

# Intro To The Old Testament

REL 110-001 | Fall 2022 | 3 Credit Hours

Lecture

Dr. Steve Jacobs

## Contact Information

### UA Campus Directory:

- Dr. Steve Jacobs (<https://www.ua.edu/directory/?i=sjacobs#listing>)

## Prerequisites

### UA Course Catalog Prerequisites:

No prereqs found

## Course Description

### Course Description and Credit Hours

Introduction to the books of the Old Testament, or Hebrew Bible as it is known in Judaism, in their historical setting, with emphasis on textual analysis and on literary forms and their function and use in the past and present.

## Required Texts

### Required Texts from UA Supply Store:

- Jigoulov / The Scriptures of Ancient Judaism : (First Edition)\* (Required)
- Jigoulov / (eBook) The Scriptures of Ancient Judaism (E - Book)

# Course Objectives

The primary goal of this survey course of the books of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) is to acquaint student with an academically rigorous and objective view of these texts as they are presently understood by scholars in the Academy, noting full well the complexities of our knowledge of these books as well as their importance to both the Jewish and Christian religious traditions communities (and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the Muslim/Islamic traditions and communities as well).

## Student Learning Outcomes

- 1. Students will be able to summarize in a single paragraph the contents of each of these books of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) within its three divisions: (a) the Five Books of Moses, (b) the Prophets and the Writings.
- 2. Students will be able to state in written form the relevant issues and controversies surrounding the study of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) as well as specific texts.
- 3. Students will be able to identify at least five (5) of the ten (10) major themes of the Book of Genesis.
- 4. Students will be able to orally explain in class discussion the Dietary System (*Kashrut*) as presented in the Book of Leviticus.
- 5. Students will be able to orally explain in class discussion the concept of Holiness (*K'dusha*) as presented throughout the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible), especially the Book of Leviticus.
- 6. Students will be able to orally explain in class discussion the concept of Covenant (*B'rith*) as presented throughout the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible).
- 7. Students will be able to orally explain in class discussion the concept of Prophecy (*N'viah*) as presented in the Second Section of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible), the Prophets.
- 8. Students will be able to successfully critique the arguments for and against dividing the Book of Isaiah into 1st, 2nd, 3rd (and 4th) Isaiah.
- 9. Students will be able to explain orally in class discussion why the first four books of the second section of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible)—Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings)—do not meet the criteria of prophecy.
- 10. Students will be able to briefly summarize orally in class discussion the twelve books which comprise the so-called "Minor Prophets" (*Tre Asar*).
- 11. Students will be able to successfully explain in class discussion why some books of the third section of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible)—the Writings—are considered "Wisdom Literature" and others are not.
- 12. Students will be able to explain in class discussion and give examples of five (5) of the ten (10) different types of Psalms contained within the Book(s) of Psalms.
- 13. Students will be able to explain and defend their choice for the best title of this anthologized collection of books—Old Testament, Hebrew Bible, First Covenant, Hebrew Scriptures, Torah, or other.

# Other Course Materials

Additional materials, if appropriate, will be either handed out in hardcopy or posted on Blackboard.

## Outline of Topics

1. Issues and concerns associated with studying the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible).
2. The Five Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers Deuteronomy.
3. The Pre-Classical Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel I&II, Kings I&II
4. The Major Prophets: Isaiah Jeremiah, Ezekiel
5. The Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
6. Writings-Wisdom Literature I: Psalms, Proverbs Job, Song of Songs
7. Writings-Wisdom Literature II: Job, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes
8. Writings-"Non-Wisdom" Literature: Ezra Nehemiah, Chronicles I&II
9. Apocrypha, Commentaries, Interpretations
10. Other Jewish Literatures I
11. Other Jewish Literatures II
12. Wrap-up

## Exams and Assignments

1. Exam #1: The First Five Books of Moses (~50 + multiple choice questions)
2. Exam #2: The Prophets (~50 + multiple choice questions)
3. Exam #3: The Writings (~50 + multiple choice questions)

## Grading Policy

Each Exam is worth 33% of the grade (class curved).

# Policy on Missed Exams and Coursework

Missed exams and coursework (lack of attendance) to be determined in consultation with the Instructor.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance is *required* unless otherwise noted in the Calendar of Meetings.

## Notification of Changes

The instructor will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, the instructor reserves the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, the instructor will notify students in class and/or via email and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

## Statement on Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official Academic Misconduct Policy (<https://catalog.ua.edu/undergraduate/about/academic-regulations/student-expectations/academic-misconduct-policy/>) provided in the Online Catalog.

## Statement On Disability Accommodations

Contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) (<https://catalog.ua.edu/undergraduate/about/support-programs/disability-services/>) as detailed in the Online Catalog.

## Severe Weather Protocol

Please see the latest Severe Weather Guidelines (<https://ready.ua.edu/severe-weather-guidelines/>) in the Online Catalog.

## Pregnant Student Accommodations

Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the UAct website (<https://www.ua.edu/campuslife/uact/information/pregnancy>).

# Religious Observances

Under the Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observances, students should notify the instructor in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance. The instructor will work to provide reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities as long as that does not interfere with the academic integrity of the course. See full guidelines at Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines (<https://provost.ua.edu/oa-guidelines-for-religious-holidays-observance>) .

## UAct Statement

The University of Alabama is committed to an ethical, inclusive community defined by respect and civility. The UAct website ([www.ua.edu/uact](http://www.ua.edu/uact) (<https://www.ua.edu/uact>) ) provides extensive information on how to report or obtain assistance with a variety of issues, including issues related to dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual violence or other Title IX violations, illegal discrimination, harassment, hate or bias incidents, child abuse or neglect, hazing, threat assessment, retaliation, and ethical violations or fraud.

## Wellness Resources

### College can be a stressful time

If you or someone you know is facing a challenging time or dealing with academic or personal stress, anxiety, depression, or other concerns, we strongly encourage and support you to seek assistance or to help friends find the care that they may need (<https://alabama.box.com/s/nz3gs827kx538255typ9hm5owd7xoyj8>) .

Also, If you are experiencing a personal crisis and need urgent assistance, you can also contact the following resources:

#### *Counseling Center*

- Monday-Friday during routine Center hours (205-348-3863).
- Weekends, holidays, after-hours (contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 and ask to speak with the on-call counselor).
- You may also text BAMA to 741-741 to text with a trained volunteer.

#### *Women and Gender Resource Center*

- Monday-Friday during routine Center hours (205-348-5040).
- Weekends, holidays, after-hours (contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 and ask to speak to the on-call advocate for the WGRC).