



McMaster Divinity
College

Biblical

Wisdom

OT 6XW6

This course runs January 4–April 9

Class meets synchronously online via Zoom:

- **Tuesday January 5:** 2:00pm–3:50pm EST
- **Tuesday Feb 2:** 2:00pm–3:50pm EST
- **Monday March 1:** 9:00am–11:00am
- **Tuesday March 2:** 11:00am–1:00pm
- **Tuesday April 6:** 2:00pm–3:50pm EST

Class meets asynchronously via Avenue to Learn (see schedule below)

***Study Week - March 14–20 – no class activities or assignments scheduled**

Professor. Dr. Paul S. Evans **E-mail.** pevans@mcmaster.ca

Course Description:

This course is an exploration of biblical wisdom literature with an emphasis on the important role it plays in the Old Testament. The books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the book of Job will be studied in the context of the ancient Near East, with its influence upon later Second Temple literature and the New Testament also explored. The course will examine the role of wisdom literature in Old Testament theology and consider wisdom as both a practical & ethical category with a view to appropriating wisdom literature into contemporary contexts. This course will facilitate critical reflection and examination of worldviews and professional practices and their potential for transformation through attention to biblical wisdom. Important themes will be explored such as: the fear of the Lord; loving God for God's sake; theology as wisdom; and the wisdom of worship and prayer in Christian life and ministry today.

Course Objectives:

Knowing

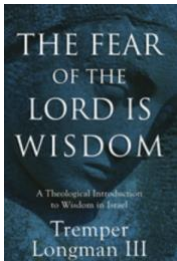
- To know the place of wisdom in OT theology
- To gain an introductory knowledge of relevant Ancient Near Eastern Literature
- To know the content, historical contexts, and theological message of the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes
- To have a thorough knowledge of the contents and message of the book of Job and its role in inner biblical wisdom dialogue

Being

- To embrace the contemporary relevance of Old Testament Wisdom Literature for the Church today
- To be transformed through attention to Christian wisdom
- To grow closer to God through study of the wisdom literature

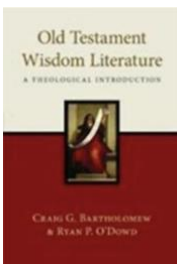
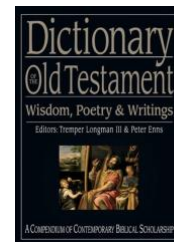
Doing

- To be able to discuss the relation of the book of Job to discussions of theodicy and modern liberation theologies
- To be able to interpret Wisdom literature in its original contexts
- To be able to draw on Wisdom literature in service of critical reflection and examination of professional practices
- To be able to bring out the relevance of Wisdom literature for contemporary audiences

Required Texts:

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

Longman, Tremper and Peter Enns. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2008.



Craig G. Bartholomew and Ryan P. O'Dowd. *Old Testament Wisdom Literature: A Theological Introduction*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2011.

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 Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Requirements

The assignments and their weights are as follows:

I. Classroom Experiences

Participation in classroom experiences is an assumed foundation for this course (like class attendance) if a student fails to participate their final mark will be reduced by one full letter grade (so A becomes B, A- becomes B-).

A. Synchronous Classroom Experiences (via Zoom conferencing app)

Successful classroom experiences depend on student commitment commensurate as how it would be in a face-to-face experience. Just as in a normal physical classroom experience, students are encouraged to take notes, participate in discussion through asking and answering questions, and wear appropriate attire. As much as is possible students should join the Zoom class in a quiet place where you will not be interrupted. Please have your video turned on whenever possible. It is best practice to mute your microphone except for when you are intending to speak to the class. Students are encouraged to use digital virtual backgrounds if desired. Tasteful backgrounds can help with the issues of privacy and prevent distractions for others in the class (e.g., in the case of a family member walking in the background of your video).

***A link to participate via Zoom will be posted in an announcement on Avenue to Learn each week we meet.

1. Tuesday Jan 5 at 2:00pm-3:50pm EST

Class will meet virtually via Zoom. Our time together will include introductions and an overview of the class.

2. Tuesday Feb 2: 2:00pm–3:50pm EST

Class will meet virtually via Zoom. In our time together we will discuss the view of Wisdom as Emotional Intelligence

3. Monday March 1: 9:00am-11:00am Tuesday March 2: 11:00am-1:00pm EST

Class will meet virtually via Zoom. Our time together will consist of some in-class lectures, Q&A, presentations, and student presentations

4. Tuesday April 6: 2:00pm–3:50pm EST

Class will meet virtually via Zoom. Our time together will consist of reflecting on our learning throughout the semester and course materials.

B. Asynchronous Classroom Experiences (via Avenue to Learn threaded Discussions)

Much of the class discussion will occur asynchronously online on the Avenue to Learn course website. On weeks noted on the schedule below, students must actively participate in the online discussion and post minimum **two** discussion topics at the beginning of a week (Sun-Tues). Student posts must be in regard to the posted lectures / assigned readings that week. As well, to further the online discussion all students must respond to minimum **two posts** every week. Since initial posts will be online in the first part of the week, there will adequate time for all students to respond to posts in a timely manner.

II. Formal Assignments:

The assignments and their weights are as follows:

A. 15% - Digital Presentation: Students will create a digital presentation on an assigned topic, informed by relevant secondary literature, then leading the online discussion for that week. Presentations may take one of the following formats:

- i. Video presentation (posted to YouTube or Vimeo). Students will send link to the video to professor who will upload it to Avenue to Learn for the rest of the students to view and hear
- ii. Digital presentation (PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi, Google Slides etc.) with audio recorded sent either the link to the professor (if it is viewable through a link) or send the file itself to the professor who will upload it to Avenue to Learn for the rest of the students to view and hear

**Presentations must be sent by Feb 13 so the class can view and discuss the week of Feb 14–20*

***Students must hand-in a detailed lesson plan to the professor regarding their presentation.*

B. 20% - Student Led discussion:

As part of the **March 1–2 Zoom modules**, each PhD/MA student will lead the class in a 30-minute discussion of a relevant research topic. In preparation for the discussion the student will conduct independent research including the textbooks and other sources.

- *Students must hand-in a detailed lesson plan to the professor regarding their presentation.*

C. 15% - Responding to Asynchronous discussions

To further the asynchronous online discussion PhD/MA students **must respond to ministry students' posts** each week (see schedule below for weeks with asynchronous discussions). This is an opportunity for Phd/MA students to provide extensive feedback and guidance to ministry students through this online discussion.

D. 40% - Major Assignment. 20 pages. Due April 1.

Papers must be double-spaced, using 12pt Times New Roman font throughout (footnotes should be 10pt Times New Roman font). The bibliography must contain at least 20 items of varied secondary sources (commentaries, theological dictionaries, specialized books) including *at least* 3 articles from peer reviewed / refereed journals. *By way of supplement* to these 20 sources, a student may use a *maximum* of 2 internet resources. Students are responsible for the quality of the sources chosen. These secondary sources do not include primary sources. Each source listed must be drawn on in the paper and evidenced in the footnotes etc. Research Topic must be approved by your professor.

E. 10% - Reflection Paper on Hermeneutical Implications. 5 pages. Due Apr 9, 2021.

For this paper students write a reflection on implications and biblical theological significance of the research covered in the course for a student's view of the Wisdom books as scripture.

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 <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/> Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

All papers to be submitted in PDF format only. Upload the PDF file to the appropriate assignments folder on Avenue to Learn. 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).

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 **April 9** 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/rules-regulations>

Gender Inclusive language:

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

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.

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

DATE	Classroom Experiences	Assignment due
Jan 4–9	Jan 5: Zoom meeting: 2pm-3:50pm A. Introductions B. Class overview	--
Jan 10–16	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	*Respond to ministry students’ posts
Jan 17–23	--	--
Jan 24–30	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	*Respond to ministry students’ posts
Jan 31–Feb 6	Feb 2: Zoom meeting: 2pm-3:50pm A. Discussion of Wisdom as Emotional Intelligence	--
Feb 7–13	--	--
Feb 14–20	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	*Digital Presentations due Feb 13 *Respond to ministry students’ posts
Feb 21–27	--	--
Feb 28–Mar 6	Zoom Meetings: Mar 1: 9am-11:00am EST Mar 2: 11:00am-1:00pm EST	* Lead Class Discussion during Zoom meetings (Mar 1–2)

Mar 7–13	--	--
Mar 14–20	Study Week No classes	No Assignments due
Mar 21–27	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	* Respond to ministry students' posts
Mar 28–Apr 3	--	*Major Assignment due April 1
Apr 4–9	April 6: Zoom meeting: 2pm-3:50pm A. Discussion and group reflection on our learning this semester	* Reflection Paper on Hermeneutical Implications due April 9

Bibliography

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