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OT 615 Minor Prophets

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I. GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the Minor Prophets that builds on the methodology of the first Inductive Biblical Studies course by further use of the skills learned there and by emphasizing the study of books as wholes. Accordingly, there is special focus on the initial survey of books as wholes, the interpretation a) of parts of books in the context of the books as a whole and b) of the books themselves as wholes. In addition, increased attention is given to thinking, valuing and living biblically by placing individual passages within their larger canonical contexts and by applying Scripture to life and ministry.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

A. Methodology. By the end of the course the student should be able evidentially and contextually to:
   1. Interpret books-as-wholes and any of their parts in light of the whole;
   2. Evaluate and appropriate passages thus interpreted;
   3. Correlate by articulating the major claims of each biblical book studied as both distinct from and related to those of other biblical books, heading toward biblical theology at various discrete levels of book, corpus, testament, and canon.
   4. Describe the essential methodological aspects of Inductive Biblical Study.

B. Content. By the end of the semester the student shall be able to:
   1. Trace the development contents of each book of the Minor Prophets studied in the course without recourse to the printed text, identifying major passages and delineating major themes;
   2. Relate major concerns of the prophets to contemporary theological agendas, especially those of Wesleyan theology;
   3. Demonstrate the importance of a sound methodology for interpretation, including specific examples from the Minor Prophets;
   4. Use a general knowledge of the historical and religious background of the Minor Prophets in the interpretation of these books.

C. Attitude. By the end of the semester the student should desire and intend to:
   1. Apply the inductive method to other biblical books;
   2. Make the Minor Prophets the object of life-long study;
   3. Use the Minor Prophets as a resource for preaching, teaching and living.
D. **General Curricular Contribution.** In addition to meeting the objectives more narrowly assigned to this course as part of the biblical studies curriculum, by the end of the semester, students will:

1. Relate their understanding of the Minor Prophets to the larger theological curriculum and the humanities in general;
2. Relate their interpretation of the Minor Prophets to the global and historical character of the church and to the multi-cultural and cross-cultural nature of ministry;

III. **TEXT, READINGS AND CLASS RESOURCES**

A. **Required Texts and Materials**

Note the “either-or” entries in this list. M.A. students other than M.A.B.S. see no. 8.

1. **A standard contemporary English translation.** Revised Standard Version of the Bible, or some other contemporary, standard (non-paraphrasing) version such as The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, New American Standard Bible, with minimal editorial clutter in the layout.
5. **A concordance of the Hebrew Bible**
   Either Even-Shoshan, A New Concordance of the Old Testament, Baker, or G. V. Wigram, The New Englishman’s Hebrew Concordance, Hendrickson or BibleWorks with its concordance search capability, or the equivalent of these.
6. **A lexicon of the Hebrew Bible**
   or William Holladay, A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament, Eerdmans, or BibleWorks, with its lexical capabilities (outdated but OK for preliminary definition for this class).
7. **A Syntax of Biblical Hebrew**
8. **M.A. students other than M.A. B.S.** would probably be best served in a lexicon by *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Hendrickson, 1979), in a concordance by *The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance* (Hendrickson) or by software such as BibleWorks. A Hebrew text and the syntax of biblical Hebrew are not required for these students.

**B. Recommended for Reading/Research**

The following commentary series are enthusiastically recommended for use. While there are both superior and less stellar volumes in each series, they are on the whole very useful and should be consulted for work in this course. In alphabetical order:

- Anchor Bible (Doubleday)
- Interpretation (John Knox)
- New International Bible Commentary (Hendrickson)
- New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Eerdmans)
- McComiskey, T. E. The Minor Prophets, 3 vols. (Baker)
- Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (InterVarsity)
- Word Biblical Commentary (Word)

For more specific bibliography see Bauer's *Biblical Resources*.

**C. History Collateral Reading and Self-Exam Chart**


2. **Self-Exam based on reading in C.1.**

   Using the Appendix VI, "History of Israel," as a study guide, and studying The Anchor Bible Dictionary, III:526-576 or Thompson's article in ZPED or the equivalent readings, the student shall gain sufficient mastery of the historical setting of the minor prophets to: 1) date each of the prophets by correlation with their major biblical and extra-biblical contemporaries, and 2) place them in the flow of major events of their world.

   To express this competence the student shall:
   1) Make a rough-draft, historical chart which includes these major persons and events (hand written on a single legal sized sheet of paper) and
   2) Invest a least one-half hour in explaining this chart and the history it presents to another person or conferring intentionally with another person (perhaps a colleague from this class) about the chart.

   *Report the person and the date and time of the above presentation,* and submit with your chart and Thompson reading report no later than ___________ (M).
Exception to III.C History Collateral and Self-exam!!
If you have already earned graduate or undergraduate credit in a course specifically in the History of Israel and the majority of the items in Appendix VI are known to you:
1. Invest a minimum of 4 hours reading in a recent, significant text on the history and/or culture of Israel (e.g., those by John Bright, Miller & Hayes) or a work like Matthews and Benjamin's *Social World of Ancient Israel: 1250–587 BCE* (see bibliography) or other works listed in the bibliography section D.
2. Report that reading _________ (M) instead of the history self-exam, with a 500 interaction with the main items of interest to you in the reading.

D. Extra-credit Research and Bibliographic Review Opportunities
1. Students wishing to earn extra credit should request an extra credit assignment sheet from the instructor. It outlines an approximately 15 hour investment whereby a semester grade can be raised one level (e.g., A- to A). Due 5:00 P.M. the last day of the semester, Dec 15 (F).
2. Readings with book survey lessons, for extra credit on given lessons. See Lesson III instructions.

E. On-line Resources
The following (and other) materials will appear in an email (First Class) folder in your campus, First Class, e-mail desktop.
- PowerPoint slides and other documents. Copies of the Power point overheads/slides and other materials we use in class will be lodged here.
- Prophetic materials studies. Some selected studies I have done on prophetic texts but which we will not use in class will be found here.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE**: Materials we will use in class will in some cases be posted here long before their use in class.
- You should consider these materials **secondary sources**.
- They should be consulted only after you have done your own work and then only with proper documentation and **critical interaction**. Undocumented use of these materials will be considered plagiarism. These materials are **not** a substitute for interaction with regularly published secondary sources.

F. Library Reserve Resources.
- Traina, R. *Methodical Bible Study*.

IV. COURSE PROCEDURES
A. Inductive Studies of the Minor Prophets.
The most important part of the course will be the student’s own, independent, direct studies of the Minor Prophets, due at class time and on the dates assigned.

A word about “independent.” It is understood that these lessons are primarily to be notes of the student’s own direct study of the Bible, with reference to secondary sources only as is appropriate—to minimally interpretive works during the course of study and to more interpretive works only after considerable interpretive study of one’s own. Then the student will be expected to give evidence of critical interaction with interpretive sources used. When secondary sources are used, clear documentation will appear. This is sufficiently important from methodological and instructional, not to mention moral perspectives that undocumented use of significant information and ideas from interpretive or introductory resources will be considered plagiarism. Plagiarism will lead to a grade of zero for the lesson involved and may constitute grounds for failure in the course.

**Note for international students.** Students from cultures where extensive, undocumented use of secondary sources is acceptable or even preferred should give particular notice to this aspect of North American scholarly expectations. We sympathize with the growth and adaptation that working in this environment may involve at this point, and we will do our best to help you here. You will nevertheless be accountable for Asbury Seminary’s policies in this regard and for following instructions of this syllabus.

“Independent” here excludes reference to any previous student’s work in the course and to lecture notes from any previous semester of OT(IBS)615. These notes are off limits for use in this class. It is assumed that all work submitted for this course is the student’s own work, done specifically for this section of OT(IBS)615, and not previously submitted as part of any other course’s requirements. Exceptions to these procedures, when group study is suggested, will be clearly announced.

**Group consultation.** In early stages of the course where group consultation is encouraged, students should still aim to participate in these consultations as independent contributors. Group participants will not simply reproduce and submit each other's work as their own and will not “divide up the tasks” to make together a group project.

**B. Format for Submission of Papers.**

To facilitate handling by my office and especially by the SPO:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Each lesson should contain a cover page with only the following information on it and with that information place in the <strong>UPPER RIGHT CORNER:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Student’s SPO (large and clear &quot;font&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Student’s name (large and clear &quot;font&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Lesson numeral and page number (IV-1, IV-2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Date due/Date completed, e.g., “Due February 11 / Done February 10”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On succeeding pages you need only put your last name and the lesson-
page enumeration. Staple or paper clip every multi-sheet work submitted.

The placement (upper right corner, front page) and order of this information (SPO, name) are important for SPO handling. Do not center your name and SPO down in the middle of the cover page.

Please write/print on one side only of paper.

C. Evaluation and Feedback
1. Lessons. All lessons are due, complete at class time as assigned on the dates posted with each separate lesson. Selected lessons of those submitted will be graded and returned in timely fashion for written feedback.
2. Classroom instruction and interaction. Main source of feedback.
3. Peer consultation. Group work will be encouraged on several lessons (probably II, III, V, and VII) to make insights and instruction from colleagues available.

D. Grade Components and Criteria.
1. Lessons, readings attendance
   - Participation 05%
   - Lessons I-II 15%
   - Lessons III-VI 20%
   - Lessons VII-X 30%
   - Lesson XI-XIII 30%
2. Grading Criteria and Criteria of Excellence
   The stated course objectives and the directions in the appendixes, especially Appendixes I, II and V provide the bases of evaluation. Careful attention should be paid particularly to the appended materials.
3. Assessment Reflected in Grade
   (See the current Academic Catalog for grade values.)
   A = Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives
   B = Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives
   C = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives
   D = Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives
   F = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives
4. Class attendance and completion of lessons. See "course requirements" below.
5. Late work. Work submitted late will not be accepted except in cases of emergency or by special arrangement with the professor.

E. Course Requirements
1. Completion and submission of all assignments and lessons in writing as assigned. All lessons must be completed to earn credit in the course.
2. Punctual attendance at all classes for the entire class, including the final session (May 19, 6:15–9:00 p.m.). This class carries a “no fault” attendance policy. No absences are excused, because absence is the issue, not the reason. Absences can be made up by arrangement with the professor. Plan now to attend the final exam session, which we will use to do important integrative work.

V. INDUCTIVE STUDIES IN THE MINOR PROPHETS

Suggestions:
1. Read through an entire assignment before beginning it.
2. Recall that items numbered separately are often interrelated and best considered together and done in light of each other.

Group One 15%
Lessons I - II

LESSON I. SYLLABUS, FOUNDATIONS AND ORIENTATION

1. Syllabus. Read through the syllabus immediately, establishing the base of your accountability for acquaintance with its contents. Give special attention to Sections I - IV and V and Appendixes I, II and V. (DUE)

2. Hermeneutical orientation. Read Bible Study That Works, revised edition. Write a 600 word, typed, critical interaction with the work. Note and then briefly elaborate on three things you learned from the reading. Do the same with three significant hermeneutical or theological questions raised for you by the reading. (DUE)

• If you have already read BSTW,
  a) read 100 pages of most interest to you in Robert Traina, Methodical Bible Study, and write the critical interaction; or
  b) select another text (or equivalent portion thereof) from Bibliography A to read and interact on the same schedule as BSTW.

3. Historical orientation. History Self-Exam (chart) and Collateral Report. Follow instructions in Section III.C above. (DUE)

4. Cultural orientation. Read the table of contents, part 1, chapter 4, and part 4, chapters 16-18, in Arnold & Beyer, Readings From the Ancient Near East (Baker, 2002). The book is on library reserve. Write a 600 word theological/cultural interaction with what you’ve read here and submit it no later than with Lesson IV (DUE)

LESSON II SURVEY OF BOOKS AS WHOLES: JONAH  DUE: (M)
Apply the instructions regarding the survey of books as wholes to the book of Jonah.

Group Two 20%
Lessons III - VI

LESSON III SURVEY OF BOOKS AS WHOLE: JOEL DUE: (M)

1. Apply the instructions regarding the survey of books as wholes to the book of Joel.
2. Remember your history self-exam is due with this lesson.

FOR EXTRA CREDIT (e.g., B to B+, B+ to A- on given lesson) ON ANY SURVEY LESSON WE DO DURING THE SEMESTER

After (repeat, after) you have completed and written up your own survey, read the introductory sections relating to this biblical book in two critical introductions to the OT or two major, contemporary critical commentaries of your choosing.

Include bibliographic reference (author, title, publisher, date) and reading notes on these works in a section of your lesson clearly entitled “Extra Credit Reading on the book of [name the biblical book].”

LESSON IV. SURVEY OF BOOKS AS WHOLE: AMOS DUE (M)

1. Apply the instructions regarding survey of books as wholes to this book.
2. Remember the interaction with Arnold & Beyer's text is due now.

LESSON V. DETAILED INTERPRETATION. JOEL 2:32 DUE: (M)

Apply the instructions regarding detailed interpretation to this strategic passage.

LESSON VI. SURVEY OF THE BOOK OF HOSEA: DUE: (M)

Apply the instructions regarding survey of books as wholes to this book.

GROUP THREE: 30%
LESSONS VII – X

LESSON VII. DETAILED INTERPRETATION & EVALUATION HOSEA 2:2-20 DUE: (M)

1. Interpret this strategic passage following instructions for detailed interpretation. Then
2. Apply instructions for evaluation of the claims of this strategic passage.

LESSON VIII. SURVEY OF BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH: DUE: (M)

Apply instructions for survey of books as wholes to this book.

LESSON IX DETAILED INTERPRETATION & EVALUATION OF HABAKKUK 2:4A DUE: (M)
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1. Quickly sketch the general thought-flow of the book of Hab. as a whole.
2. Interpretation. Apply instructions for detailed interpretation to this strategic passage.
3. Evaluation. Select one of your passage’s major claims and evaluate it in order to determine the manner in which it speaks cross-culturally. Use distributed instructions for evaluation.
4. List the major theological claims this text as evaluated makes upon Christian readers of the present world.

LESSON X. SURVEY OF BOOK AS A WHOLE: ZECHARIAH DUE (M)

Apply instructions for survey of books as wholes to this book.

GROUP FOUR: 30%
LESSONS XI - XIII

LESSON XI. INTERPRETATION, EVALUATION, APPROPRIATION: AMOS 9:7-15 DUE (M)

Interpret, evaluate and appropriate this passage following distributed instructions for these tasks.

LESSON XII. SURVEY OF MALACHI AS A WHOLE DUE (M)

Survey this book, using and adapting distributed instructions.

LESSON XIII. INTERPRETATION, EVALUATION, APPROPRIATION MALACHI 3:16-18 DUE (M)

1. Interpret Malachi 3:16-18 in its book context.
2. Evaluate and Appropriate
3. This study should indicate your skills in inductive Bible study and should represent a synthesis of previous studies in the Twelve Prophets insofar as they relate to an understanding of Malachi 3:16-18. In this process give careful consideration also to the significance of 4:4-6.
4. Use and adapt distributed instructions in this work.

God bless you.

VI. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY
See Section I below for extended bibliographies

A. METHODOLOGY & HERMENEUTICS (Including popular presentations)
**Blair, Edward P. The Bible and You. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953.

** Indicates a classic in the field of Inductive Bible Study.
B. PROPHETIC LITERATURE and THE TWELVE


Minor Prophets


C. Approaches to Prophecy


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For prophetic literature in general, see An Annotated List of Biblical Resources (Bibliography G below).

D. HISTORICAL–CULTURAL SETTING OF THE TWELVE


E. INDIVIDUAL BOOKS

For individual books, see Biblical Resources for Ministry (Bibliography G below).

F. WORD STUDY RESOURCES

Concordances and Indexes

†Brown, Francis. The New Brown - Driver - Briggs - Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon. Hendrickson, 1979. [This work is keyed to Strong's concordance.]

† Particularly helpful for students without competence in biblical languages
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Wordbooks and other Resources

G. OLD TESTAMENT and BIBLICAL THEOLOGY
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H. BIBLIOGRAPHIES FOR BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES
### VII. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR SEMESTER

**FALL 2006: TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

**OT(IBS)615 MINOR PROPHETS**

Mondays 6:15 – 9:00 p.m.

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<tr>
<th>Group I: 15% LESSONS I–II</th>
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<td>Week 1</td>
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<th>Group II: 20% LESSONS III – VI</th>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<th>Group III: 30% LESSONS VII – X</th>
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**November 20 – 25 Reading Week**

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<th>Group IV: 30% LESSONS XI – XIII</th>
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<td>Week 12</td>
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| Week 13        | 12/11 | XIII. MALACHI IE&A  
|                 |       | Final integrative lesson & class session, 6:15 – 9:00 p.m  
|                 |       | Class meets the entire session to process lesson. |

**5% PARTICIPATION**