



The University of Manchester

School of Arts,
& Cultures, Faculty of Humanities
Course Unit Descriptor



Languages

23.02.2016

GENERAL INFORMATION

Credit Rating	10
Course Unit Title	Interpreting the Old Testament
Unit Code	115 (8115 Distance learning version)
Unit Level	1
Contact Hours	22 (n/a for Distance learning version)
FHEQ Level	4
Teaching Period	Flexible delivery
Teaching Staff	Dr Zoltán Schwáb
ECTS	5

EXTERNAL FACING COURSE UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit builds on the discussion of introductory issues in unit 112 Introduction to the Bible and on skills acquired in unit 103 Reading and Using the Bible. It helps students to improve their exegetical skills and to read and use commentaries and other aids independently. It also pays attention to contemporary use of the Old Testament.

COURSE UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit builds on the discussion of introductory issues in unit 112 Introduction to the Bible and on skills acquired in unit 103 Reading and Using the Bible. It helps students to improve their exegetical skills and to read and use commentaries and other aids independently. It also pays attention to contemporary use of the Old Testament.

AIMS

To give students more experience in interpreting the Old Testament and in using secondary literature.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of this unit students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a good understanding of a variety of Old Testament passages

Intellectual Skills

By the end of this unit students will be able to:

- Evaluate critically commentaries and other aids
- Analyse the use of Scripture in devotional literature

Practical Skills

By the end of this unit students will be able to:

- Interpret passages from the Old Testament with confidence

- Communicate the significance of different parts of the Old Testament for today

Transferable Skills and Personal Qualities

By the end of this unit students will be able to:

- Evaluate texts with confidence
- (115 only) work constructively in a group

Employability Skills

Students will improve skills such as reading texts appropriately, managing information, organizing and presenting their ideas. These skills are vital to a range of employment contexts.

SYLLABUS

1. Introduction, Old Testament vs. New Testament
2. Is the Old Testament Violent?
3. Hermeneutics of the OT 1: story or history (the question of historicity)
4. Hermeneutics of the OT 2: The world in front of/behind/of the text
5. Context 1: ancient Near East
6. Context 2: academic context (biblical criticism)
7. Context 3: faith context (Jewish vs. Christian interpretations)
8. Exegesis of the OT 1: basics (Genesis 1)
9. Exegesis of the OT 2: basics continued (Genesis 1)
10. Exegesis of the OT 3: characterization, and speeches in narratives
11. Exegesis of the OT 4: how to read poetry

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

102: Interactive lectures and small groups

8102: Distance learning

Unit materials are available at Spurgeon's *Online* to support student learning

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Assessment task	Length	Weighting within unit
Formative:		
• 115: <i>An exegetical exercise</i>	<i>Notional 500 words</i>	n/a
• 8155: <i>An exegetical exercise</i>	<i>Notional 500 words</i>	n/a
Summative:		
• 115: <i>An exegetical essay</i>	2000 words	100%
• 8155: <i>An exegetical essay and a learning journal*</i>	2000 words	100%
		Pass/fail*

* Distance learning students are required to pass this element. So long as this element has been passed, they will be eligible for compensation if the overall unit mark is within the compensation zone (30-39%), and the compensatable credit allowance as set out in the Degree Regulations has not been exceeded.

FEEDBACK METHODS

- Oral feedback in class
- Written feedback on formative and summative written submissions within 15 working days

REQUISITES

Available on which programme(s)?	BA in Theology
Available as Free Choice (UG) or to other programmes (PG)?	Available as Free Choice (UG)
Pre-requisite units	103 and 112
Co-requisite units	n/a

RECOMMENDED READING

- Alter, Robert, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (George Allen & Unwin, 1981) [The relevant chapter will be available via Moodle]
- Arnold, Bill T. and Brent A. Strawn, *The World around the Old Testament, The People and Places of the Ancient Near East* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2016) [Available in Perlego]
- Dalley, Stephanie, *Myths from Mesopotamia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) [The relevant chapter will be available via Moodle]
- Dell, Katharine, *Who Needs the Old Testament? Its Enduring Appeal and Why the New Atheists Don't Get It* (London: SPCK, 2017) [Available in Perlego]
- Goldingay, John, *An Introduction to the Old Testament: Exploring Text, Approaches and Issues* (London: SPCK, 2016) [Available in Perlego]
- Gorman, Michael J., *Elements of Biblical Exegesis, A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020) [Relevant section will be available via Moodle]
- Kugel, James L., *How to Read the Bible* (New York: Free Press, 2007) [An audiobook is available via Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/How-to-Read-Bible-James-L-Kugel-audiobook/dp/B003JOAK4K>]
- Longman III, Tremper and Raymond B Dillard, *A Quick Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012) [Available in Perlego]
- Miller, Clare, *A Simple Guide to Better Biblical Exegesis, Or How Not to Write a Boring Exegesis* (London: Spurgeon's College, 2017) [Available on-line: [file:///C:/Users/zolta/Downloads/How%20to%20Do%20Exegesis-Surgeons%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/zolta/Downloads/How%20to%20Do%20Exegesis-Surgeons%20(1).pdf)]
- Mburu, Elizabeth, *African Hermeneutics*, Africa Christian Textbooks (Plateau State, Nigeria; Carlisle, Cumbria: HippoBooks and Langham Publishing, 2019) [Available in Perlego]
- Walton, John H., *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 2nd edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2018) [Available in Perlego]
- Multiple articles, videos, and further resources on the website:
<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/>

SCHEDULED ACTIVITY HOURS

22 contact hours (n/a for distance learning version)

PLACEMENT HOURS

n/a

INDEPENDENT STUDY HOURS

78 hours (100 hours for distance learning version)

ADDITIONAL NOTES

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APPROVAL

Date approved by UGC	
Valid from Date (Publishing Date)	