

REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**POETS OT5300**  
2 credits

Winter 2024  
Jan.22-24, 8:30AM -5:00PM  
Jan. 25, 8:30AM – 12:00PM

INSTRUCTOR: Rev. William Fullilove, Ph.D.

Contact Information:  
[bfullilove@rts.edu](mailto:bfullilove@rts.edu)  
703.581.2015

NOTE: Please do not email or text for questions on assignments or to request extensions. The following contacts should be via Canvas:

- 1) Extension requests must be made in the individual comment section where the student would submit that assignment on Canvas.
- 2) Questions about assignments should be made in the general comments section regarding that assignment (visible to all).
- 3) More general class questions should be made in the Professor/Student discussion forum in Canvas.

If the issue is not covered by these three categories, then please email me. You are welcome to have my cell phone, but please only text me for emergencies. The three categories above are *not* emergencies.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** An examination of the literary structure, themes, and history of the Psalms and wisdom literature of the Old Testament.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Comprehension:

1. To increase your knowledge of the English Bible of the books Job-Song of Songs.
2. To increase your understanding of the message(s) of the books Job-Song of Songs, both separately and together.
3. To introduce the basic trends in scholarly research regarding these books.

Competence:

1. To sharpen your ability to understand and interpret Hebrew Poetry.
2. To sharpen your ability to interpret the books Job-Song of Songs in their historical, theological, and literary contexts.
3. To sharpen your ability to teach and preach the books Job-Song of Songs in the context of the local church.
4. To prepare those called to pastoral ministry for licensure and ordination exams at their local church assemblies and examination boards.

Character:

1. To sharpen your application of the themes of the books Job-Song of Songs in your personal spiritual life.
2. To be a person of growing faith, hope, and love based on the work of God as revealed in these books.

## REQUIRED READINGS:

- Biblical books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs in two English translations of the student's choice.
- Belcher, Richard P., Jr. *The Messiah and the Psalms* (Mentor/Christian Focus, 2006). [978-1845500740]
- Futato, Mark D. *Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2007). [978-0825427657]
- Kidner, D. *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1985). [978-0877844051]

## REQUIREMENTS:

*Attendance:* Students are required to attend class lectures and discussions. If you know you cannot make it to a portion of a class session, notify the instructor in advance. Given the weekend format of this class, students are not permitted to miss a full weekend.

*Reading:* Students should complete all readings according to the course schedule below.

*Hourly Examinations:* Three take-home hourly exams will be distributed to be done in the evening. Each exam will be **due at the beginning** of the next class. The final hourly will be **due Jan. 26 at 6:00 PM**. Each hourly will be closed book, and the student will have 1 hour to take the exam. **Hourlies 1 and 2 may be submitted as a .pdf file to the course website on Canvas or brought to class as a physical copy. Hourly 3 should be submitted as a .pdf file to the course website on Canvas.** These hourly examinations are **not intended to be difficult, but they will require the student to demonstrate basic proficiency** in the skills taught in the previous day's class.

*Paper:* Students who have taken Hebrew are required to write an exegetical paper for this class. Students who have not taken Hebrew may instead write a theological paper. Papers should be 15-20 pages, double-spaced and should interact both with the material discussed in class sessions and the secondary readings. Additional research is required for these papers and must be demonstrated both in the paper itself and in its bibliography.

- Exegetical Paper: Students may submit an exegetical paper on one of the following passages: Psalm 24, Proverbs 3:13-26, or Job 19:23-27. If a student wishes to do a different passage, it should be approved by the instructor. (N.B.: This is for your benefit – to keep you from biting off more than you can chew!)
- Theological Paper: Students should email the instructor by Jan. 24 with a one-page paper proposal for approval.

This paper will be **due Feb. 28 at 5:00 PM by submission on Canvas. The paper should be submitted as a .pdf file. Please include your name as part of the file name.**

Note: Students who are interested in doing **additional graduate study** beyond their RTS degree **MUST** contact the instructor in advance, as these requirements may be adjusted to better prepare the student for his or her future course of study.

**TOTAL GRADE:**

The final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Hourly Examinations: 50%

Paper: 50%

Grades will be assigned according to the RTS grading system. The instructor reserves the right to adjust grades based on each student's attendance at class and participation in classroom discussion.

**ZOOM POLICY:**

Your professor may allow you to Zoom into class or watch Zoom recordings for excused absences based on the professor's discretion and subject to the availability of equipment. Students should contact their professor well in advance of the class meeting. For a third absence the Registrar should be consulted. Your professor may require additional interactive assignments to offset the absence of classroom interaction. Sync or Remote Live courses have priority for the limited Zoom equipment.

**EXTENSION POLICY:**

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Registrar's Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 46 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 18)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 49)

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

The majority of this class will focus on an exegetical study of the books Job-Song of Songs. Particularly important topics in academic or pastoral study of these books will also be covered. NOTE: The course schedule is ALWAYS subject to revision based on the needs of the class.

**Jan 22:**

Topics:

- What is Hebrew Poetry?
- How to interpret Hebrew Poetry
- Proverbs

Reading Due:

- Proverbs (English Bible)
- Kidner, pp. 11-55
- Futato, pp.23-56

**Jan 23:****Hourly 1 due at the start of class**

Topics:

- Psalms

Reading Due:

- Psalms (English Bible)
- Futato, pp.57-181
- Belcher, all

**Jan 24:**

Topics:

- Psalms (cont.)
- Song of Songs
- Ecclesiastes

Reading Due:

- Song of Songs (English Bible)
- Ecclesiastes (English Bible)
- Futato, pp.182-230
- Kidner, pp.90-115

**Jan 25:****Hourly 2 due at the start of class**

Topics:

- Job
- Wisdom Literature as a Whole

Reading Due:

- Job (English Bible)
- Kidner, pp.56-89, 116-124

**Jan 26: Hourly 3 due at 5:00 PM via Canvas****Feb 28: Final paper due at 5:00 PM via Canvas**

**OFFICE HOURS:**

I am always also available by appointment, including before or after class.

I enjoy sharing thoughts with students, so do not hesitate to contact me. The contact information given above is for your use, and you should feel free to contact me as much as you wish. I will respond as promptly as possible.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY/RECOMMENDED READING:**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Berry, Donald K. *An Introduction to Wisdom and Poetry of the Old Testament* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 1999).

Brown, William P. *The Psalms* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2010).

Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010).

### **HEBREW POETRY**

Petersen, D. and Richards, K. *Interpreting Hebrew Poetry* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992).

### **PSALMS - INTRODUCTION**

Brown, William P. *The Psalms* (IBT; Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2010).

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Message of the Psalms* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1984).

Keel, Othmar. *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms* (New York, NY: Seabury, 1978).

Longman, Tremper III. *How to Read the Psalms* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988).

Lucas, Ernest C. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Psalms & Wisdom Literature* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

McCann, J. Clinton. *A Theological Introduction to the Book of Psalms: The Psalms as Torah* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993).

### **PSALMS - COMMENTARIES**

Allen, Leslie C. *Psalms 101-150* (Vol. 21. 2 Revised. WBC. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2002).

Clifford, Richard J. *Psalms 73-150* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003).

---. *Psalms 1-72* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002).

Craigie, Peter C. *Psalms 1-50* (Vol. 19. 2nd ed. WBC. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005).

Futato, Mark D. *Psalms* (Vol. 7. Cornerstone Biblical Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2009).

Kidner, Derek. *Psalms: An Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973).

Tate, Marvin E. *Psalms 51-100* (Vol. 20. WBC. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1991).

VanGemeren, Willem A. *Psalms* (EBC. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008).  
Waltke, Bruce K., and James M. Houston. *The Psalms as Christian Worship: An Historical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010).

### **WISDOM**

Berry, Donald K. *An Introduction to Wisdom and Poetry of the Old Testament* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 1999).  
Lucas, Ernest C. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Psalms & Wisdom Literature* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).  
Murphy, Roland E. *The Tree of Life* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996).

### **PROVERBS**

Bridges, Charles. *A Commentary on Proverbs* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1846).  
Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (The New American Commentary, 14; Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993).  
Longman, Tremper III. *Proverbs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006).  
Ortlund, Raymond C., Jr. *Proverbs: Wisdom That Works* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2012).  
Waltke, Bruce K. *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1-15*. (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).  
---. *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 15-31*. (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005).

### **JOB**

Anderson, F. *Job* (Tyndale OT Commentaries 13; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1976).  
Konkel, August H., and Tremper Longman III. *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2006).  
Hartley, J. *The Book of Job* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988).

### **ECCLESIASTES**

Bartholomew, Craig G. *Ecclesiastes*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009).  
Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (The New American Commentary, 14; Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993).  
Konkel, August H., and Tremper Longman III. *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2006).  
Provan, Iain. *Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

### **SONG OF SONGS**

Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (The New American Commentary, 14; Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993).

Hess, Richard S. *Song of Songs*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005).

Konkel, August H., and Tremper Longman III. *Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2006).

---. *Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005).

Provan, Iain. *Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

### **LAMENTATIONS**

Dearman, J. Andrew. *Jeremiah, Lamentations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002).

Hillers, D. *Lamentations* (AB 7a; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972).



## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b>	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong</li> <li>➤ Moderate</li> <li>➤ Minimal</li> <li>➤ None</li> </ul>	
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	Exam, Paper
<b>Scripture</b>	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	Exegetical Focus, Significant Paper, Readings
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Minimal	Biblical-theological emphases of this portion of canon; engage theologically when appropriate
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	Close study of the Word of God sanctifies; strong devotional components of Scripture
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Material is taught within and analyzed against redemptive-historical worldview
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Moderate	Discussion and evaluation of contributions from other traditions in a respectful and honoring way
<b>Pastoral Ministry</b>	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading, and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Xns.	Strong	Exegetical work that forms the backbone of strong preaching; frequent discussion of applications for preaching; Psalter forms a basic component of many traditions' Christian worship