ROSE STATE COLLEGE

Division Course Syllabus

Division  
Humanities
Course Prefix and Number  
ENGL 2133

Course Title  
Bible as Literature

Semester and Year Submitted  
REVISED Spring 2015
Credit Hours  
3

Prepared by  
Caryl Gibbs

Hours Per Week:  
Class 3  Lab 0

Course Description (as it appears in Catalog)
A survey course in Biblical literature introducing students to the academic study of the Bible as a literary and cultural document. This course emphasizes the themes and literary forms of the Bible, as well as the historical and cultural contexts from which the Bible, including the Hebrew Tanakh, Apocrypha, and Christian New Testament, was written. May be taken as credit for Humanities General Education Requirements.

Prerequisites:  
ENGL 1213 or equivalent

Text(s):
(1)  
Title: Exploring the Bible, 2nd ed.
Author: Stephen L. Harris
Publisher: McGraw Hill
Copyright Date: 2014
Reading Level: 16

(2)  
Title: The Oxford Study Bible: A Complete Guide to the World of the Bible
Author:  
Publisher: Oxford UP
Copyright Date: 1992
ISBN#: 978-0-19-529000-4
Reading Level: 7

Supplemental Materials: (Other books, audio visual aids, etc.)
The individual instructor may select audio-visual presentations concerning topics relevant to Biblical studies and literature. Additional reading may be used to supplement the text selections.
**Rationale:**
In a world in which a student is expected to be philosophical as well as practical, a division within a particular institution must provide courses that address themselves to both demands. From a practical point of view, this literature course meets the requirements for three types of students. For the prospective English major, at least one literary survey is required; for the student planning to major in a related field (history, for example), a literary survey is suggested as an elective; for other majors, either course may serve as partial fulfillment of the general education requirements for humanities.

For the prospective student of literature, this course would provide general background for more intensive and specialized literary study in later courses. For this student, this course should also present an overall view of the current theories of Biblical literature and Biblical Studies in general.

The non-major also will benefit from this course because it is a comprehensive study that acquaints the student with the academic study of the Bible as a literary collection representing one of the chief cornerstones upon which Western civilization is built, and which has influenced the heritages of everyone, even in secular matters, so powerful and compelling are its writings.

Obviously, such a course also, and perhaps most importantly, aids the student to look realistically at himself in his search for self-awareness and to more fully understand the past and present in their relationship to the future.

**Expected Outcomes (Course Objectives):**
Upon completing the course, the student should, as evaluated by the instructor:

2. Analyze the major themes, purposes, and literary techniques included in the Biblical writings.
3. Evaluate how social, religious, and cultural factors influenced Biblical literature and describe how the authors reflected the values and attitudes of their times.
4. Analyze and debate the value of studying the Bible as a literary document and viewing it in the context of other ancient texts and beliefs.
5. Demonstrate the ability to read literature with increased perception, enjoyment, and sophistication.
6. Engage in a critical reading of a variety of Biblical literary genres; recognize, understand, and explain various literary elements of Biblical texts.
7. Analyze and interpret Biblical texts based on both original ideas and literary and/or Biblical theory.
8. Write well-organized, thesis driven literary argument papers and support ideas with explicit reasoning and textual evidence.
9. Conduct research, evaluate sources, and cite literary evidence using accurate MLA conventions.
10. Demonstrate the ability to use complex language in a variety of contexts.
Methods of Instruction:
Methods of instruction may vary with individual instructors. Instructors are encouraged to explain their methods at the beginning of each course. The following methods of instruction may be used in order to accomplish the stated objectives:
1. lectures
2. audio-visual presentations
3. guest lecturers
4. individual research and library work
5. oral and/or written work
6. class discussion
7. individual conferences
8. journals or other written responses to literature
9. exams and quizzes
10. online learning management system component

Assessment (Including Critical Thinking Measurements):
Methods may vary with professor but could include the following:
1. Objective and essay exams
2. Oral presentations
3. Written reports and response writing
4. Research project
5. At least 20 pages of credited writing for assessment, inquiry, learning, thinking, and/or communication. (These pages may include but are not limited to the following: journals, exploratory writing, and discussion board postings, etc.)

Learning Objectives:

Unit 1 – Introductory Unit (Expected Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7)
1. Identify course rationale, objectives and procedures for evaluation.
2. Discuss means and methods of literary analysis of the Bible, including the difference between theological and literary study, or between devotional and phenomenological study, of an ancient text.
3. Define and explain critical literary terminology as it applies to the Bible.
4. Identify the time frame covered by the course.

Unit 2 – The Hebrew Bible (Expected Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7)
1. Identify the three major sections of the Hebrew Bible: the Torah (Law), Prophets (Nevi’im), and Writings (Kethuvim).
2. Analyze representative selections from the Hebrew Bible, including the Torah, Nevi’im, and Kethuvim.
3. Explain the processes by which the Hebrew Bible was created (transmission, canonization and translation) in relation to the Torah, the Nevi’im, and the Kethuvim.
4. Identify and explain the social, religious, philosophical, and historical forces affecting the development of the Biblical literature of the Hebrew Bible.
Unit 3 – Between the Testaments: The Apocrypha (Expected Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7)
1. Analyze representative selections from the apocryphal Biblical books.
2. Explain the concept of Apocrypha and the historical reason these books are not universally accepted as part of the Biblical canon.
3. Identify and explain the social, religious, philosophical, and historical forces affecting post-exilic Judea leading up to the introduction of Jesus and the development of the New Testament.
4. Compare these forces with those of the prior era.

Unit 4: The New Testament (Expected Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7)
3. Identify and explain the social, religious, philosophical, and historical forces affecting the literature of the New Testament.
4. Compare these forces with those of the prior era.

Unit 5: Research Unit (Expected Outcomes 8, 9, and 10)
1. Evaluate sources for use in scholarly research.
2. Demonstrate the ability to write a research paper using accurate MLA conventions.
3. Compose a well-developed research paper using specific evidence from primary and secondary sources.