



Bible and Theology Department
"Shaping Servant-Leaders"

– Syllabus –

BOT 530 OLC Old Testament Introduction

Spring 2020

Faculty Information

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Course Information

Credit hours: three
Course dates: January 6-April 24
Meeting times: (no classes) Assignments due Tuesdays
Location: Online, Course Commons

Required Texts

Walton, John H. *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994. ISBN 0-310-48161-9

Walton, John H. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 9781540960214

Williams, William C., ed. *They Spoke From God: A Survey of the Old Testament*. Springfield, MO: Logion Press/Gospel Publishing House, 2003. ISBN 0-88243-694-5

For information on textbook pricing, go to <http://www.bkstr.com/evangelstore/home>.

Evangel University Mission Statement

Evangel University is a comprehensive Christian university committed to excellence in educating and equipping students to become Spirit-empowered servants of God who impact the Church and society globally.

Assemblies of God Theological Seminary Mission Statement

AGTS shapes servant leaders with knowledge, skill and passion to revitalize the church and evangelize the world in the power of the Spirit.

Catalog Description

An introduction to graduate study of the Old Testament, focusing on major background information, the critical issues in the discipline of Old Testament studies, and a summary of the most significant contents and concepts of the OT.

Course Prerequisites

It is highly recommended that you have read through the Old Testament at some time in the last few years.

Course Purpose

This course is to help equip you as a Bible student to better interpret and understand Old Testament texts with the best tools and to enable you to pursue further study of the Old Testament, at a graduate level.

Learning Outcomes¹

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:	PLO	EU20	FWE/ON
1. Construct a brief historical framework of the major events in the history of Israel including where all the writing prophets fit and the succession of ancient Near Eastern empires from the monarchy to the advent of the Roman Empire.	None specifically	C3,	N/A
2. Define the cultural background concepts and practices that are significant for understanding major Old Testament teachings.	N/A	C3	N/A
3. Explain and evaluate the major historical, critical, and interpretative issues involved with the books of the Old Testament.	MDiv 2; MATS 7	C3, E2,	N/A
4. Summarize the message of the whole Old Testament and the major theological concepts taught and assumed throughout that are essential to understanding	MDiv 1,2; MATS 1, 8; MACM 4; MAIS 2	C3, C4, E1, E2	1
5. Distinguish the main features and principles of each genre of the Old Testament literature that must be	MDiv 2; MATS 1, 2; MACM 4	C3, E1	N/A

¹ All masters and doctoral PLOs, EU20 and FWE outcomes can be found at <https://agts.edu/current-students/academic-policies/>

understood for valid interpretation of the author's intended meaning.			
6. Conclude what are the best sources to go to for help with the various kinds of questions that could come up in your ministry. (not assessed)	MACM 3	E4	N/A
7. Incorporate into one's life the universal principles taught in the Old Testament for holistic living as God's holy people and teach others how to determine them and apply them. (not assessed)	MDiv 2; MATS 8; MACM 3; MAIS 1, 2, 6	C4, C5, E2, I1	1, 2, 6

Course Format

Online through Course Commons.

Course Schedule

This is a tentative course outline. The course schedule may be changed at the discretion of the course instructor. Notice of changes will be made in class and/or through Course Commons announcements.

Date	Assignments
January 14	Discussion Forum (DF) Fri. the 10 th , Short Answers (Sh Ans) and Essay due Tues, the 14 th ; What is the OT?
January 21	DF (Fri. the 17 th), Sh/Ans, Word Study; How do we Interpret the OT?
January 28	DF (24 th), Comparison Chart, Essay; Creation and Flood Accounts
February 4	DF (31 st), Sh/Ans, Essay; Overview of the Message and Story
February 11	Sh/Ans, Map, Matching; History to the Exodus and Geography
February 18	Sh/Ans, Sh/Ans, Essay; Pentateuch content, JEDP
February 25	Sh/Ans, Essay, Sh/Ans, Essay, Sh/Ans; the Exodus and the Covenant
March 3	DF (28 th), Sh/Ans, Essay; The Laws of the Pentateuch
March 10	Sh/Ans, Essay; Holiness and Ceremonial laws
March 24	Sh/Ans, Sh/Ans, Essay; ANE Religious World View and Practice
March 31	DF (27 th), Sh/Ans, Essay; Issues and Contents of Poetry and Wisdom books
April 7	Essay, Sh/Ans, Essay; OT History from Joshua to Solomon
April 14	DF (10 th), Sh/Ans, Time Frame Chart; History after Solomon and the Prophets
April 21	DF (17 th), Sh/Ans; The Books of the Prophets
April 27	Essay, Sh/Ans, I will turn in grades Tuesday morning, the 28 th

Course Policies & Requirements

Preparation

In order to succeed in this class, students should arrange to have regular access to a computer, the internet, Evangel email and Course Commons. This class will use Course Commons for all course communication, interaction, content, announcements, collaboration and assignments. However, you may communicate with me by internet.

Participation and Attendance for This Online Course

For this online course, you need to discipline yourself to do thoughtful discussion posts by Friday at 7:00. The rest of the weekly assignments are due on Tuesday evening. Midnight is typically the limit, but I will not be grading the assignments for two days, so the Tuesday due date each week is flexible. Be very careful not to get behind.

Assignments

Week 1, January 8-14: Course Overview and What is the Old Testament?

1. Discussion Forum (DF) Posting (for Friday) (3pts):

- a. Post around 200 words on who you are to **introduce yourself** to the professor and other students. You do not have to use whole sentences for this. Include where you grew up, where you live, spouse and children, what your undergrad degree is and from where, what you do for a living, what your current ministry is, why you are at AGTS, and any thoughts about further ministry. Do you consider yourself experientially Pentecostal or charismatic or not? Do you have any background that helps you in the study of the OT? What are the most important things you want people to know about you, and your favorite thing to do. Please **post by Friday, Jan 10, at 7:00 pm**. In addition to your post, read the other students' posts. To help initiate some interaction, each student is required to **reply to at least two** of your peers' posts with comments, further inquiries, or dialogue. This is not really graded but you receive 3 pts when it is completed. Besides helping us get acquainted, the intent of this exercise is to familiarize you with the actual discussion forum posting and response mechanism.
- b. Read the other students' posts. Respond to at least two of them with comments, further inquiries, or dialogue, **by Tuesday night, Jan 14**.
- c. Besides helping us get acquainted, the intent of this exercise is to familiarize you with the actual discussion forum posting and response mechanism. Since this is a personal posting and relational response it will not be graded.

2. Overview the course:

Read the syllabus and the following two handouts on *Expectations for Graduate Students* and *Characteristics of Participation in a Pentecostal Class* and ask any questions you have about what is expected in the course. (Italics will be used for the titles of the handouts articles throughout this syllabus, even though the correct style is quotation marks.)

3. Readings:

- a. Introduction to Week 1
- b. Williams: Foreword, Preface, Chapter 1
- c. Walton *Charts*: pp. 12 , 90-93
- d. Handouts:
 - What Do We Need to Know to do Graduate Level Study?*
 - Definitions for Biblical Studies*
 - The Relationship of Theological Disciplines*
 - Basic Resources for OT Studies*
 - Various Terms used in OT Studies*
 - Canon of the OT: Hebrew, Protestant, Catholic*
 - Dict. of OT (from IVP): Pentateuch article on Textual Criticism*
 - Keeping Grandmother's Pie Safe*

Be aware of and be sure to follow, as needed, the handouts on writing and bibliographic form. (Some of the handouts in the book for this course are for the general benefit of the student and for any future OT studies.)

OT Biblical Concepts in Cotton's Words

4. Short Answer definitions of key terms: The Canon and Text of the OT (18 pts)
Write a simple definition that gives the significance of each of the terms below that you could use in teaching others, including a sentence or two telling why knowing each of these is helpful for the study of the OT. For example: knowing that Canticles (of Canticles) is the Latin for the Song of Solomon, also called the Song of Songs, helps when dealing with literature or people from a tradition that uses that title. The listed readings should be sufficient for this assignment.
 - a. Qoheleth
 - b. 1, 2, 3, 4 Kings (Reg. is the abbreviation for the Latin for these books) in a Catholic Bible
 - c. the Septuagint (designated by LXX)
 - d. the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS)
 - e. the MT
 - f. TANAK
 - g. textual criticism
 - h. Be aware of the three divisions of the books in the Hebrew Bible and how different the Jewish organization of the books is from ours. Also, note that Jesus refers to it in Luke 24:44. State which division of the Hebrew Bible each of the following is found in: Joshua, Kings, Ruth, Chronicles, Lamentations, and Daniel.
 - i. Which two OT books contain sections in Aramaic as well as Hebrew?
5. Essay: The Inspiration and Authority of the Old Testament (10 pts)
Write around 200 words on your view of the divine inspiration and authority of the Old Testament, in regard to your life and ministry. Do you consider all the OT books of the protestant canon to be fully authoritative for you as God's Word? How do you generally see that authority working – how do you submit to what such ancient books say, as God's Word for you, in general terms?

Week 2, January 15-21: *How Do We Interpret the Old Testament?*

1. Readings:
 - a. Introduction to Week 2
 - b. Williams: Chapter 1, pp. 50-55; Chapter 2, pp 64-65
 - c. Walton *Charts*: pp. 34, 94-95
 - d. Handouts:
 - Principles to Remember About Bible Translations*
 - Translation Continuum of different versions*
 - The Pendulum Swing of Biblical Interpretation*
 - The Bible Text and Critical Methodologies* (also see extra document from Hernando Hermeneutics book chapter on *Interpretive Approaches*)
 - Determining the Meaning of a Bible Passage*
 - Hermeneutics summary chart*
 - Literary Clues to a Bible Writer's Intended Theological Meaning*
 - Basic Exegesis Guidelines*

Deciding Among Exegetical Options

Be aware of the handouts on flow of thought diagramming.

Look over the handouts on word studies. The last two of these are on the Genesis 6:1-4 assignment.

For future OT studies be aware of *OT Commentaries Recommended*, *Checklist of Tools for Biblical Research*, *Doing Biblical Theology on an OT Passage*, and *Studying a Theme of OT Theology*.

2. DF: Facts vs Interpretations (4 pts)

In a few sentences explain and illustrate the distinction between facts and interpretations. An example in OT studies is the fact that some Pentateuch passages use "God" (*elohim*, in the Hebrew) and others use the personal name, "Yahweh" (usually represented in English translations as "the LORD"). The commonly accepted liberal scholarly interpretation or theory (the JEPD Theory or Documentary Hypothesis) is that these verses are from two different sources, designated as "J" for Yahweh and "E" for *Elohim*, which is the Hebrew word for "God." However, this is not the only way that these facts can be interpreted. Give your own example of the difference between facts and interpretations or opinions, preferably in something in biblical studies. Post by Friday at 7 pm and respond to two other posts by Tuesday night.

3. Short Answers: Information Needed to Interpret the OT and Critical Approaches (12 pts)

- a. What general kinds of information do we need in order to interpret any Old Testament passage accurately? (Cotton sees four kinds) You are not required to summarize them his way.
- b. Summarize, in a few sentences, your general view of using the critical approaches/methods that scholars use. (Do NOT discuss each method, individually). What value do you see in them, in general terms? What should be the purpose of using them for a person who believes in the divine inspiration/authority of the Bible?

4. Word Study: God "repented," "regretted," or "grieved" (16 pts)

Write a 2- 3 page (double spaced, around 600-900 words) word study (see instructions and examples in Handouts) on the Hebrew word in Gen. 6:6, *nacham*, for "repented" in KJV, "grieved" in the NIV, 1984 edition, "regretted" in the NIV, 2011 edition, or "was sorry" in the ESV, not the "grieved" word in ESV or in KJV. Your study should end up answering the question of in what sense did God "repent" or was He "sorry" that He made humans. The sections needed from the main two tools are provided in the book of handouts – a Hebrew concordance and the NIDOTTE article. Read over the handout on instructions for word studies to see how to use these hard copy tools but you do not have to find them in a library – the copies are provided. Also, tell the professor at the end of your word study whether you read the NIDOTTE article for this Hebrew word.

Week 3, January 15-21: How Do the Creation and the Flood Accounts in Genesis Compare to Those in the ANE and How Do They Relate to Modern Science?

1. Readings:

- a. Introduction to Week 3
- b. Williams: Chapters 2 and 3

c. Walton *Charts*: pp. 14, 80, 81, 97, 98, 100, 101

d. Handouts:

World View vs. World Picture

Genesis 1-11 in Relation to Science

Summary of Cotton's View of the Issue of the Days of Creation

Old Testament Parallels: creation and flood stories

Genesis 1-11 and the ANE from Wenham's commentary

Ancient Parallels to Flood Story from Wenham's commentary

The Bible In Its World, by Kitchen, on the Flood

Essay on the Nephilim and Diagram of Gen. 6:1-4

2. DF: Is Evolution Incompatible With the Bible? (4 pts)

Briefly summarize your answer to this current question: Can a person believe Genesis is God's Word and believe in the theory of evolution as a physical process that God used (not as a philosophy)? Do not worry about detailing all your reasons but only state them generally. Do not overreact to the views of other students but seek to understand their reasoning and views of both Genesis and of evolution.

3. Comparison Chart: The Flood in Genesis vs the ANE Stories (12 pts)

a. Compare the Genesis account of the Flood with the ANE story. Read the excerpts from Gilgamesh and Atrahasis flood accounts from *Old Testament Parallels* by Matthews and Benjamin in the Handouts. Watch for the similarities to and the differences from Gen. 6-9.

b. Read these handouts: *Wenham's commentary on Gen. 1-15* in Word Biblical Commentary Series, pp. xlvi-1, 159-166; Kitchen, *The Bible In Its World*, pp. 27-30; and *Walton's chart* in his book of charts, p. 81.

c. Turn in your own chart of similarities but mostly your detailed *differences* between Gen. 6-9 and the ANE flood accounts of Gilgamesh and Atrahasis (you may consider them together as one Mesopotamian tradition). Your list should include Walton's items but make your own additions to them and any changes of wording that you prefer. Wherever your chart differs from Walton's chart use *italics* or **bold**. I especially would like to see you make some observations on the implications of the ANE statements, such as how the shape of the ark would affect it in the storm. Therefore, the grading of the chart will focus on *additions, improvements to, and comments on Walton's chart*, from your careful reading and interpreting of the texts, and from the observations of scholars.

d. Then, WRITE your summary in around 150 words or so of what is the relationship between the ANE flood story and Gen. 6-9. Assume that the copies of the ANE flood accounts are older than our copies of the OT. (Does that really matter?) State why there are similarities. State briefly what you see as significant about the *differences* between the two accounts. Answer the question: Did either writer copy from the other? Explain briefly for a layperson your view of the divine inspiration of Gen. 6-9 in relation to other flood accounts outside the Bible?

4. Essay: Essential Points of Genesis 1-11 (10 pts)

Write around 300 words on the major points you believe are essential for Christians to agree on concerning Genesis 1-11 and why? You may just briefly state and explain each point, and there need only be 3-6 or so points.

Week 4, January 22-28: *What is the Overview of the Message and Story of the Old Testament and the Relationship to the Books?*

1. Readings:

- a. Introduction to Week 4
- b. Williams: Look at all the chapter titles and what OT books they cover.
- c. Walton *Charts*: pp. 107, 113
- d. Handouts:

Overview of The Bible chart

Foundational and Essential Truths of OT Theology

Kaiser on Mission (and Messiah) in OT

Keys to Unlocking the OT

Overview of the Kings Prophets and Empires of OT History

Summaries of the Messages of the Books of the OT

Seeing the Four Blocks of the OT Books in the Big Picture

2. Short Answer: The Message of the Old Testament? (3 pts)

State the purpose and message of the OT, in one or two sentences, in terms that relate it to the NT Christian but using only language that the OT people would have understood.

3. Short Answers: Messages of Selected Books (8 pts)

Read about one of the following three OT books in Williams and the handouts, "Messages of the Books of the OT" and "Seeing the Four Blocks of the OT Books in the Big Picture": *1 and 2 Chronicles together as one, Obadiah, or Ecclesiastes*. Summarize in one sentence the content of and then in another sentence the theological message of the book you chose in a way that relates to the rest of the OT and to God's salvation plan. For example, Lamentations is a poetic book, seemingly by the prophet Jeremiah, that is a song of mourning over the destruction of Jerusalem. The message is the seriousness of the Lord's judgment on His missionary people, Israel, for their unfaithfulness, but also the hope of His forgiveness for the repentant and hope of His salvation plan continuing because of His amazing love. Great is His faithfulness, 3:23.

4. Essay: OT Passages of the Message (10 pts)

State your summary of God's message in the Old Testament in one sentence. The list the 4-10 most significant OT passages you would use to overview the message and purpose of the OT, with a brief explanation (a sentence or two) of why you see each as having key significance for understanding the overall message and purpose of the OT? See the Introduction for the week for more on this.

Week 5, January 29-February 4: *What are the Major Points of the ANE Historical Background of the Old Testament up to the Exodus, Principles of Archaeological Study, and Facts of the Geography/Map of the Near East?*

1. Readings:

- a. Introduction to Week 5
- b. Williams: Chapter 4; Chapter 5, pp 178-183
- c. Walton *Charts*: 13, 15, 60, 61, 64, 76-78, 82, 116

d. Handouts:

Map of ANE

Map of Israel (topography)

Cross-section of the Holy Land

ANE Historical Framework

Basic Archaeological Principles and Terms

Basic Geographical Principles and Terms

2. Short Answers (need not be sentences): Geography of ANE (14 pts)

- a. What is a good round number for a reference date to associate with the life of Abraham?
- b. Mesopotamia refers to what?
- c. Is Jerusalem on a plain or in hills?
- d. What are the three major broad historical-cultural-geographic regions of the Near East that are directly related to the history of Israel in the OT?
- e. What are the three major factors in the choice of a location of a city in the ANE?
- f. What is the nature and significance of a city gate in the ANE?
- g. What area of the U.S.A. has a climate similar to that of Israel?
- h. What are the elevations of Jerusalem, Jericho, the lowest point in the Dead Sea, the Sea of Galilee, and Mount Hermon?
- i. What are the distances from Dan to Beersheba, from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean Sea, from Jerusalem to the Sea of Galilee, and from Jerusalem to Babylon?

3. Map: Map of the ANE (27pts)

List these with their number from the map in the course documents.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| - Ninevah | - name the three continents that meet at Israel |
| - the city of Babylon | - Ebla |
| - The River (the Euphrates) | - Ur |
| - Persia | - Haran |
| - Ugarit | - Tyre |
| - Damascus | - Moab |
| - Edom | - Jerusalem (2pts) |
| - Samaria (city) | - Megiddo |
| - Sinai | - the Negev |
| - Mesopotamia | - Philistia |
| - Aram | - Sea of Galilee |
| - the Transjordanian region | - Jordan River |

You may identify up to three additional items on the map for bonus points that are significant for OT studies. To indicate these to the professor you will need to describe roughly where each is in relation to a number already on the map such as "about 1 inch due east of # 20, at the river." (unless you scan and send a copy and circle your bonus items)

4. Matching/Identifications: ANE History, Archaeology, and Geography (17pts)

1. a tell
2. ostraca
3. LBI
4. Albright

5. Aram
6. Ebla
7. Ugarit
8. the Levant
9. Mari
10. a wadi
11. the Hittites
12. cuneiform
13. the Sumerians
14. stratigraphy
15. pottery typology
16. Chaldean
17. the latter rain

(Only one of the descriptions below, Q or R, is not used and the other is; all the other descriptions are used.)

- A) An ancient city-state in northern Syria whose library of many large cuneiform tablets, uncovered in the 1970's, from the mid third millennium BC, a few centuries before Abraham, showed a great trade empire and well-developed urban society, possibly populated by $\frac{1}{4}$ million people.
- B) A city on the northern Mediterranean coast of Palestine whose religious epic texts from the mid-second millennium BC shed light on the Canaanite religion and culture and the poetic style of a Semitic language related to Hebrew.
- C) The name of the people who occupied eastern Asia Minor in the mid second millennium BC, and spoke an Indo-European language. Their treaties with Egypt and others shed light on the Sinai Covenant.
- D) A city on the Euphrates, occupied by Amorites in the 18th century BC, whose tablets shed a lot of light on the economics and culture of Mesopotamia, especially information about nomadic peoples in the period of the patriarchs, as well as references to ANE prophecy.
- E) The archaeological period in which the early date for the Exodus occurs.
- F) The term for pieces of broken pottery, very common in Near Eastern archaeological sites, which were used to write things on as well as for other purposes.
- G) The Hebrew word for Syria including the area from Damascus to Haran.
- H) The term for a mound produced by the remains of an ancient city which had been destroyed and rebuilt in successive layers.
- I) The term for a person of Babylon and also used to be used to refer to the Aramaic language.
- J) One of the ways archaeologists do relative dating of sites based on their understanding of the time periods and places where certain styles and forms of vessels were made and used.
- K) One of the most famous archaeologists who worked in the region of Israel and Palestine, who pointed out many correlations with what the Old Testament describes.
- L) Ancient writing using a stylus with a wedge shaped end to mark on clay tablets, mainly in Mesopotamia, and mostly in syllabic symbols.
- M) The politically neutral geographical term for the lands along the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, containing Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan and may be used to avoid the term Palestine.
- N) A dry creek bed, usually a ravine or gorge, throughout much of the Near East, which only runs with water during the rainy season.

- O) One of the most ancient of civilizations, from where the Euphrates River empties into the Persian Gulf, with an amazing culture and which produced the first lingua franca that we know of, a very unique, nonsemitic, language.
- P) The most logical and common way of dating (relatively) the finds in archaeology, which carefully documents the location of everything dug up according to levels/layers of the dig. This method works with a cross section of an ANE city mound, which looks like a multi-layered cake.
- Q) the fall rains that come at the end of the dry summer.
- R) the spring rains that ripen the harvest of winter wheat.

Week 6, February 5-11: *What are the Contents and Issues of the Books of the Pentateuch?*

1. Readings:

- a. Introduction to Week 6
- b. Williams: Chapters 2-8 to overview contents of the Pentateuch
- c. Walton *Charts*: 108
- d. Handouts:
 - Summaries of the Messages of the Books of the OT (Pentateuch)*
 - The Name of God in the OT*
 - Wenham on JEDP Theory of sources, from his Genesis commentary*
 - Wenham article on Method in Pentateuchal Source Criticism*
 - Pentateuchal Criticism by Hummel on Mosaic authorship*
 - Chart of the Composition of the Torah (JEDP Theory), by Larue*
 - The Undead Hypothesis article by Garrett, on the JEDP theory*

2. Short Answers: The Pentateuch Contents (14 pts)

- a. Give the basic outline of the major divisions/subjects of the books of the Pentateuch. I recommend: 2 divisions for Genesis and the second one listing three people whose stories are the focus; three divisions for Exodus, two divisions for Leviticus; three divisions for Numbers; and four or so for Deuteronomy. Give summary titles for each division showing what is covered in them.
- b. Point out what, in the ANE, the structure of Deuteronomy is very similar to.
- c. Explain briefly who Ephraim and Manasseh are, why they are counted as receiving land with the other 11 tribes of Israel and why there aren't then 13 tribal territories.
- d. Briefly tell who Melchizedek was?
- e. Briefly tell who Hagar was and what is significant about her story.

3. Short Answers: Identification of Pentateuch Passages (8 pts):

Name the book and chapter in which each of the following is found in the Pentateuch (three of the five books are used twice):

- a. The giving of the Decalogue and the covenant at Sinai.
- b. God's call for circumcision of heart.
- c. The stories of the faith journeys of Abraham and the patriarchs.
- d. The filling of the 70 with the Holy Spirit on Israel's journey in the wilderness.
- e. The command to love your neighbor as yourself.
- f. The Aaronic Blessing: "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord . . ."
- g. The construction of the Tabernacle.
- h. The Shema: "Hear , O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is One."

4. Essay: JEDP Theory (10 pts)

Write about 300 words or so on what you think of the JEDP Theory or Documentary Hypothesis, which is still the major approach to the composition of the Pentateuch, by liberal scholars. Is it substantiated – why or why not? Is it helpful for understanding what God is saying through the Pentateuch? State how you see the divine inspiration and authority of the Pentateuch in relation to whatever the process was of producing the final form of the Pentateuch that we have. Also, summarize your view of the authorship of the Pentateuch – what role did Moses play?

Week 7, February 12-18: *What are the Issues of the Exodus and the Concept of the Covenant Between the Lord and Israel?*

1. Readings:

a. Introduction to Week 7

b. Williams: Chapter 6; Chapter 8, pp. 314-21

c. Walton *Charts*: 60, 61, 85, 86, 99, 102, 103,

d. Handout:

Treaty Between Mursilis (Hittite) and Duppi Tesub (Amorite)

Covenant in The Bible In Its World by Kitchen

Covenant in the OT

Lessons for Christians from the Sinai Covenant in its ANE Context

The Patriarchal Age article, by Kitchen

Archer on the Date of the Exodus

Be aware, from the readings, that there are different views of where the Red Sea of the exodus was. Also, even conservative scholars question whether we are correctly understanding the seemingly large number of Israelites who left Egypt that is given in Exodus.

2. DF: Are we to keep the OT laws? (4 pts)

(for this discussion have 4B #4 done)

3. Short Answers: the Sinai Covenant (10 pts)

a. State your basic definition of a covenant.

b. Give the major features of the Sinai Covenant. Describe its basic outline.

c. What is the relationship of the laws as a whole to the covenant – what role did they play in the covenant?

d. What does the word *chesed* mean and how does it relate to ANE covenants?

e. Describe the similarities and differences between the Sinai Covenant and the ANE covenants or treaties AND give your view of the significance of these similarities and differences for the Lord's relationship with Israel.

f. Why do you think God chose this cultural form of a suzerain-vassal treaty to communicate their relationship?

4. Short Answers: The Name of God (6pts)

Briefly explain:

a. What Hebrew word is in the Hebrew text of the OT that is designated by LORD in English translations and what or who does it refer to – is it a title or a name?

- b. Why is LORD used for this Hebrew word – who started this and why?
 - c. What is the significance of recognizing what the Hebrew word really is in these places – what difference does this knowledge make for understanding OT texts that have LORD in them and not just Lord?
5. Short Answers: The Dating of the Exodus (9 pts)
- a. What is the Early Date of the exodus (may be rounded to the correct decade)?
 - b. What is an approximate Late Date for the exodus?
 - c. List the three broad *categories/sources* of evidence used in dating the exodus.
 - d. Which date for the exodus does the 480 years given in 1 Kings 6 (taken literally), for the time from the exodus to the building of the temple, point to?
 - e. Which date does the archaeological evidence of the Canaanite cities and the Transjordanian region support, according to many archaeologists both liberal and conservative ones, though Archer and others give rebuttals, as seen in Walton’s chart?
 - f. What is the Dream Stele and which date does it best support?
 - g. What are the Amarna Letters and which date do they best support?
 - h. Which date seems stronger to you?

Week 8, February 19-25: *What are the Nature and the Purpose of the Laws of the Pentateuch (of Moses) and How do They Compare to the Laws of the ANE?*

1. Readings:
 - a. Introduction to Week 8
 - b. Williams: Chapter 7
 - c. Walton *Charts*: 87, 21, 24, 25
 - d. Handouts:
 - Foundational and Essential Truths of OT Theology*
 - Four Different Ways Christians Are to View God’s Requirements In the OT*
 - The Universal, Absolute, Principles of the OT Law*
2. Essay: Comparison of the OT laws to the Laws of the ANE (7 pts)
 - a. Describe briefly at least 4 differences in major values and/or things considered right vs wrong in the laws of the Pentateuch vs the ANE laws.
 - b. What is your summary of the principle behind the kinds of crimes for which God required the death penalty – What is your summary of the one common denominator principle for why God required the death penalty for all the following in the OT laws: idolatry; blaspheming God; witchcraft; defiant breaking of the sabbath; murder; willfully negligent homicide; malicious false witness in a capital trial; kidnapping; ongoing rebellious behavior of a youth; cursing of one's parents; rape; and sex with anyone but one's spouse, including with animals.
 - c. What was the intent of the “eye for an eye” (*lex talionis*) requirement in the Pentateuch (Be aware that it had the same purpose in the ANE.)?
3. Short Answers: The Purpose of the Laws of the Pentateuch (8 pts)
 - a. Was keeping the laws of the Pentateuch intended by God to be the way of salvation in the Old Testament? How do you describe the relationship of Israel’s laws to salvation? (2 pts)

- b. Why did God give Israel the laws – what was the function of the laws for Israel?
- c. What NT book and chapter best explains the relationship of the OT law to the Christian?
- d. Are Christians under obligation from God to keep all these laws? If not, explain briefly how we should relate to the laws of the Old Testament – what good is it to read them? (2 pts)
- e. What is your summary of the purpose of the Ten Commandments (the Decalogue), as a whole: a) for Israel; b) for Christians; and c) for the rest of humanity?
- f. Briefly summarize what was the purpose of the Sabbath commandment for Israel.

Week 9, February 26-March 3: *How Should We Understand the Holiness and Ceremonial Laws?*

1. Readings:

- a. Introduction to Week 9
- b. Williams: Chapter 7
- c. Walton *Charts*: 19-25, 110
- d. Handouts:

Theological Principles of the OT Ceremonial Instructions

Principles of Relating to God in His OT Ceremonial Instructions

Moving from the Major Institutions of OT to NT

Significance of Key OT Institutions for Relating to the OT

Continuity/Discontinuity of the Testaments chart

Distinguishing Universal Principles from Specific Cultural Applications in the OT

What the OT Writers Understood for Distinguishing Universal from Temporary

Instructions

How Do We Decide How to Relate to the OT Laws?

One Question for Relating Anything in the OT to People Today?

2. Short Answers: The Ceremonial Laws (9 pts)

- a. What is the OT definition of atonement in one sentence?
- b. What specifically was the priestly garment called an ephod?
- c. What was a Nazirite?
- d. In a sentence or two, how does Cotton define typological?
- e. In a sentence or two explain the theological significance of the Tabernacle (and later the temple) – what major truth was God teaching Israel?
- f. In a sentence or two define the biblical concept of holiness in regard to God’s people. (2 pts)
- g. In a sentence or two explain the holiness concept of clean and unclean as used in the OT.
- h. Why did God give Israel a land--what is the significance of the Land of Israel in the Bible?

3. Essay: How We Should Relate to the OT Laws, Especially the Sabbath (15 pts)

After doing all the readings, explain in summary of around 500 words how you believe Christians should relate the laws of the Sinai Covenant, in general, to their lives.

- a. How do you think we should decide which ones to keep?
- b. Should we keep the Sabbath – why or why not?

Week 10, March 4-10: *What are the World View and Practices of the Religion of the ANE Peoples and The Comparison to Those of the OT?*

1. Readings:
 - a. Introduction to Week 10
 - b. Williams: Chapter 8, pp. 347-48
 - c. Walton *Charts*: 83, 84
 - d. Handouts:
 - Ancient Near Eastern Religion and World View vs. the OT*
 - e. Walton *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the OT*, Parts 3 and 4

2. Short Answers: Religion Terms (5 pts)

In a phrase, or a sentence or two, explain what the following refer to in the OT:

 - a. Leviathan (and the word Rahab in certain contexts referred to the same idea)
 - b. cult/cultus
 - c. Baal
 - d. Asherah
 - e. high places

3. Short Answers: Common Cultural Items or Activity in the OT (10 pts)

What do the following cultural items refer to in the OT world?

 - a. shekel (it was NOT a coin back then)
 - b. ephah
 - c. cup bearer
 - d. gleaning
 - e. threshing
 - f. strong drink
 - g. cubit
 - h. what lamps were like in the ANE
 - i. bride price
 - j. concubine

4. Essay: God and Magic Formulas (8 pts)

In around 200 words explain why God is strongly against the use of magic formulas? What problems of the human heart are they connected with? What does belief in them imply about how one views the character or nature of God?

Week 11, March 11-17: *What are the Issues and Contents of the Poetry and Wisdom Books?*

1. Readings:
 - a. Introduction to Week 11
 - b. Williams: Chapter 12
 - c. Walton *Charts*: 47-51, 25
 - d. Handouts:
 - Basic Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry*
 - Introductory Points on the OT Books of Poetry*
 - Imprecatory Passages: Principles of God's Perspective*

2. DF: The Message of the Book of Job (4 pts)

State how you summarize the message of the book of Job in one or two sentences. Elaborate why, briefly.

3. Short Answers: Terms in the Poetry Books (17 pts)
 - a. Give the OT definition of the concept of wisdom in reference to what God means when He wants His people to have and use wisdom.
 - b. State the basic features of Hebrew poetry (Cotton sees three) Read Psalm 110 with these features in mind.
 - c. Briefly summarize the nature of parallelism in Hebrew and ANE poetic writing.
 - d. State briefly what *sheol* refers to in the OT. (see handout *Various Terms . . .*)
 - e. State briefly what Zion refers to both physically and then theologically/spiritually in many contexts. (see handout *OT Biblical Concepts . . .*)
 - f. Give the basic OT idea of the concept of a "fool." (see handout *OT Biblical Concepts . . .*)
 - g. Summarize the contents and purpose of each of the 4 books of Poetry and Wisdom besides Job, which you already discussed, in one or two sentences, each. (see handout *Summaries of the Messages . . .*)
4. Essay: Imprecatory Material (8 pts)

In around 200 words tell what imprecatory refers to in the Psalms and summarize how you will tell Christians to relate to these passages.

(Study) BREAK WEEK, March 17-24

Week 12, March 25-31: *What are the Important Points and Issues of the History of Israel From the Pentateuch Through Solomon?*

1. Readings:
 - a. Introduction to Week 12
 - b. Williams: Chapters 9; 10; 11; 13, pp. 555-572
 - c. Walton *Charts*: 26-29, 38-41, 99, 104
 - d. Handouts:
 - Introductory Notes on OT Historical Books*
 - Anointing in the OT*
 - Understanding the OT on the Taking of Human Life*
 - Response to the Perception that the God of the OT Seems Different from the God of the NT*
2. Essay: The Choices by Writers That Show Their Intent (7 pts)

In around 200 words tell what kinds of choices the Bible writers of the Historical books made in telling their narratives (as all writers do) point to their (inspired by God) theological interpretations of the history? (Cotton sees three kinds of choices an author makes in creating a narrative that indicate what the author believes about the events and is intending to communicate.)
3. Short answers: Facts from the History Books (4 pts)
 - a. Simply summarize what does 1 Chronicles cover and what does 2 Chronicles cover in relation to the books of Samuel and Kings, not listing specific subjects.

- b. What judge is described in the Bible in more positive terms than any other judge?
 - c. Briefly describe the function of a kinsman-redeemer in the OT, which is what Boaz was in the book of Ruth, and which is also what the Lord is sometimes called in relation to His people.
 - d. Briefly summarize why David was a man after God's heart despite his terrible sins of adultery and murder. (reread Psalm 51)
4. Essay: Anointing in the OT (8 pts)
- What did anointing mean in the OT – what was the act for in relation to kings or other leaders? What does the Hebrew word transliterated “messiah” literally mean? What English words do we use for the parallel event in the church and for the parallel event in government? Does the OT use of the noun, messiah, always refer to the Messiah, in OT times, or usually just a messiah?

Week 13, April 1-7: *What are the Important Points and Issues of the History from Solomon to the End of the OT, Including the Contexts of the Books of the Prophets?*

1. Readings:
- a. Introduction to Week 13
 - b. Williams: Chapter 13, pp. 573-595; Chapters 14, 15, 17, 18
 - c. Walton *Charts*: 30-36, 42-46, 60-73, 75
 - d. Handouts:
 - Major Events in the History of Israel*
 - Overview of The Kings and Prophets and Empires of OT History*
 - Biblical World in Pictures in Bib Arch Soc slides folder*
2. DF: Unity, Dating, and Authorship of Isaiah and Daniel (10 pts)
- After doing the reading, in around 150 or so words, summarize for discussion/feedback your view of the general principles of the issue of the unity, dating, and authorship of both Isaiah and Daniel. What are the main kinds of arguments that major sections of both Isaiah and Daniel were written later than the time of the biblically described Isaiah and Daniel and do you agree or disagree? You do not need to discuss much detail about the arguments, but focus on the kinds of arguments, the presuppositions, and then be sure to conclude with how such views relate to your view of the divine inspiration of these books.
3. Short Answers: Significant Points and People (6 pts) Include a statement of the major significance for the Old Testament.
- a. What was meant by Elisha’s request of Elijah to receive a double portion of his spirit? (see handout *Various Terms . . .*)
 - b. Briefly summarize what the Syro-Ephraimite war refers to.
 - c. Briefly state who the following were:
 - i) Sennacherib
 - ii) Huldah
 - iii) Nebuchadnezzar
 - iv) Cyrus
5. Short Answer: Comparison/case study (4 pts)
- Propose, in summary, in around 100 words why you think the writer of 2 Kings leaves out

Manasseh's repentance and the Chronicler emphasizes it. Be sure to read both passages. Look at good commentaries if you need to.

6. Assignment to view archaeological slides by the end of the course.
Some time by the due date of the Week 8 Accountability Sheet for the course readings you are to view archaeological slides of *Biblical World in Pictures* in a power point document in a zip file called *Bib Arch Soc slides*. There is an instruction sheet in the folder.

Week 14, April 8-14: What Are the Important Points and Issues of the Books of the Prophets of the OT?

1. Readings:
 - a. Introduction to Week 14
 - b. Williams: Chapter 16
 - c. Walton *Charts*: 52-58, 105, 106, 112
 - d. Handouts:
 - Principles for Understanding the Books of the Prophets*
 - Horton commentary on Isaiah on the critical views of its unity*
 - Motyer commentary on Isaiah on unifying themes*
 - Harrison Introduction on Book of Daniel*
2. Time frame chart (15 pts):
Place the following in the approximate location on the blank chart provided in the course documents and give the specific dates (may be rounded to the correct decade) for the * ones.
 - Destruction of Jerusalem and exile of Judah to Babylon*
 - Fall of Samaria and exile of Israel to Assyria*
 - First deportation of Judah to Babylon
 - First return of Jews from exile
 - Solomon builds the Temple*
 - The Temple is rebuilt*
 - Desecration of the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes
 - David as king
 - Last OT reference – the end of Nehemiah's governorshipPut at the approximate location on the time chart all the writing prophets (the 4 and the 12) and Elijah. (The four major prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel; the 12 minor prophets are: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi). For Joel and Obadiah note where the traditional dating placed them and where modern conservative scholarship places them (a couple places). Mark at the approximate location on the time chart when each of the four controlling world empires began, from the 8th century onward through the 4th century.
(Every student of the OT should memorize at least this much background of the OT, but this assignment will not assess memorization. It is hoped that the assignment will help imprint on your mind some sense of the chronological relationship of these events and books.)
3. Short Answers: Definition of a Prophet and Important Verses (13 pts)
 - a. Give a very simple one sentence definition of what a prophet was in the OT and then elaborate briefly on their God-intended function in Israel. Give the main Hebrew word

- used in the OT for a prophet. (see handout *OT Biblical Concepts . . .*)
- b. What does apocalyptic refer to in OT studies of the prophetic books? (see handout *Various Terms . . .*)
 - c. Where are the following famous verses found?
 - i) the climactic servant song of the suffering savior dying as the substitutionary lamb of God for the sins of all people and rising again
 - ii) the promise of the New Covenant
 - iii) "the Spirit is upon me to preach good news to the poor"
 - iv) "What does the Lord require of you but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God"
 - v) God promising to put a new heart in His people
 - vi) "the just shall live by faith"
 - vii) "one like a son of man" – receiving authority from the Ancient of Days
 - viii) statement of future resurrection to everlasting life or shame
 - ix) "Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit says the Lord Almighty"
 - x) the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit on all believers, enabling them to prophesy

Week 15, April 15-21: Concluding Reading Synthesis

1. Readings:
 - a. Introduction to Week 15
 - b. Williams: Glossary
 - c. Walton *Charts*: 79, 117, 118
 - d. Handouts:
 - Key Aspects of OT Studies summary chart*
 - Study Guide for Final Exam*
 - Israelite Obesity (humorous essay)*
2. Reading of Walton book, *ANE Thought and the OT*, and Writing of a Narrative of Insights:
 - a. Besides finishing the Walton book on *ANE Thought* read an **additional 100 pages** of your choice from any combination of the following (see bibliography for any more details you may need on these):
 - Hoerth, Mattingly, Yamauchi, *Peoples of the OT World*
 - Hoerth, *Archaeology and the OT*
 - Currid, *Ancient Egypt and the OT*
 - Chavalas and Younger, *Mesopotamia and the Bible*
 - Arnold and Strawn, *The World Around the Old Testament*
 - Von Soden, *The Ancient Orient*
 - Craigie, Peter C. *Ugarit and the Old Testament*.
 - De Vaux, Roland. *Ancient Israel*. Vol. 1, *Social Institutions*. Vol. 2, *Religious Institutions*.
 OR a similar scholarly book on background of the OT approved by the professor (by email or phone call)
 OR any pages from the following (and each of these pages counts as two pages):
 articles from scholarly archaeological journals, OR articles in scholarly ANE background encyclopedias, such as the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology*,
 OR a background commentary on OT verses of your choice such as in *Zondervan*

Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament, edited by Walton.

Turn in a list of all the above readings that you did for the 100 pages, **with a total** of the pages read.

b. Essay (50 pts):

Turn in a 4-6 page (double spaced, around 1200-1800 words) narrative of the most helpful specific insights you gained from any of the above reading, especially from Walton, *ANE Thought*. These are to be insights that make specific differences or clarifications in your understanding of what God was doing and saying to us in the Old Testament.

4. Submit percentages of the readings for the course on the accountability sheet. (60 pts)

5. Short Answer: Significant Principle Learned (4 pts)

State the most significant principle you learned or confirmed in this course that helps you understand the Old Testament more clearly, which is NOT from the reading just covered above.

Writing Style Guide

All formal papers (unless otherwise specified by the instructor) are to be formatted according to the [AGTS Writing Style Guide](#). For this online course, I want you to single space and proof read before sending. You do not need to use footnotes unless you are quoting something.

Communication

If you have a question, comment or suggestion, feel free to contact me. You may contact me by phone, email, or through Course Commons. I will respond to emails/messages within 24 hours. I expect students to stay on top of communication that I send to them.

Assessment

The points are listed with each assignment, above, thereby showing the student the weight of the assignment in relation to the total course. However, the grades are recorded as percentages representing the quality level of the answer as interpreted by the professor. The readings are graded at the end of the course on the basis of the percentage that the student records on the accountability sheet, provided under files. The reading of the Walton book of charts together with the book of handouts is worth 20 points. The Walton *ANE Thought* book and the additional 100 pages listed for week 15 are together worth 20 points. The Williams book is worth 20 points. The grand total for the course is 500 points. The course grade is based on the percentages scored, as valued in the seminary grading scale given below.

Late/Missed Assignment Policy

All work will be accepted until the final due date, after which grades will be turned in. If too many assignments are delayed until the end, the grades may be lowered.

Grading Scale

✍️ Grades will be based on the number of points accumulated. The following AGTS grading scale applies:

100% ▶ 94%	93% ▶ 90%	89% ▶ 87%	86% ▶ 84%	83% ▶ 80%	80% ▶ 77%	76% ▶ 74%	73% ▶ 70%	69% ▶ 67%	66% ▶ 64%	63% ▶ 60%	59% ▶ 0%
A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F

Grade Access

All course grades will be recorded and shown through Course Commons. Simply click the “Grades” link in the course menu. For more information on how to check your grades and what you can do from this page, see [How Do I View My Grades?](#)

I will try to grade assignments and provide feedback within four days of the assignment due date. Please pay attention to notifications of graded items and feedback. **I expect students to review and learn from the feedback that I provide on their assignments.**

The Temporary Grade of Incomplete

An “I” (Incomplete) applies to work of acceptable quality when one or more required assignments are not completed because of illness, accident, death in the family, or other satisfactory reason. The request for an Incomplete should be student-initiated. The *Incomplete (I) Grade Request Form* may be obtained from your administrative assistant in your department.

Recommended Bibliography For Old Testament Introduction

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Specific Data

Syllabus prepared by Roger D. Cotton, Th. D., December 2019.

Academic Integrity

As participants in a Christian university, members of the broader academic community, and active professionals, it is incumbent upon every member of the Evangel community to employ and encourage integrity in all our academic and professional pursuits. Any and every instance of academic dishonesty compromises the mission of Evangel University and violates the standards we hold as people of Christ and practitioners within our professional fields. Students are expected to understand and avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, which includes falsification, cheating, collusion, and plagiarism.

As members of the Evangel community, students share the responsibility to deter and report academic dishonesty. Should a student become aware of a violation of academic integrity, he or she is encouraged to report the incident to a faculty member or department chairperson.

It is the responsibility of the faculty to address any and all acts of academic dishonesty. Sanctions for violations of academic dishonesty can include but are not limited to a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade for the course, suspension from school, or expulsion from the university. Evangel's policy on academic integrity, as published in the [Student Handbook](#), appears in the section IX. University Policies: Academic Integrity.

Accommodation Statement

Evangel University is committed to equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act as amended (ADA). Academic Support, a division of the Center for Student Success, is the office designated by Evangel University to review disability documentation, determine reasonable accommodations, and develop plans for the provision of such accommodations.

If you have already established accommodations through Academic Support and receive accommodation memos, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible (accommodations are not retroactive). If you have not yet established accommodations, but have a disability or health condition (permanent or temporary) that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, you are welcome to contact Academic Support staff in the Center for Student Success (ZM-208; 417-865-2815 x.8215) so that accommodations can be arranged. See the [Disability and Academic Accommodations Handbook](#) for further information on the accommodations process.

Inclusive Language

The Assemblies of God Theological Seminary employs inclusive language for human beings in both verbal and written communication. This commitment to equality and community is rooted in the biblical revelation of God's will to form one united people, including men and women from every nation, people, tongue, and tribe (Rev 7:7-9). In regard to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. Students must use inclusive language in all assignments.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom

It is expected that electronic devices will be used during class to support the students' learning. Any use of technology that substantially degrades the learning environment or promotes dishonesty or illegal activities is prohibited.

Cell phones should only be used for academic purposes during class. It is not permissible to answer cell phones or engage in text messaging while class is in session. Should an emergency situation arise that requires you to use your cell phone, please make the professor aware of the circumstances.

University Resources

Evangel University Libraries

Klaude Kendrick Library's physical holdings currently includes approximately 120,000 bound volumes, 3,100 media in various formats, and number of periodical subscriptions to key titles in relevant fields of study. The facility includes a computer center, equipped with 13 computers, multiple laser printers, and a copy machine/scanner/printer, providing access to productivity software, library resources and the Internet. The library also provides access to a wireless network throughout the facility.

The **Cordas C. Burnett Library** is the major information resource center of AGTS. Its physical holdings currently includes 127,726 bound volumes, 5,561 media in various formats, and number of periodical subscriptions to key titles in relevant fields of study.

To access the library catalogs and resources online, visit [Evangel University Libraries](#). Evangel's libraries include computer centers, equipped with computers and a copy machine/scanner/color printer, providing access to productivity software, library resources, and the Internet. The libraries also provides access to a wireless network throughout the facility.

The Write Place

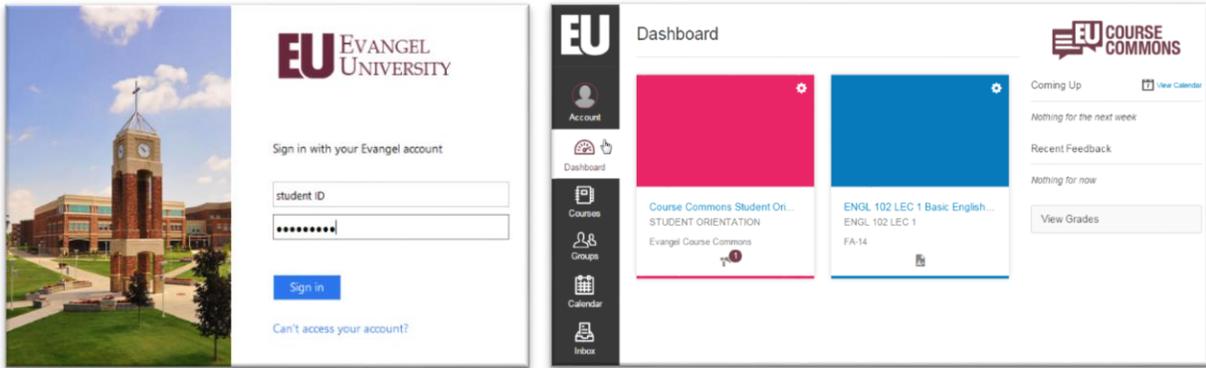
The Write Place is a free service available to all Evangel students. The tutors in The Write Place offer tutoring and support to help each student through the writing process. Although The Write Place is not an editing service, the tutors do teach correct grammar and punctuation, which then may be applied to the student's paper. Students must engage tutors directly and take an active role in the correction process. The Write Place is available to online students. For more information or to set up an appointment, see [The Write Place Online](#).

The Center for Student Success

The Center for Student Success is also available to all Evangel student. The Center for Student Success provides tutoring, coaching and academic support. The Center for Student Success is located in Zimmerman Hall 208. The Center for Student Success is available to online students. For more information or to set up an appointment, see [The Center for Student Success](#).

Course Commons

This course will use Course Commons, Evangel's learning management system. There are links to Course Commons in the Student Portal and the Evangel website. The login page for Course Commons is <https://courses.evangel.edu>.



Use your Evangel username and password to login.

Course Commons Student Orientation

All Evangel students have access to the [Course Commons Student Orientation](#). If you are new to Course Commons, you are encouraged to take advantage of this excellent resource. As part of your course preparation, this will help you make the most of the features that are available to you as a student.



Accessing the Course in Course Commons

Access your courses list by clicking on the Courses icon on the Global Navigation menu on the left of the screen. You can also click on the course card on the Dashboard.

To customize your Courses list, see the following Help Guide:

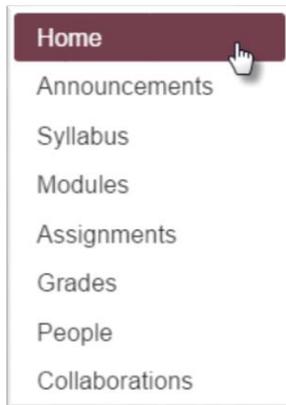
[How do I customize my Courses list?](#)

Students will have access to this course in Course Commons seven (7) days *before* the official beginning of the semester. If students have not completed their financial registration by the first official day of class, their course access will be revoked.

After the end of the semester, students will have read-only access to the course through Course Commons. Only access to already submitted work, course resources and grades will be available.

Accessing Course Content in Course Commons

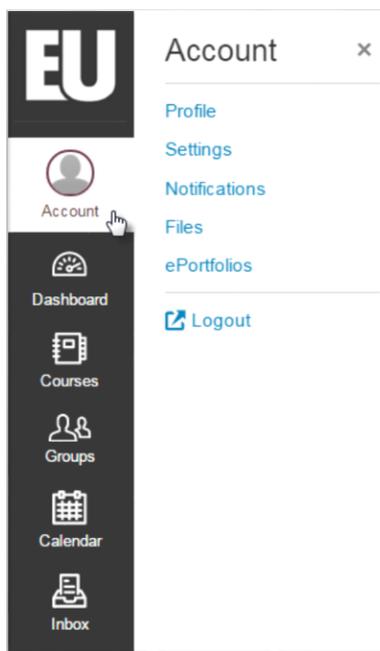
The professor controls the availability of course content and features. Some items may be unavailable until a date set by the professor.



You can navigate the course content and features using the Course Navigation menu on the left. This menu can be customized by the professor, so it may differ from course to course, depending on what features the professor has chosen to make available.

You can collapse the Course Navigation menu to focus on the page content. Click on the menu icon in the upper left (which looks like 3 lines). You can expand the menu by clicking on the menu icon again. All course content (syllabus, modules, course materials, assignments, online quizzes, online discussions, grades, etc.) can be accessed using the links in the Course Navigation menu.

Personal Settings in Course Commons



Students can adjust their personal settings in Course Commons. Click on the Account icon to access the Account menu.

On the **Profile** page, you can add a profile picture to your account. You can also edit your display name, which will show to your instructor and peers throughout Course Commons. The **Settings** link allows you to add additional contact methods (personal email or cell phone number for text message alerts) to your account. You can also add external services, like Twitter, Skype or Google Drive.

The **Notifications** link allows you to customize *what* notifications you receive from Course Commons and *how* and *when* you receive them. This is a student-centered feature that allows you to optimize your notifications to help you stay connected to what is happening in all your courses.

For more information, see the following pages in the Course Commons Student Orientation: [How to Update your Profile and Settings](#) and [How to Update Your Notifications Preferences](#).

Accessing Grades in Course Commons

All course grades will be recorded and shown through Course Commons. Simply click the “Grades” button on the lower right of the Dashboard to access your grades for all courses. You can also use the Grades link in the Course Navigation to access your grades for this course. For more information on how to check your grades and what you can do from the Grades page, see the following page from the Course Commons Student Orientation: [How to Check My Grades](#).

How to Get Help with Course Commons

Help is never more than a few clicks away! You can access the Support menu from any page in Course Commons.

Click on the Support icon in the lower left corner of the screen. Because the Course Commons is powered by the Canvas Learning Management System, all help guides and helpdesk tickets will reference Canvas.

From the Support menu, you can send a message to your instructor, search the Canvas Help Guides, or report a problem. You can browse the [Canvas Student Guide](#) for help on a specific topic.

Course Commons Troubleshooting

Do you have a question about a quiz, an assignment, or another item in the course? Contact your professor.

Are you having technical problems with Course Commons? Click the Support icon, click “Report a Problem” and complete the form to file a ticket for a personal response from the support team. Please be sure to include a thorough description of the problem.

Are you having trouble with your Evangel account (username and password)? Contact the IT Helpdesk at studenthelp@evangel.edu (email) or call 417-865-2815 ext. 4357 (HELP). Please allow 24 hours for a response on a weekday and 48 hours for a response on the weekend.

Support



Course Commons Student Orientation

This course provides on-demand video tutorials for using Course Commons.

The Center for Student Success

Your success is our goal! This course contains resources for career planning, student employment, tutoring and academic support.

The Write Place

Find resources and connect with tutors to help you hone your writing skills.

Ask Your Instructor a Question

Questions are submitted to your instructor

Search the Canvas Guides

Find answers to common questions

Report a Problem

If Canvas misbehaves, tell us about it