

**BIB1001: Old Testament History and Religion**  
**Tues. & Thurs. 8:00-9:00am in Fermanian 104**  
[markmann@pointloma.edu](mailto:markmann@pointloma.edu)  
**Office Hours: By Arrangement**

**Course Description and Purpose:** This course is designed to open a conversation (that will hopefully last a lifetime) about the Old Testament (also known as the Hebrew Bible). The class provides an introduction to (1) the literature/content of the Old Testament in its social, historical, literary, and theological contexts; and (2) the critical study of the Old Testament. Along these lines, this course is designed as a journey, which serves to introduce the student to the basic content of the divine-human drama that unfolds within the pages of the Bible and to equip the student with the foundational tools and skills to continue the dialogue with that drama throughout his or her life. Cognitive development will be encouraged through textbook readings, classroom discussions/lectures, and periodic examinations. Social development will be encouraged through small group discussions and exercises as well as through the relating of biblical concepts to contemporary social issues. Spiritual development will be encouraged through a dialogue with the dynamic faith of the Christian Scripture, a faith that grew out of the community of believers and continues to challenge and shape that community in contemporary settings.

**Course Learning Outcomes** (School of Theology and Christian Ministry): The student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

1.
  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.

**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 Texts:** All are available for purchase through the PLNU Bookstore. Additional readings (and videos) will be available within the [Modules](#).

1.
  1. The New Interpreter's Study Bible (New Revised Standard Version). Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.
  2. Judy Fentress-Williams, *Holy Imagination: A Literary and Theological Introduction to the Whole Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2019.
  3. Sam Powell, *A Teachers Guide to Understanding Scripture*, 2012.

### **Course Requirements:**

- **Quiz on the Books of the Old Testament:** This will take place in class.
- **Class Participation and Attendance:** Regular attendance in class is required, and worth 20% of the final grade. You are allowed three absences, after which each absence will result in a 10% reduction of your attendance grade, which is equivalent to 2% of your total grade. The only excused absences are those involving a hospitalization, a death in your family, or an illness or condition approved as an accommodation through the [PLNU Educational Access Center](#). **NOTE:** Giving false information on the daily roll sheet (i.e. signing someone else in or having someone else sign you in) is an act of cheating that is equal to cheating on an exam. It will subject you to the academic dishonesty penalties of the university, including failure of this course and possible expulsion from the university. If you are aware that you will be unable to attend class, let me know beforehand, and I will use zoom so that you can participate remotely, in which case you will be considered present.
- **Book Review Essay:** For this assignment, you will write a review of *A Teachers Guide to Understanding the Scriptures* by PLNU Prof. Emeritus Samuel Powell. This review should include a summary and assessment of the book, including reference to ideas and themes we have discussed throughout the semester. It should be 2-3 pages in length and will be graded for accuracy of summary, depth of assessment and clarity of writing. See attached rubric for additional grading criteria.
- **Group Presentations:** All students will be required to contribute to a group presentation on one book of the OT. These groups will coincide with discussion groups. Complete directions are available within the appropriate Module.
- **Group Discussions:** Multiple assignments over the course of the semester will involve your participation in discussions with your presentation group. Responses to all members of your small group are required for full credit.
- **Midterm and Final Exam:** There will be two major exams--a midterm and final. The midterm will cover material from the first half of the semester and the final material from the entire semester. You will have several days and have access to all course materials, including notes from lectures, all assigned readings and videos. Use of AI and plagiarism are both strictly forbidden and will result in a failing grade on the exam and a report to the provost. Canvas is VERY good at identifying both, and it's typically obvious to your professor, even when students make extensive changes to cover their tracks, so it's not worth trying. Besides, you are being given open access to all course materials, so there is no reason for cheating. And plagiarism is actually

very easy to avoid--you simply need to cite the sources you have used for your answers. I'm not particular about what citation format you use, and am happy to talk with students who need instruction for doing this properly.

### Course Policies

**1. Grading:** The student's final grade will be based on a combination of class attendance, discussions, presentations, essays and exams as follows:

Attendance	50 Points
Group Introductions	20 Points
Quiz on the Books of the OT	50 Points
Review Essay	80 Points
Lectio Divina Assignment	50 Points
Mid-term Exam	100 Points
Group Presentation	50 Points
Final Exam	100 Points
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>500 points</b>

**2. Grading Scale:** (Based on percentage off total points)

- **A:** 94-100; **A-:** 90-93
- **B+:** 87-89; **B:** 84-86; **B-:** 80-83
- **C+:** 77-79; **C:** 74-76; **C-:** 70-73
- **D+:** 67-69; **D:** 64-66; **D-:** 60-63
- **F:** Anything below 60

**3. Electronics:** Students are not permitted to use laptop computers, iPads, iPhones, or similar devices in the classroom during the class sessions. (If you have documented reason to do so from the [Educational Access Center](#) or other extenuating circumstances, please discuss with the professor.)

**4. Late Work Policy:** In order to receive full credit for assignments, they must be submitted by the day and time listed in Canvas. I also accept late work, but with a grade deduction of 10% per day late for the first five days, after which the assignment can be turned in any time before the end of the semester for up to 50% credit, which is better than no credit.

**5. Inclusivity:** 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. This course will strive to practice sensitivity toward and foster respect for issues of inclusivity in matters of language and conduct. Each student should seek to enrich this inclusive atmosphere in both their class contributions and personal interactions.

**6. Academic Honesty:** 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.

**7. Academic Accommodations:** If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's [Educational Access Center \(EAC\)](#) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation.

**8. 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.

**9. Course Credit Hour Information:** In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 2-unit class delivered over 16 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 75 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes.

**10. State Authorization:** State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on State Authorization to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.