within the canon. The result is a flow of topics that is in line with other studies of ancient literature and culture, without ignoring the religious function of the Hebrew Bible [adapted from the publisher's description].

2. At least two modern English translations of the Hebrew bible. (In this course you will learn the advantage of being able to consult a variety of translations). Besides any personal copies you may already have, many different translations are readily available on-line. The *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) and the *Jewish Publication Society* version (JPS) are recommended; they are both available in helpful annotated or study Bible versions:
 - *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha, Fifth Edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
 - *The Jewish Study Bible, Second Edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Make sure you have access to at least two English Bible translations for every class session

3. *Moses, Man of the Mountain*, by Zora N. Hurston. New York: Harper Perennial, 2008 ["Hurston." on the class schedule below]. This book is available as an e-book through the University of Regina library system.

In this 1939 novel based on the familiar story of the Exodus, Zora Neale Hurston blends the Moses of the Old Testament with the Moses of black folklore and song to create a compelling allegory of power, redemption, and faith. Narrated in a mixture of biblical rhetoric, black dialect, and colloquial English, Hurston traces Moses's life from the day he is launched into the Nile River in a reed basket, to his development as a great magician, to his transformation into the heroic rebel leader, the Great Emancipator. From his dramatic confrontations with Pharaoh to his fragile negotiations with the wary Hebrews, this very human story is told with great humor, passion, and psychological insight—the hallmarks of Hurston as a writer and champion of black culture [from the publisher's description].

In addition, selected readings will occasionally be assigned from other sources, which will be linked to the UR Courses website for this course. Class handouts (including this course syllabus!) are also required reading.

UR Courses:

You will need to access the course website (<https://urcourses.uregina.ca/>):

- If you choose to participate in Zoom classes Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 - 2:15 p.m. (Recordings of classes will be available only by application based on extraordinary circumstances).
- To participate in discussion forums, office hours and other online activities.
- To find up-to-date information on readings and other assignments.
- To access various course materials.
- To submit written assignments, quizzes and exams and to receive back marked written assignments, quizzes and exams.
- To check your marks.

The course website will be continually updated, so please refer to it often.

Helpful People

The following persons will be helpful in assisting you in properly completing your assignments, particularly the final paper.

Carla Flengeris is the Luther College Library Coordinator. She can help you locate, use, evaluate and cite your research for the assignments and projects in this course.
[306.206.2125](tel:306.206.2125) carla.flengeris@uregina.ca



Scott J. Wilson teaches English and coordinates the [Writing Across the Disciplines Program at Luther College](#). He can especially help you with the structuring and writing of papers.
[306-206-2091](tel:306-206-2091) scott.j.wilson@uregina.ca



Attendance

This course is **hyflex**, meaning that you have the choice of attending the class either in person in LC 215 or on-line through Zoom (synchronously only on Tues and Thur at 1:00 - 2:15 p.m.). However note that recent research demonstrates that Zoom use has detrimental effects on your energy and mood - so, you are advised to attend class in person as much as possible if you are able

Class Schedule

It is your responsibility to keep informed on assignments and their due dates. We will attempt to generally follow this schedule but circumstances may require modifications along the way. Please watch for announcements in class and on the course website.

Note that required readings on texts from the Hebrew Bible will be announced in class.

Week	Dates	Focus/Topic	Special Dates	Activities and Assessments	Readings
1	Jan 9, 11	Introduction: Reading the Hebrew Bible			Gravett et. al., introduction, chapter 2
2	Jan 16, 18	Geographical & Historical Context			Gravett et. al., chapter 1
3	Jan 23, 25	Identity: The Story of Moses	Jan 21, World Religion Day Jan 25, <i>Tu B'Shevat</i>	Jan 22, Quiz 1 due by 11:59 pm	Gravett et. al., chapter 3; Hurston, chapters 1-18
4	Jan 30, Feb 1	Family Identity & the Hebrew Bible	Jan 27, Holocaust Remembrance Day (UN)	Jan 29, Introductory Assignment due by 11:59 pm	Gravett et. al., chapter 4; Hurston, chapters 19-25.
5	Feb 6, 8	Ethnic Identity & the Hebrew Bible		Feb 5, Quiz 2 due by 11:59 pm	Gravett et. al., chapter 7; Hurston, chapters 26-31.
6	Feb 13, 15	Gender Identity & the Hebrew Bible	Feb 14, Ash Wednesday		Gravett et. al., chapter 5; Hurston, chapters 32-36
	Feb 20, 22	Winter Reading Week			No classes
7	Feb 27, 29	Class Identity & the Hebrew Bible	Mar 1, World Day of Prayer	Feb 26, Quiz 3 due by 11:59 pm	Gravett et. al., chapter 8; Hurston, chapters 37-40.
8	Mar 5, 7	Body Identity & the Hebrew Bible		Paper Proposal Due on Mar 4 by 11:59 pm	Gravett et. al., chapter 6.
9	Mar 12, 14	Power & the Hebrew Bible: The Story of David	Mar 15, Last Day to drop with a W	Mar 11, Quiz 4 due by 11:59 pm	Gravett et. al., chapter 9, 10
10	Mar 19, 21	Deity Power & the Hebrew Bible		Mar 18, First Pages and Annotated Biblio due by 11:59 pm	Gravett et. al., chapter 13.
11	Mar 26, 28	Ideological Power & the Hebrew Bible	Mar 24, Purim & Palm Sunday Mar 29, Good Friday	Mar 25, Quiz 5 due by 11:59 pm	Gravett et. al., chapter 11.
12	Apr 2, 4	Media Power & the Hebrews Bible	Mar 31, Easter Sunday		Gravett et. al., chapter 12.
13	Apr 9, 11	Summary		Apr 8, Final Draft of Paper due by 11:59 pm	TBA

TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM: Due Tuesday, April 16 by 11:59 p.m.

Evaluation Components and Due Dates

1. *Participation*: You need to attend class sessions and have completed the assigned readings and any special assignments for each class period. Please also make active use of the discussion area and other features of the course website. You will also meet individually with the instructor once during the course. Your class participation mark, and your general performance in this course, will depend on your attendance, and on your preparedness and active participation.
2. *Quizzes*: Five open-book quizzes will be given, one every two weeks. These quizzes will be based on the assigned readings. Quizzes will be released digitally, usually on a Thursday or Friday, and you will have until 11:59 p.m. on the following Monday to complete and submit them. Only the four quizzes in which you earned the highest marks will count towards your final class mark. These quizzes are meant to motivate you to keep up with the material and to provide you with a measure of your progress. Quizzes not submitted by the due date cannot be made up, unless you have encountered circumstances beyond your control (e.g. medical reasons, death in the family); in this case you will need to apply with the instructor for an extension – see the form on the course website.
2. *Introductory Assignment*: You will complete an introductory assignment (5-6 pages) on an assigned text from the Hebrew Bible. Further details will be made available in class. This assignment is due on Monday, January 29.
3. *Research Paper*: You will write a research paper of 10-12 pages. Your paper will consist of a study of a text from the Hebrew Bible. Your topic must be approved by the instructor.
You will write the paper in three stages:
 - A proposal explaining the topic you have chosen, and raising possible questions and issues for investigation, with a bibliography of at least 5 items. Due on Monday, Mar 4.
 - The first two pages of your paper and a complete and annotated bibliography. Due on Monday, Mar 18.
 - The final complete version of your paper. Due on Monday, April 8.
 Your paper may include a creative form such as a short drama or other art form, a set of lesson plans or other practical expressions; please consult the instructor. Bonus marks will be awarded.
4. *Take-Home Final Exam*: This will be issued on April 12 and will be due on April 16 by 11:59 pm.

****Note:** You must complete all of the above requirements in order to pass this course. For written assignments, see the section on “Written Work” below.

Evaluation Component	Grade Weight	Due Date
Participation	10%	Ongoing
Quizzes (4 X 5)	20%	Bi-Weekly
Introductory Assignment	15%	Jan 29
Paper proposal	5%	Mar 4
First pages and annotated bibliography	10%	Mar 18
Completed paper	20%	April 8
Final exam	20%	April 16
Total	100%	

Professional Conduct & Policies

Written Work:

All written assignments for this course must be *typewritten* in 12 point font, double-spaced, on 8½" by 11" white paper with normal margins, and provided with a cover page with your name

and student number. Written assignments should be properly paginated and referenced with consistent citations and a properly formatted bibliography. The authenticity and scholarly reliability of sources from the Internet must be carefully evaluated before being used; if in doubt, consult the instructor.

With certain exceptions, written work should follow MLA or Chicago style. The *Style Sheet* published by the University of Regina provides a quick reference to MLA; see: <https://www.uregina.ca/arts/english/assets/docs/pdf/stylesheet2017.pdf>

Written work, including assignments and quizzes must be submitted as pdf's through the course website. All written assignments will be evaluated by Turnitin.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offences and will result in severe academic penalties that can include a failing mark or even expulsion from the university. See the academic regulations regarding cheating and plagiarism in the *U of R Undergraduate Calendar* section on "Student Code of Conduct and Right to Appeal" (www.uregina.ca/student/support/Student-Code-of-Conduct-and-Right-to-Appeal.pdf); see also <https://www.uregina.ca/president/executive-team/ed-governance-univ-secretary/student-appeals/student-behaviour.html>. On plagiarism, see the information at https://academic-integrity.uregina.ca/?page_id=59 and https://academic-integrity.uregina.ca/?page_id=106.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

You are permitted, if you wish, to use generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT or others, but **only** to brainstorm for written assignments. Beyond that, any work that you submit must reflect your own original understanding and insights. Note that generative AI tools often produce rather general, inconsistent, and mediocre work, and may also contain entirely fabricated material. If you choose to use AI tools, you are required to submit an appendix to your submitted written work containing the AI generated content, the tool used, and any prompt(s) used in content generation. Please note that programs like Grammarly now use generative AI extensively and therefore are not allowed in the production of your submitted work.

****Late Submission Policy:**

Written work is due on the deadlines specified in the class schedule. If, for circumstances beyond your control (e.g. medical reasons, death in the family), you are unable to complete the written work on time, apply, in advance, if possible, with the instructor for an extension. Assignments submitted late without permission of the instructor are liable to a grade reduction.

Attendance Policy:

Please attend class sessions, whether in person or on Zoom, punctually, complete the assigned readings for each class period, and participate in online discussions. Your attendance constitutes a significant part of your participation mark.

Accessing the Zoom Classroom: Procedures and Etiquette

1. Login to the Zoom class meeting **only** through the link on the UR Courses site.
2. Keep your audio muted, but, if possible, please have your video enabled since it is important for the class experience for everyone to see each other. If you are worried about showing the background of wherever you are located when attending class, please use a virtual background (see instructions at <https://www.uregina.ca/remote-learning/zoom-backgrounds.html>).

3. To ask a question during the instructor's presentation, please use the raised hand option in Zoom and type your question into the chat. You can also unmute yourself to ask a question.
4. Class sessions will be recorded and will be available only for those who have applied to access specific class recordings due to extraordinary personal circumstances. Recordings will be kept for only a limited time. Please see the U of R statement regarding Zoom recordings and privacy below.
5. Time permitting, during the last minutes of class, the recording will be turned off and you will be able to participate in a discussion of the material covered in class.

University of Regina Statement Regarding Recording of Zoom Class Meetings

Some of our Zoom class sessions may be recorded to support student learning (i.e. for use by enrolled students, including those who are unable to attend live or who may require certain accommodation). As a result, the University of Regina may collect your image, voice, name, personal views and opinions, and course work under the legal authority of The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Students who participate in a Zoom session with their video on or utilize a profile image are consenting to have their video or image recorded (including anything visible in the background). If you have concerns with such recording, be sure to keep your video off and do not use a profile image. In addition, students who un-mute their microphone during class and participate orally are consenting to have their voices, and personal views and opinions recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to this recording, please do not un-mute your microphone during class. If you have any questions about the collection or use of your personal information, please contact your instructor

Professionalism:

The overwhelming majority of future employers believe that universities should develop professionalism in students regardless of their field of study. A job applicant's professionalism has a huge impact on the likelihood of being hired. Therefore, it is well worth the effort for you to cultivate a professional attitude and behavior as a student. Aspects of professional student conduct have already been touched on above, but here is a list of some things to which you will want to pay attention in order to develop your sense of professionalism:

1. Be on time for classes. If you are late, join without disrupting the class.
2. Stay for the whole class. Do not leave or log out until the instructor has indicated that the class is over.
3. During class, be attentive to the instructor. So as not to distract your fellow classmates, keep quiet or mute your microphone unless participating in a class discussion or asking a question.
4. Turn cell-phones off or set them to vibrate.
5. Do not distract other students by texting or surfing the web during class.
6. Submit assignments on time, clearly labelled with your name.
7. Respect the opinions of other students in the class; avoid rudeness.
8. Use a formal approach to communicating with your instructor; do not assume familiarity unless the instructor permits or encourages it.
9. Never ever plagiarize! It is stealing and unprofessional and not worth it in the long run. Plagiarism includes work that has been produced by someone other than yourself or by generative AI software.

Teaching and Learning Philosophy:

You, as a student, are responsible for your own learning; I, as an instructor, am responsible to assist you with your learning. I do not claim to have all the answers on the subject matter; rather, together we will generate productive questions and explore possible answers. Instead of competing with other students in class, make friends and help each other succeed.

I will strive to be prepared each class; I expect you also to be prepared. I will work hard, be involved and enthusiastic; I expect the same from you. I expect you to read the required readings, take notes, ask questions and talk about what you are learning. I expect you to take the written assignments seriously as a

way of thinking and improving your written communication skills. I will respect your contributions and alternative views of the material.

I will maintain standards to ensure learning. I will endeavour to inform you of your standing in the class in an ongoing manner.

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor about any questions or problems connected with the course.

Helpful Stuff:

The University of Regina Student Mental Health at the Student Wellness Centre, 119 Paskwaw Tower (306-337-2200) provides personal counseling and emergency counselling. See <https://www.uregina.ca/student/counselling/>.

The University of Regina Student Success Centre offers writing tutoring, student success workshops, and one-on-one learning skills consultations. See <http://www.uregina.ca/student/ssc/>.

See the attached pages for helpful information on various university procedures and deadlines.

“A mind is not a vessel to be filled. It is a fire to be kindled.”

Plutarch



בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הוֹה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שָׁנַתָּן מִחֲכָמְתוֹ לְבָשָׂר וְדָם.

*Blessed are You, LORD our God, Master of the universe,
who has given wisdom to flesh and blood.*