Major Prophets
Bangor Thursdays 9-11:50 a.m.
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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is a course on the Major Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. We will study the prophets in their perspective historical contexts and will learn a range of interpretive methodologies that have emerged in the modern era. We will also analyze central themes of the prophets, including that of Israel the battered wife, so frequently used by the writers of the prophetic texts.

II. TEXTBOOKS:

Required

A Bible is also required for the class. You may use any translation; however, make sure you understand the translation you choose. Do not use a paraphrase such as Good News for Modern Man.

Recommended:
or
New Interpreter Study Bible, NRSV, Walter J. Harrelson, ed., Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003. ($42.00)

III. COURSE OBJECTIVE

On successful completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

- Place the texts within their historical context
- Locate the texts’ relationship to the larger biblical narrative
- Effectively use source, literary and social criticism
- Develop effective word studies
- Converse with various hermeneutical positions
- Identify the effect of their social location on their hermeneutic.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are expected to:
1. Read the primary literature to discern central themes
2. Read the secondary literature to become familiar with the history of interpretation in the modern era
3. Engage in classroom discussion and analysis of the material
4. Develop exegetical skills through the writing of essays (3-4 pages each.)
5. Write one exegetical paper that demonstrates the student’s ability to discern the structure and central themes of a biblical text and its theological significance for a contemporary audience (10-15 pages)

V. TEACHING STRATEGIES:
The course will be a combination of discussions on the history and literature of ancient Israel and close readings of texts to develop analytical and exegetical skills.

VI: SEMINARY STANDARDS

A. Inclusive Language

Bangor Theological Seminary has an official policy regarding the use of Inclusive Language. The policy may be found in the Seminary Catalog and is further explained in the Student Handbook. If you have specific questions, please see me.

B. Academic Integrity

Student integrity regarding all work assigned in this class is a basic expectation of the Seminary community. A detailed policy regarding what constitutes a violation of academic integrity can be found in the Student Handbook.
VII. CALENDAR OF TOPICS AND READINGS:

Week 1: 2/3/11
Intro to Major Prophets
Historical Background/Dating the Texts and Events they portray/Historical Setting
***If you have not taken Intro to OT I and II, before Class begins, please read Part 3 of Michael Coogan’s Intro to the Old Testament, pp. 231-377 to familiarize yourself with the history of Ancient Israel. Coogan is on Reserve in the BTS Library.

Week 2: 2/10/11
1st Isaiah
Isaiah 1-23:18; Childs 1-170
*Assignment: Outline and Themes of 1st Isaiah
*Although the Outlines and Themes of each Prophet will not be calculated in your final grade, completing these will be instrumental in your understanding of each prophetic book. These should be completed and brought to class at the beginning of each new prophetic section.

Week 3: 2/17/11
Isaiah 24-39; Childs 171-288

Week 4: 2/24/11
Jeremiah 1-10; Allen 1-133
Essay #1 Due: Isaiah and Hezekiah

Week 5: 3/3/11
Jeremiah 11-25; Allen 133-293
*Assignment: Outline and Themes of Jeremiah

Week 6: 3/10/11
Jeremiah 26-36; Allen 293-401
Essay #2 Due: Jeremiah’s Laments

Week 7: 3/22-26 Reading Week – No Class
Please Read Weems, Battered Love during Reading Week. Be prepared to discuss it and the concepts Weems presents over the rest of the term.

Week 8: 3/24/11
Jeremiah 37-52; Allen 401-542

Week 9: 3/31/11

2nd-3rd Isaiah
Isaiah 40-55; Childs 289-538

Week 10: 4/7/11
Isaiah 56-66; Childs 439-548
Essay #3 Due: 3rd Isaiah: The Suffering Servant

Week 11: 4/14/11
Ezekiel 1-15
Bowen 1-83
Essay #4 Due: 3rd Isaiah and Universalism
4/18-22/11: Easter Recess – No Class

Week 12: 4/28/11
Ezekiel 16-32
Bowen 83-203
Assignment: Outline and Themes of Ezekiel
Topics Due for Final Exegesis

Week 13: 5/25/11
Ezekiel 33-48
Bowen 204-271
Essay #5: Ezekiel: Yahweh and his Battered Wives

Final Paper Due: Graduating Seniors: May 11, 2011
All others: May 20, 2011

***Final Exegesis: 12-15 page paper on a topic of your choice, pre-approved by the Instructor

IX. METHOD OF DETERMINING FINAL GRADE:

1. Class Attendance is Crucial for Receiving Credit
2. Assignment: Outline and Themes of 1st Isaiah  0%*
3. Essay #1: Isaiah and Hezekiah  15%
4. Assignment: Outline and Themes of Jeremiah  0%
5. Essay #2: Jeremiah’s Laments  15%
6. Essay #3: 3rd Isaiah: The Suffering Servant  15%
7. Essay #4: 3rd Isaiah and Universalism  15%
8. Assignment: Outline and Themes of Ezekiel  0%
9. Essay #5: Ezekiel: Yahweh and his Battered Wives  15%
10. Exegesis Paper  25%

*Although the Outlines and Themes of each Prophet will not be calculated in your final grade, completing these will be instrumental in your understanding of each prophetic book. These should be completed and brought to class at the beginning of each new prophetic section.