



School of Theology & Christian Ministry

HON 2001 Old Testament History and Religion

2 Units

Fall 2023 – Quad I

Meeting days/times: TR 9:30 am – 11:20 am

Meeting location: Evans Hall 121 (E 121)

Final Exam: Thursday, 10/12, 9:30 am – 11:20 am

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PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Foundational Explorations Mission

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture

Course Description

Within the context of the history of Israel, this course provides an overview of the literature of the Old Testament with special attention to its religious and theological meaning. This course (in conjunction with HON 202 in sequential quad terms) highlights the theological unity of the Christian Scriptures, while exploring the literary diversity of the two-testament canon.

Course Learning Outcomes

The student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

- 1) Identify the historical contexts of the Old Testament.
- 2) Articulate the unity of the Old Testament in its canonical context within the diverse literature of the Christian canon.
- 3) Articulate and appreciate the ways in which the Bible, understood as given by divine inspiration, functions as the church's central norm for Christian discipleship, faith and practice; and,
- 4) Articulate the basic content of the books of the Old Testament and the methods appropriate to the interpretation of those books.

Foundational Explorations Learning Outcomes

This course is one of the components of the Foundational Explorations Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, under the category of "Responding to the Sacred." By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the faculty supports the study of Scripture and Christian heritage as foundational in the pursuit of knowledge and the development of personal values.

- 1) Link to FE (formerly GE) courses and corresponding FELO's:
<https://assessment.pointloma.edu/academic-assessment/general-education/assessment-plan/>
- 2) FELO 3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of Christian Scripture, Tradition, and Ethics, including engagement in acts of devotion and works of mercy.
- 3) The signature assignment assessing FELO3 will be the **Final Project** (description below under "Assignments at a Glance")

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

1. Michael Coogan, et.al., eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible (NRSV w/Apocrypha)*, (5th ed; Oxford University Press, 2018), ISBN 0790276072

2. Matthew Richard Schlimm, *This Strange and Sacred Scripture: Wrestling with the Old Testament and Its Oddities* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015), ISBN: 9781426793042.
3. Additional resources available via the course Canvas page.

Assessment and Grading

Grades will be based on the following:

Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Assignment distribution by percentage:

- 35% Readings and Weekly Homework
- 20% Midterm Exam
- 15% Discussion Leadership
- 30% Final Project

Descriptions of each assignment group may be found under “Assignments at a Glance” at the end of this syllabus and in Canvas.

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In Old Testament History and Religion, all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include discussions of the different views on the inspiration of Scripture and its interpretation. It is not uncommon within the scope of this class for students to voice differing opinions on topics such as gender roles, politics, and the role of the church in society. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of biblical studies, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In Old Testament History and Religion, students may choose biblical passages that may cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics may include reading about violent imagery and threats of violence, slavery, and other forms of human oppression and abuse. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include reassigning or proactively assigning peer review assignments, leaving class while the topic is discussed, or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of biblical studies and their interpretation, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g. ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski) is not permitted, and use of these tools will be treated as plagiarism.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#).

The School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the school urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings. Thus, terms like "man" or "mankind" or the pronoun "he," should not be used to refer to all humans. Instead "people," "humanity," "humans," and "he or she" better acknowledge women as full persons.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

Assignments At-A-Glance

Note: Specific assignment information for weekly homework, instruction sheets and rubrics, and all due dates will be posted in Canvas.

Readings and Weekly Homework (35%): The OT is the primary text for this course. All readings are required. Please have your Bible with you for Zoom sessions. It is important to keep up with the readings on a session-by-session basis or the information will quickly become overwhelming. Reading check-ups 1 and 3 will be online quizzes. For reading check-ups 2 and 4, you will fill out a worksheet and bring it to class. (FELO 1c)

Midterm Exam (20%): The quiz will be taken in class **on Thurs, Sept 22**. It will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and matching. The quiz will cover the contents of the mini-lectures and assigned readings from the first half of the quad (Tue, Sept 6–Tue, Sept. 20). (FELO 1c)

Discussion Leadership (15%): Each student will take a turn facilitating discussion in their breakout session over the assigned reading for that class session. Students will prepare discussion questions and/or group activity and submit to the professor two days before their assigned day. An instruction guide and rubric will be posted to Canvas.

Final project (30%): As the culmination to the quad, there will be a final project due (submitted online) during our final exam period. We will practice these skills during discussions, especially in the sessions after the midterm exam. You will have a choice of format (paper, video, visual presentation, etc.) A complete instruction sheet and rubric will be provided. Briefly, you will be asked to: Choose any passage (about 10 verses) from the Old Testament and reinterpret it in two ways:

- 1) A historical interpretation: how might the Hebrew people exiled from their land interpret this passage? How might they compare it to their situation? What message from God (hope, guidance, peace, etc.) might they find as they reinterpret this passage for their time?
- 2) A contemporary application for today: how might people today interpret this passage? How might they compare it to their situation? What message from God (hope, guidance, peace, etc.) might they find as they reinterpret this passage for their time?