PHD-CHTH G105-C05 MA - OT 6ZI6
THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT ISRAEL
Fall 2017

Class Schedule:
Mondays 10:30-12:20pm
Professor: Dr. Paul S. Evans
Phone: 905.525.9140 x24718
E-mail: pevans@mcmaster.ca
Office: 236

Course Description:
• A thorough study of the history of Israel with attention to modern historical reconstructions and questions of historiography and historical method. This course will focus on a variety of evidences relevant for critical modern historical reconstructions such as, textual evidence, epigraphic evidence, and archaeological evidence. Areas to be explored include: the role of material evidence; dating archeological evidence, debate over the 'low chronology'; the role of memory in history writing; methods of ancient historiography; the question of verification, and the role of the biblical text in historical reconstruction.

Course Objectives:
Knowing
• To have a thorough knowledge of the various stages of ancient Israel within the context of ancient Near Eastern culture and context.
• To gain familiarity with the state of the field of research on the historiography of ancient Israel
• To gain an awareness of the various perspectives on Israel's history present in the OT guild today

Being
• To embrace the contemporary relevance of OT historical texts for the Church
• To grow closer to God through closer study of Old Testament texts

Doing
• To be able to discuss the relation of biblical historiography to history
• To be able to interpret the OT in its historical context
• To be able to apply knowledge of historical issues in the OT to contemporary audiences
Required Texts:
- Grabbe, Lester L. *Ancient Israel: What Do We Know and How Do We Know It?* London: T & T Clark, 2007.
- Articles distributed to the class

Recommended Texts:

Textbook Purchase:
All required textbooks for this class are available from the College’s book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Boulevard, Etobicoke, ON M9W 6H3; 416-620-2934; fax: 416-234-8840; e-mail books@readon.ca.

Course Evaluation
The assignments and their weights are as follows:
20% - Class Participation: This course is designed as a graduate seminar. The professor will begin with some introductory lectures but the majority of the course will be student-led discussions and presentations. Classroom experiences will be collaborative, with both students and professor engaged in the learning process together. Students must attend every class and come prepared to actively contribute to class discussions. Therefore, assigned readings and research must be completed before class time in order for both the individual student and the broader class to benefit. During the first month of the course students will present to the class a summary (with PowerPoint) of an important piece of extra-biblical evidence often used in historical reconstructions of ancient Israel (Sept 18, 25, Oct 2)

30% - Research Paper on chosen historical period: 20 pages. Due Oct 13, 2017 via email to the professor who will distribute them to the class, who will then discuss them in class Oct 23. Students will then revise their paper in light of the feedback received and submit the final version to the professor by Oct 30, 2017. For this paper students will choose a historical period in the ancient Near East related to their chosen area of research for their dissertation. The paper will provide an overview of the period and identify the main evidences available to support a historical reconstruction. The
paper will also identify critical issues and problems for such reconstructions and argue for the best approach to these problems.

40% - Research Paper on Chosen Historical event. 25 pages. Due Nov 20, 2017 via email to the professor who will distribute the paper electronically to the class, who will then discuss them in class Nov 27. Students will then revise their paper in light of the feedback received and submit the final version to the professor by Dec 4, 2017. For this paper students will choose a historical event that occurred during the historical period chosen for the first paper. This paper will be more specific than the first paper in assessing critical historical reconstructions and arguing for their own historical reconstruction of the event utilizing all known evidences and outlining their methodology and approach to each piece of evidence, and especially their use of the Bible in their historical reconstruction.

10% - Reflection Paper on Hermeneutical Implications. 5 pages. Due Dec 11, 2017 via email to the professor. For this paper students write a reflection on implications of the issues and research covered in the course for a student’s view of the Bible as scripture.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Introduction to Historical Research, Historiography, and state of the guild.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• This section of the course will involve lectures, readings, and discussion to orient seminar participants to the relevant issues surrounding reconstructing the History of Ancient Israel</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Presentation of Papers on Historical Periods</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• This section of the course will consist of student presentations providing an overview of relevant Historical Periods identifying the main evidences available for historical reconstructions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November-December</td>
<td>Presentation of Papers on Reconstructing of Historical Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In this section of the course seminar participants will present papers on their chosen historical event assessing critical historical reconstructions and arguing for their own historical reconstruction of the event utilizing all known evidences and outlining their methodology and approach to each piece of evidence, and especially their use of the Bible in their historical reconstruction.</td>
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</tbody>
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College Style for Submission of Written Work

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses.

All papers to be submitted in electronic format only (a pdf file)—no hardcopies! Email to pevans@mcmaster.ca. Include your last name in the file name of your attachment (e.g., evans.researchpaper.pdf). To avoid late marks papers must be received before the end of the calendar day on which they are due (i.e., before midnight Eastern Standard Time).

Papers must be double-spaced, using 12pt Times New Roman font throughout (footnotes should be 10pt Times New Roman font). Each item listed in the
bibliography must be drawn on in the paper and evidenced in the footnotes etc. Title pages and bibliography do not count as part of the page count total.

**Policy concerning late papers**
Extensions for papers will not be given except in very exceptional circumstances. (serious illness, family crises, etc.). Busy-ness, holidays, computer problems etc. are not legitimate reasons to grant extensions. Late assignments will be docked at the rate of 2% per day for the first 7 days (including weekends) and 4% per day after that. All assignments must be received by **Dec 13** in order to avoid a failing grade in the class.

**Academic Honesty:**
Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one’s academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~
[http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations](http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations)

**Gender Inclusive language:**
McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

**Useful Internet Sites**
- itanakh ([www.itanakh.org](http://www.itanakh.org)) Includes links to many full text articles and useful webpages.
- ETANA: Electronic sources for ANE Studies [http://www.etana.org](http://www.etana.org)
- [http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/sitesofinterest.aspx](http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/sitesofinterest.aspx) From the website of the Society of Biblical Literature. Contains links to many useful sites categorized according to subject areas.
- Dinur Centre for Research in Jewish History ([http://www.hum.huji.ac.il/dinur/internetresources/historyresources/biblical_studies.htm](http://www.hum.huji.ac.il/dinur/internetresources/historyresources/biblical_studies.htm))
- Internet Ancient History Sourcebook
  [http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook.html)
- Codex: Resources for Biblical, Theological, and Religious Studies ([http://biblical-studies.ca](http://biblical-studies.ca))
- Bible & ANE: ([http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/%7Ehumm/Resources/Texts/index.html](http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/%7Ehumm/Resources/Texts/index.html))
- **Link for choosing commentaries:** [http://bestcommentaries.com](http://bestcommentaries.com)
Disclaimer
This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.
## Research Paper Evaluation

**Name:** ____________________________  **Topic:**

I. The next items are rated according to this scale: 1 = inadequate; 2 = adequate; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = superior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bibliographic consciousness</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range and Use of Sources</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity in Defining Issues</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strength of Argument</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of Exegetical Issues</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accuracy of Data and Assertions</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis /Critical Thinking</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction (Thesis Statement /Clear Issue)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Thesis (focus)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary Style (awkward, wordy, repetitive)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization/coherence of ideas</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar/Spelling</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

§ Note: this is a simple evaluation tool to assist in paper assessment. The categories are not weighted equally, and thus are not added together or averaged to calculate your grade.

II. The following need attention if so indicated

- [ ] Use inclusive language
- [ ] The paper is too long/too short
- [ ] Write a unified essay
- [ ] Edit your paper more thoroughly
- [ ] Line spacing, Font size, Margins, Page numbers etc. need attention
- [ ] The paper needs balance
- [ ] Follow MDC Style guide
- [ ] Cite primary resources correctly/consistently (e.g., Gen 1:26; Gen 1; Genesis)
- [ ] Cite secondary resources correctly/consistently

III. Comments
Select Bibliography

In order to aid in research preparation, topic selection or for further reading students may wish to consult the following bibliography.


______. “Sennacherib’s Campaign to Judah and the Date of the LMLK Stamps.” *Vetus Testamentum* 29 (1979): 61-86.


