

JS 234/RS 234
Power and Corruption in the Bible (Old Testament)
Fall 2022

Instructor: **Location:** **EV3 4412**

Time: **10-11:20**

Day: **Tues. & Thurs.**

Office:

Office Hours: **11:45-12:45 Tues. & Thurs**

You can always contact me by email and/or we can arrange a mutually convenient time. I am always available to address your concerns.

Ph.:

Email:

Course Description

This course will concentrate on issues of political and ethical corruption as they emerge from close readings of biblical accounts offered in the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings. We will examine the uses and abuses of power and analyze various historical narratives as well as prophetic response to political and moral challenges posed by the monarch. Some of the core narrative will be the conflict between Saul and David, the political/moral rise and fall of David and Solomon and the subsequent rupture in the power structure of ancient Israel between the Northern and Southern kingdoms.

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.

Academic Integrity:

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 (University):

<http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

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.

Contingencies for Covid Related Changes in Course Delivery

In the event of covid related class disruptions arrangements will be made to post lectures on Learn for any classes that might be required to be delivered

remotely as a result. Arrangements will also be made for any films scheduled for those classes to be viewed online.

In the event of such an occurrence, notifications will be sent out to all students enrolled in the class when the recorded lectures are posted and on which Module. All students will of course be notified as to any changes to this course delivery.

The Writing Centre- For Help to Improve your Writing Skills

The Writing Centre works across all faculties to help students clarify their ideas, develop their voices, and write in the style appropriate to their disciplines. Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre.

Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available.

Please note that writing specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not proof-read or edit for you. Please bring hard copies of your assignment instructions and any notes or drafts to your appointment.

[optional] For Distance Learners and Students at Satellite Campuses Online appointments (using video and audio) are available to students who are registered distance learners, students on co-op, and students who study at one of Waterloo's satellite campuses. Simply request an online appointment when you book an appointment. To see what in-person services are available at satellite campuses, please see the Writing Centre website.

Course Requirements

- Attendance and participation in all course sessions
- All reading assignments
- **Assignment #1** (6-7pp., typed, double spaced) (Topics to be assigned) (25% of final grade). –

Assignment#2 (7-9 pp., typed, double spaced); (Topics to be assigned) (35% of final grade).

- **Final Exam- Take Home** (covering all lectures and reading assignments on course) (40% of final grade)

Approximate Dates for Assignments- This is just an approximation, so you know about when to expect them. The assignments will usually be handed out two weeks prior to due date at which time instructions will be clearly given and posted:

- First assignment handed out approximately 3rd week of class
- Second assignment handed out approximately 7th week of class

Submissions of Assignments

-Drop boxes will be available on Learn for submission.

Penalty for Late Submissions

Any late submissions without legitimate and documented medical or other emergency excuse will be subject to a penalty of a 20 percentage reduction in grade for each day it is handed in past the deadline.

There will be no exceptions to this rule without a legitimately acceptable reason.

Required Texts:

- Old Testament -Any English translations** that you have including the King James version, etc.
 - **All Readings posted on LEARN**
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Lecture 1

- Overview
- Goals of Course
- What is the Hebrew Bible?
Readings: Introduction (on LEARN)

Read the following two right away:

Greenberg, M., "Biblical attitudes toward power: Ideal and reality in law and prophets"

Walzer, Michael, "Interpretation and Social Criticism"

The other 3 should be read over the course of the first month of classes.

Lecture 2- Power and Corruption Begins at Creation

Genesis 1-11

Lecture 3

- Moses- Ideal Leader
- Exod., chapters 1, 2, 3
- Readings: **Module # 1**
- Visotzky, B., "The Fugitive" from The Road to Redemption
- Machinist, "Who Was Moses"

Lecture 4

Rebellion against divine authority

- The Golden calf

Exodus 31:18 - 32:35

Readings: Module # 1

(1) Wildavsky, A., "A dialogue against death" from The nursing father: Moses as a political leader;

(2) Walzer, M., "Murmurings: Slaves in the Wilderness" from Exodus and Revolution,

Lecture 5:

We will concentrate particularly on two narratives but read over the entire book of Judges.

- Introduction to Book of Judges

Reading: Module #2

Gros Louis, K.R.R., "The Book of Judges" from Literary Interpretation of Biblical Narratives

Lectures 6-7

- Samson
- Hubris and foreign women

Judges ch. 14, 15, & 16

Readings: Module #3

Crenshaw, J., "Chapter two: passion or charisma" from Samson: A Secret Betrayed, a Vow Ignored

Lecture 8:

- Rape as Assertion of Power-Concubine at Givah

Judges ch. 19, 20, 21

Readings: Module # 4

Aschkenasy, N., "The hapless concubine" from Woman at the Window

Lecture 9:

- Introduction to Book of Samuel and King Saul

Readings: Module # 5 , # 6

- (1) Fox, E., "Introduction" from Give Us a King,
- (2) Wiesel, E., "Saul" from Five Biblical Portraits

Lecture 10

Saul - Appointment & Disappointment

- a) The choice of monarchy - 1 Samuel ch. 8
- b) The fall of Saul - 1 Samuel ch. 15

Readings: Module # 6

- (1)Gunn, D.M., " The story: 1 Samuel 8-15" from The fate of King Saul.

(2) Walzer, M. et al, The Jewish Political Tradition

Lectures 11- 12:

David- Multiple Introductions

1Sam 17-18

Readings: Module #8

Lectures 13-14

A Women's Tragedy- The Story of Michal the daughter of Saul

• **Readings- Module # 9:**

- Clines, D.J.A., "Michal observed: An introduction to reading her story

- Biblical Humour

• **Reading- Module #7**

- I Sam. Ch. 25-
- Garsiel, Moshe, "Wit, Words and a Woman: 1 Samuel 25" from On Humour and the Comic in the Bible

Lectures 15-17:

David and Batsheva

- Power corrupts
- Seduction and betrayal

2 Samuel ch. 11 ; 2 Samuel 12:1-25

Readings: Modules # 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

Brueggeman, Walter, David's Truth,

Heller, Joseph, God Knows,

Miscall, Peter D., "Moses and David: Myth and Monarchy"

Nicol, Rev. George G., "Bathsheba, a Clever Woman?"

Schmitt, Gladys, David the King,

Lecture 18

Rape of Tamar

2 Samuel ch. 13

Reading: Module # 15

Rosenberg, J., "Amnon and Tamar" from King and kin : political allegory in the Hebrew Bible,

Lecture 19

Absalom, Absalom

2 Samuel ch. 15 -18

Readings: Module #16

Daube, P., "Absalom and the ideal King"

Lecture 20

Elijah Stories

- Jezebel & Ahab - Monarch as supreme despot

1 Kings ch. 17 – 22

2 Kings chs. 1-2

Readings: Modules # 17-18

Trible, Phyllis, "The Odd Couple: Elijah and Jezebel"

Lecture 21-23

Book of Esther

Queenship in Israel

- Read entire book of Esther

- Where does power really lie?
- Will the real monarch stand up?

- **Readings- Module # 19-20**

Greenstein, E.L., "A Jewish Reading of Esther"

Lecture 24- Conclusions

***TAKE HOME EXAM* will be posted on Learn**