

ASSOCIATED CANADIAN THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS OF TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Graduate Course Syllabus

Course Number: BOT 655

Course Name: Exposition of Wisdom Literature

Semester and Year: Fall 2020

Instructor: Andrew Krause, PhD

Contact Information: andrew.krause@twu.ca

Office Hours: By appointment (Zoom)

Co-requisites or Pre-requisites: BIB 505

Semester Hours: 3

Class Schedule: Wednesday, 18:30–20:30 (Pacific Time).

****The entirety of this course will be online. Class time will be two hours (including breaks) on Wednesday evening, with the remaining hour fulfilled through Moodle Discussion Boards****

Course Description

A survey of the Old Testament wisdom corpus and study of selected passages in greater detail. Relevant hermeneutical issues are highlighted, key themes are investigated, and the enduring significance of wisdom instruction is explored.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, each student should be able to:

1. understand the criteria, implications, and relevance of the generic designation of wisdom literature, as well as the dynamic concept of wisdom in early Israelite, Judahite, and Judean literature.
2. define the intended message, and the canonical and theological significance of the individual wisdom books.
3. evaluate critically the various options used to explain the context(s) out of which these inspired texts arose and proposals regarding the issues and audience that text (as received) seeks to address
4. analyze the poetics common to this genre, in order to clarify the meaning-making, purposes, and genre expectations of these texts.

Course Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and its Application

- demonstrate in-depth knowledge of a particular field of study and/or profession
- demonstrate ability to apply knowledge and discipline specific methodology to solve unique problems
- demonstrate superior ability to identify and interpret new ideas and research in a specific discipline
- demonstrate superior skills in academic research, writing, and communication act as skilled practitioners to move beyond knowledge into practice

B. Cognitive Complexity

- show ability to carry out discourse and research as an active member of a discipline
- demonstrate the ability to “undertake inquiry and analysis, to solve problems with a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking and risk taking”
- give evidence of integrating knowledge and applying the knowledge across disciplinary boundaries

C. Inter-and intra-personal Wellness

- demonstrate a holistic awareness of their personhood, purpose, and calling within the context of the communities in which they live and study
- demonstrate academic and personal integrity
- ability to become socially responsive agents with a commitment to understanding global issues

D. Leadership

- demonstrate high level innovative expertise, collaborative knowledge and the capacity to inspire others and achieve results
- demonstrate academic proficiency to communicate effectively and to enter into conversation and constructive dialogue with others
- demonstrate integrity and humility in all matters

Required Texts and Materials

Tremper Longman III, *The Fear of the Lord is Wisdom: A Theological Introduction to Wisdom in Israel*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017.

Leo G. Perdue, *The Sword and the Stylus: An Introduction to Wisdom in an Age of Empires*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

Sundry journal articles and book chapters, which will be posted on Moodle:

Samuel E. Balentine. “My Servant Job Shall Pray for You.” *Theology Today* 58.4 (2002): 502–18.

John J. Collins. “Wisdom and Torah.” Pages 59–74 in *Pedagogy in Early Judaism and Early Christianity*. Edited by Karina Marin Hogan, Matthew J. Goff, and Emma Wassermann. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017.

James L. Crenshaw. “A Rhetoric of Indecision: Reflections on God as Judge in Qoheleth.” Pages 177–88 in *When the Morning Stars Sang': Essays in Honor of Choon Leong Seow on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*. Edited by Scott C. Jones and Christine Roy Yoder. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018.

- Michael V. Fox, "The Speaker in Job 28." Pages 21–38 in *'When the Morning Stars Sang': Essays in Honor of Choon Leong Seow on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*. Edited by Scott C. Jones and Christine Roy Yoder. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018.
- Matthew J. Goff. "Qumran Wisdom Literature and the Problem of Genre." *Dead Sea Discoveries* 17 (2010): 315–35.
- Scott C. Jones. "The Values and Limits of Qohelet's Sub-Celestial Economy." *Vetus Testamentum* 64 (2014): 21–33.
- Matthew J. Lynch. "Bursting at the Seams: Phonetic Rhetoric in the Speeches of Elihu." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 30.3 (2006): 345–64.
- Carol A. Newsom. "The Book of Job as a Polyphonic Text," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 97 (2002): 87–108.
- Nili Samet. "Religious Redaction in Qohelet in Light of Mesopotamian Vanity Literature." *Vetus Testamentum* 66 (2016): 133–48.
- C. L. Seow. "Orthography, Textual Criticism, and the Poetry of Job." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130.1 (2011): 63–85. (Optional)
- Christine Roy Yoder. "Forming 'Fearers of Yahweh': Repetition and Contradiction as Pedagogy in Proverbs." Pages 167–83 in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients*. Edited by Ronald L. Troxel, Kevin G. Friebel, and Dennis Magary. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005.

Course Activities/Requirements

(Relevant Course Objectives; Relevant Student Learning Objectives)

1) Exegetical Paper (1, 2, 3, 4; A, B)

Write a 5000-word expository paper (including footnotes) on a narrative text from the canonical wisdom literature, to be negotiated with the professor.

In the paper, you must:

- *discuss the hermeneutical issues (e.g., genre; cultural, historical, literary and theological contexts) that are significant for the analysis of the passage;*
- *outline the structure and describe the compositional flow of the passage and how it tells the story of which it is a part;*
- *explicate other significant points/ideas/themes in this text in your discussion of its overall message/meaning;*
- *answer the following question through clear reference to the text you are exegeting: How does this author understand and utilize wisdom?*

This paper is to be well-researched, properly documented, and is to include a bibliography of works consulted and cited. You may consult the class texts, reference works, and other reputable and recent books and journals/periodicals (but not Study Bible notes). At least ten such sources should be used. However, be sure to use these sources for background and contextual information. Do not simply survey the interpretations of commentators for the passage that you analyze, but you should give evidence of having worked through interpretative issues for yourself. Citation or other use of sources must be scrupulously documented. NB: Plagiarism for this or other assignments will not be tolerated. Penalties may range from receiving an F on the paper to failing the entire course. The grade for this assignment will be based on both the content of the paper and the quality of your writing.

2. Wisdom Paper (1, 2, 3; A, B)

How does Wisdom act as Scripture? How does it compare and contrast to other forms and genres within the Old Testament, such as law or prophecy? Is it relevant for Christianity today? Is there any comparable

literature today? In this short paper (ca. 2500 words, including footnotes), students will be asked to assess the meaning and significance (both potential and actualized) of this literature in its canonical setting, as well as its significance for Christianity in the 21st century.

3. In-Class Presentation (1, 2, 4; A, B, C, D)

During the final 1–2 meetings of the class, students will be expected to give a 15 minute presentation on their exegetical paper topic, which will be followed by 5–10 minutes of discussion.

4. Moodle Discussion Board (1, 2, 3, 4; A, C, D)

In this hybrid class, class-time will be limited to 2 hours (with at least 20 minutes of break), with the remaining 1 hour to be filled with a structured discussion board on Moodle. Every week students will be expected to interact on this Moodle discussion board based on the themes and texts discussed in the most recent class. Questions will be posed by the professor on Wednesday night (conceptual questions) and Saturday morning (formation and application questions). Students are encouraged to interact with one another’s responses and the readings for the week. Students will be marked based on level of interaction and the thoughtfulness of responses. Students will be expected to provide 2–4 comments per week, each about 1–2 paragraphs in length.

Course Evaluation

Exegetical Paper	40 %
Historiography Paper	20 %
In-Class Presentation	15 %
Moodle Discussion Board	25 %
TOTAL	100 %

Grading System

Letter Grade	Grade Percentage Equivalency	Point Value	Quality Characteristic
A+	97-100	4.3	Outstanding, excellent work
A	93-96	4.0	
A-	90-92	3.7	
B+	87-89	3.3	Good, competent work
B	83-86	3.0	
B-	80-82	2.7	
C+	77-79	2.3	Adequate work
C	73-76	2.0	Minimally acceptable work
C-	70-72	1.7	
F	Below 70	0	

Course Outline

Subject to change at the professor's discretion.

Date	Discussion	Readings	Assignments
Sept 9	Review of Syllabus and Expectations What is Wisdom, and what does it have to do with the Bible or Christian Theology?	Perdue ch. 1	
Sept 16	Proverbs I – The Wise and the Foolish	Perdue ch. 2 Longman ch. 1, 7	
Sept 23	Proverbs II – Instruction and Wisdom Poetry	Yoder Longman ch. 10–11	
Sept 30	Wisdom Psalms	Perdue ch. 4 Longman ch. 9, 12	
Oct 7	Ecclesiastes I – Failure of Wisdom (?) Eccl 1–7	Perdue ch. 5 Jones	
Oct 14	Ecclesiastes II – Making It through Life Anyways Eccl 8–12	Longman ch. 2 Crenshaw Samet	
Oct 21	Job I – Prologue & the First Two Cycles of Debate Job 1–21	Perdue ch. 3 Longman ch. 3	Wisdom Paper Due
Oct 28	Reading Week – NO CLASSES		
Nov 4	Job II – Third Cycle and Elihu's Speech Job 22–37	Lynch Fox Longman ch. 8	
Nov 11	Job III – God's Speech & the Epilogue Job 38–42	Newsom Balentine Seow (optional)	
Nov 18	Wisdom in the OT Apocrypha Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon	Perdue ch. 6 –7	
Nov 25	Wisdom at Qumran 4QBeatitudes, 4QInstruction, 4QMysteries	Goff Perdue ch. 9 Longman ch. 14	
Dec 2	The Changing Face of Wisdom	Collins	Exegetical Paper Due

Course Policies

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AT TWU

One of the core values of Trinity Western University is the integration of academic excellence with high standards of personal, moral, and spiritual integrity. The University considers it a serious offence when an individual attempts to gain unearned academic credit. It is the student's responsibility to be informed about what constitutes academic misconduct. For

details on this, and on identifying and avoiding plagiarism go to the [University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar](#) (p. 47).

<https://prezi.com/od62fxnkbmxh/plagiarism-how-to-get-it-out-of-your-life/> (Prezi presentation)

<http://bit.ly/1p00KX3> (Google Slide presentation offering more comprehensive information)

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

Students with a disability who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Equity of Access Office upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and include the educational impact of the disability along with recommended accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Equity of Access Office on their website at: <http://www.twu.ca/student-life/student-success/disabilities-and-equity-access>.

HOSPITALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

TWU is committed to an ethic of inclusion centred on the principles of Christian hospitality, reciprocity and reconciliation. We seek to cultivate generous learning spaces that are based on respect for differences and are open to diverse views, opinions, and identities that are thoughtfully expressed in a collegial manner. We welcome and value all voices, including those from under- represented groups or those who have been marginalized.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

Late assignments will be docked 10% per day late, unless the student and professor have previously agreed to a new due date based upon exceptional circumstances.

LIVE STREAMED COURSES

A live-streamed course makes it possible for students at a distance to observe and also to participate interactively with an on-campus class in real time. Those who attend a class by live-streaming see and hear the instructor. They can watch class media presentations (e.g. PowerPoint) on their computer screens. They can follow class discussions, posing questions and making comments of their own. They can join in group discussions with other learners when the class breaks into smaller groups. Through internet-based simulcast, they are able to share all the essential elements of the formal class experience with those who attend class in person. Unless otherwise stated in the syllabus, live-streaming students will do the same course assignments and follow the same course schedule as on-campus students.
Requirements for Participating in a Live-streamed Course

- Because the number of live-stream participants to a course is limited, ***students must receive faculty permission prior to the beginning of the course*** in order to participate through live-streaming.
- ***Students must participate in classes in real-time***, as they would if they were attending class in person. For example, those who take a live-streamed course that meets on Thursday mornings will be expected to be in that class virtually, or physically, when that class meets. (A live-streaming student who is in the area and able may attend class in person when possible if he/she wishes.)

ACTS has the capacity to record live-streamed courses for later viewing, but we do not record them as a matter of routine. If it is difficult for students to participate in a class session, they may ask the instructor for permission to watch recorded versions of the class. This will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

- Participation in a course through live-streaming **requires a fast and consistent internet connection (ADSL or cable), a reasonably up-to-date computer system, a webcam, and a quality headset with a microphone**. Students must familiarize themselves with the live-streaming software platform and ensure that their link, webcam, and headset are working properly before the first class session.

Please arrange for a practice run on the system with the instructor prior to class, especially if this is your first live-stream course. This can be arranged by email.

- As much as possible, **be sure you are fully ready for each class session before the class begins**. To the degree that logging in and connecting with the system can be done from your end, there is some flexibility for you to “arrive” as you are able. But testing the system and other logistics that require faculty assistance should be done before class starts. The instructor will do his/her best to ensure that everything is in place for the live-stream session; but he/she cannot allow live-stream setup to significantly delay or interfere with the smooth flow of the class session for other students once class begins.
- Arrange a backup plan with your instructor in case of system failure. ACTS uses high-caliber, current equipment and communication platforms for live-streaming, but hardware and internet connections are not infallible and do occasionally fail. Your instructor cannot stop class in order to troubleshoot and resolve technical problems in the unlikely event that these occur. To minimize possible disruption in the case of a loss of connection:
 - Provide email, text, or phone contact information so that he/she can contact you at the next natural break in the class.
 - Discuss the possibility of a back-up link to the class in case of system failure. (E.g.: a skype or phone link if the regular link fails.)
 - Have a plan for follow-up contact with the instructor and/or with a fellow student to fill any gaps in your interaction with the class (as you would if you had to miss a class for other reasons).

Note that under the policy guidelines of our accrediting body, the Association of Theological Schools, live-stream courses are classified as “distance” education and are subject to the normal policies, limitations, and expectations that apply to distance courses. See the ACTS academic catalogue, or consult with the Academic Program Advisor or your Program Chair if you have any questions about the way that distance courses operate within your degree program.