Intermediate Biblical Hebrew
University of Waterloo, Winter 2013

January 2013
RS331/JS336A
Room: Modern Languages 212
Fridays, 10:30-13:00

Instructor: Dr Robert M. Kerr
Office hours: by appointment
E-mail: rkerr@wlu.ca

I Course Description
The purpose of this course is to consolidate and expand on previously learnt Hebrew grammar as well as to increase reading proficiency. Focus is given to covering a wide variety of genres, e.g., narrative, chronicle, genealogy, oracle, prayer, hymn, and proverb. Students will gain proficiency in reading, translating, and analyzing the grammar of selected prose passages from the Hebrew Bible with the aid of a lexicon. Along with the emphasis on reading original biblical texts in Hebrew, the course will continue to focus on the linguistic and cultural background for the texts that the students read. At the end of the course, students should: a) be able to parse accurately regular and irregular forms of the verb in all conjugations; b) have increased their basic core of frequently used vocabulary; c) have attained fluency in the oral reading of the set passages of Hebrew texts; d) have a good knowledge of text-critical, historical and literary issues generally related to the passages studied; e) gained familiarity with some of the tools required to do independent research in biblical and related literature, including the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia apparatus and a concordance. Preparation may include reading, writing or oral homework assignments from the text or handouts.

II Prerequisites
Either a two term introductory course in Biblical Hebrew or a one term intensive course. Students should have a basic working understanding of Hebrew phonetics and morpho-syntax.

III Course Expectations
Thorough preparation and active participation in every class is the most important part of the work in this course. Students will be expected to have prepared the assigned readings well: before class one should ascertain that one is proficient in reading the text out loud with proper intonation and that one understands what one is reading without having to consult a translation. Students will be expected to have looked up all unfamiliar vocabulary and grammatical forms, and made notes on them. There is no need to write out a full English translation as long as one understands the text. While working with the texts in class, students will be asked to try their best with it without consulting their notes. Students should not be discouraged if this is initially difficult: perseverance and repetition results in improvement. Regular class attendance and full participation in oral work, group activities, etc. are required in order to pass this course. It will be difficult if not impossible to make up classes that you have missed. Attendance is mandatory and there are no unexcused absences allowed. The penalty for one unexcused absence is 10 marks deducted from your final mark. The penalty for a second unexcused absence is a failing grade. Absence is only allowed with the presentation of a note from a doctor or approved counsellor - or in very exceptional cases with the permission of the instructor.

IV Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to understand intermediate level issues related to the history, morphology, syntax and discourse of biblical Hebrew, know the various textual traditions which witness to the Hebrew Bible, and have considerably expanded upon the basic reading vocabulary acquired in introductory Hebrew. Students will have acquired an ability to read Biblical Hebrew following the Massoretic accentuation, to use intermediate grammars for studying Biblical
Hebrew, to exegete a narrative passage of biblical Hebrew with attention to translation and meaning of the passage, and have basic proficiency in the text critical analysis of biblical text.

V Course Evaluation
In-Participation (readings and assignments): 50%
Final exam: 50%

N.B. The final exam will be conducted *viva voce* during the examination period. It will contain both texts read in class and *non vidi*.

VI Primary Course Readings
Genesis 1-3; 1 Samuel 1; Ruth; Deuteronomy 5-6, 32; Judges 3-4, 6; Amos 3-5; Zechariah; selections from Proverbs and Qohelet; selected Psalms. (Subject to change).

Students should have at least prepared Gen 1 *before* the first class.

VII Required Course Materials


VIII Supplementary Bibliography (English only)
*Introductory Grammars:*

*More Advanced Grammars:*

Dictionaries/Lexicons:

Concordances:

Other Lexical Aids:
Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary Cards. Visual Education Association, 581 West Leffel Lane, P.O. Box
1666, Springfield, Ohio 45501, USA.


**Commentaries:**

**Genesis**


Westermann, Claus. *Genesis*. 3 volumes (Fortress, 1984-86)

**Ruth**


**Deuteronomy**


Clements, R. E. *Deuteronomy OTG* (JSOT, 1989)

Nelson, Richard D. *Deuteronomy OTL* (WJK, 2002)

Rad, Gerhard von. *Deuteronomy OTL* (WJK, 1966)


**IX Cross-listed course**

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

**X Academic Integrity:**

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

*Discipline*: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found
to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm. Academic Integrity website (Arts): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo): http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/

XI Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:
Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.