

BL 511-1

The Language of the Old Testament

Semester: Fall 2014

Days: W F 11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Room: L2100

Number of credits: 3

Prerequisite:

None

Instructor: R. R. Remin

Email: rremin@ambrose.edu

Phone: 403-410-2000, ext. 7906

Office: L2081

Office hours: By appointment; see below!

Course Description:

An introduction to the grammar, syntax and vocabulary of biblical Hebrew taught inductively from the Book of Esther. Some attention is given to the oral reading of Hebrew. Students will be introduced to the hard copy and electronic resources available to assist their study of biblical Hebrew.

Further Course Information:

For the academic year 2014-15 the textbook has been changed so that students will be reading biblical Hebrew from more than the Book of Esther.

A note on the methodology and values adopted in the teaching of this course is in order.

1. The instructor recognizes and tries to maintain a sensitivity to the fact that more mature adult learners may have a different learning style than undergraduates and that individual students have different learning styles. And so, for example, examinations have two parts – an open book take home and a closed book section written in confinement.
 - a. Patience and repetition are by-words in this course.
 - b. The emphasis falls on learning and understanding as opposed to rote memorization; on recognition as opposed to the ability to reproduce information and data. The ability to reproduce tables and charts does not guarantee that learning and understanding have been achieved.

Important Dates:

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| First day of classes: | September 3, 2014 |
| Registration revision period ends: | September 14, 2014 |
| Last day to request revised examination: | October 27, 2014 |
| Last day to withdraw from course: | November 12, 2014 |
| Last day to apply for time extension for coursework: | November 24, 2014 |
| Last day of classes: | December 9, 2014 |

Final Exam: December 12, 2014

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Room: A2141

- c. The focus is on learning to read and understand as opposed to writing which is a very different skill.
- d. The instructor is aware that fear (in moderation) may be a motivator to learning but fear in immoderate degrees prevents learning, and will try to set an atmosphere accordingly.
- e. The instructor assumes that all students have forgotten all of the grammar they had ever been taught and will teach accordingly. The instructor is not as cynical on this point as the author of your text who states that this is a polite way of saying that students weren't taught any.
- f. Students are encouraged to work together in learning groups.
- g. To these ends the instructor has adopted certain rules for the class.

The Rules For The Class

Have fun!

Make mistakes!

Ask dumb questions!

Cheat! (Except on the tests and the final.)

Consider this classroom a safe zone!

There are no dumb questions!

There are no topics which are off limit.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

It is the aim of the course that students acquire the following skills:

1. The student will learn and then review the grammatical elements of biblical Hebrew by observation of the Hebrew text so that the student will be able to identify correctly the morphological patterns of the verbs and nouns as well as translate Hebrew text into meaningful English. Students are required to learn the structural markers (morphemes) of the Hebrew language rather than the rote memorization of the same. The emphasis falls soundly on learning to understand the Hebrew text and not necessarily the translation of the text *per se*. The pedagogical methodology of the course presents the student with the opportunity to learn inductively and deductively.
2. From the third lesson the student will be reading Hebrew biblical text. The student will read in Hebrew a wide selection of texts from the Old Testament.
3. The student will commit to memory in this semester a minimum vocabulary of approximately 250 words of Hebrew vocabulary all of which occur more than forty times in the Old Testament or are of particular theological interest.
4. The student will be taught the major reading markers (accents) of Hebrew so that the student can learn to read the texts out loud, discerning the meaningful units in each case.
5. The student will learn how to read and regularly use the Hebrew lexicon which is referred to by the names of its editors, namely, *Brown-Driver-Briggs* and which is abbreviated *BDB*.

- The student will be introduced to the major reference grammars for biblical Hebrew (Gesenius-Kautzsche-Cowley, Jouon, Waltke-O'Connor) as well as theological dictionaries such as *TWOT*, *TDOT*, *DOTT*, *DBI*, *ABD*, and *IDB*. Some time will be spent discussing computer and internet resources.

Secondary Objectives

- The student will learn how to observe and how to learn by observation.
- The student will be introduced to those aspects of various ancient Semetic and non-Semetic cultures which are evident in the texts of the Old Testament and which are distinct from the Jewish culture of the diaspora and our modern culture. Thus the need for cross-cultural awareness even within the Old Testament will be demonstrated.
- The student will read in *Tall Tales Told in Biblical Hebrew* which are children's stories told in biblical Hebrew. This reading facilitates learning to read more quickly and to read for amusement and pleasure.
- The student will be introduced to the basic principles of the contextual-syntactical-verbal-theological method of exegesis.

Outline:

This is a textbook based course. The course follows the outline provided by the chapters in the required textbook and workbook (Practico).

This course meets on Wednesdays and Fridays from 11:15 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. in one of the class rooms of Ambrose.

Some special dates to remember:

September 24

No Class – Seminary One Day Retreat

November 5

Two Part Test

November 28

Reference Works Assignment Due

December 5

Last Class in this course

December 12, (Friday), 9:00 a.m.

Final Examination

December 17

Last Day of Semester The last day of the semester is the last day of the examination period; instructors are not permitted to accept assignments after the last day of the semester without the registrar's permission

Course Requirements:

In order to successfully complete this course each student will complete the following.

1. Attend all scheduled sessions of this course. Students will not receive marks for attendance but absences will result in deductions from their final grade.

Each class builds on the previous and so missing a class leaves the student at a disadvantage and questions raised because of an absence inconvenience the rest of the class. Moreover the purpose of this course is not to facilitate “an information dump” from the textbook. Learning language requires repetition, hearing, and learning from other students, all of which cannot be done in isolation. Moreover Hebrew exegesis is a skill and an art both of which improve as a result of the interaction in class between instructor and students and between students. It is in the class that students learn the methodology and catch the passion for the task at hand.

2. Each student will prepare each lesson from the textbook in advance of the class in which it is discussed. Complete assignments as instructed!
3. Each student will write weekly quizzes testing vocabulary and points of grammar.
4. Each student will write a two part mid-term test (in class closed book and open book take-home) as scheduled in the semester.
5. Each student will complete “word study / reference works project” which is a study of a Hebrew word in the various selected reference works available for studying Hebrew and write an evaluation of the works used (A list of possible Hebrew words, the selected reference works and criteria for grading this assignment will be made available.). See “Very Important Notes,” number 2 below for more details.
6. Read entries in the Hebrew-English lexicon as directed so as to learn how to read the lexicon.
7. Each student will compile and regularly revise their own synthesis of Hebrew grammar which they are learning.
8. Each student will write the two part final examination (in class closed book and open book take-home) as scheduled by the Registrar during the scheduled examination week.
9. Investigate software options to assist their study of the Greek and Hebrew Testaments. (There is no software package for just one of these languages.) Which program is immaterial. Invest in one is essential. Try out these websites for the best programs. The programs will be discussed in class. But as you investigate ask these simple questions.
 - Which Greek and Hebrew texts are included in the program?
 - Which translations are included – *LXX*, *Vulgate*, *RSV*, *NRSV*, *NIV*, *NASB*, *etc.*?
 - What can be added to this platform? *BDB*, Word Biblical Commentry, Bauer-Ardnt-Gingrich, *TDNW*, Van Gemeren?
 - All of these programs have “tagged text.” All of them do concordance type searches. But do they have GRAMCORD? What’s GRAMCORD?

- Do they have a simple mouse click or macro to link to commentaries and lexicons which come with the software package or can be added to the platform?

Here are the three most commonly used programs. All three provide on line demos.

Bibloi 8.0 -- <http://www.silvermnt.com/bibloi.htm> This is the one used in class.

Logos Bible Software -- <http://www.logos.com/> Special rates? Many variations.

Accordance Bible Soft. -- <http://www.accordancebible.com/> MAC platform,

Textbooks

The following books are available in the on campus bookstore. These are required texts. Bring the first two books by Practico to each class.

Gary D. Pratico, Miles V. Van Pelt. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew* (2nd edition, Zondervan, 2007).

Gary D. Pratico, Miles V. Van Pelt. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew, Workbook* (2nd edition, Zondervan, 2007).

Gary D. Pratico, Miles V. Van Pelt. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew, Vocabulary Cards* (Zondervan, 2007).

Brown, Francis, Driver, S.R., Briggs, Charles A. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Clarendon Press, 1907). There is no value to having an edition with "Strong's numbers" as Strong's dictionary is inaccurate to the point of being dangerous and in any case has been replaced.

For your reading pleasure, entertainment and to amuse your children around the breakfast table. (Your professors version of *Our Daily Bread*.)

Ethelyn Simon, Irene Resnikoff, Linda Motzkin and Susan Noss. *Tall Tales Told in Biblical Hebrew* (EKS Publishing Co., Oakland, CA, 1994).

The following items are highly recommended to those students who wish to begin using their knowledge of Hebrew in Old Testament exegesis immediately.

Walter Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (Baker, 1981).

Douglas Stuart, *Old Testament Exegesis: A Primer for Students and Pastors* (Westminster Press, 1984).

Submission of Assignments

1. There is no Moodle Site for this course to which students may submit assignments because there are too many issues with the electronic display of Greek and Hebrew fonts. All assignments are submitted to the professor via campus mail or directly to his office.

2. ἵνα ῥεμῶφιθη ἰσχυρῶς (Deut 4.9) All hand written tests, examinations, or any other hand written thing you hand to your professor must be written in ink! Your professor cannot and will not read anything written in pencil.
3. ἵνα ῥεμῶφιθη ἰσχυρῶς (Deut 4.9) All other assignments must be submitted in hard copy. (Do not submit electronic copies and expect the instructor to print them or read them.) Follow these guidelines!
 - All printing is in black ink and on white paper. Twelve point font. There are no other colors or shading. No borders around pages.
 - There is no cover page. The following information will be listed in the upper left corner of the first page in single space format. Nothing bold, nothing fancy.
 - The name of the assignment at the top left of the page.
 - Student's full name on the second line. Do not include your student number.
 - The words Ambrose Seminary on the third line.
 - The date on the fourth line.
 - Leave a blank line and begin your paper.
 - The fonts used must be twelve point standard fonts. The basic fonts such as Times New Roman, Arial, etc.
 - Any Greek and/or Hebrew in the assignment must be in a Greek or Hebrew font. Do not put quotation marks around nor italicize any Greek or Hebrew words in Greek or Hebrew fonts. Transliteration is not acceptable except in a direct quotation or a title of a published work. Students will be provided with fonts upon request. However, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the fonts are correctly printed before the paper is handed in. (Not all printers will correctly print all fonts.) This is the student's responsibility. Papers with incorrectly printed fonts will not be read. In the event of "font printing failure" the Greek or Hebrew words may be hand printed in black ink. (This was how it was done from the time of the invention of the type writer until the passing of the same when the personal computer was invented.)
 - Footnotes and bibliography must be consistent and in an acceptable format which identifies who wrote what, when and where it was published.
 - One (and only one) staple in the upper left corner. Do not use plastic covers, rings, binders, etc. Think "Adam's ale!"

Attendance:

1. **Absences** are intolerable because of the nature of the subject being learned and the manner in which this course is taught, namely a modified inductive method. If you must miss a class please work through the lesson(s) missed and then come to the instructor with any problems or questions. In the event you cannot be prepared, you are better being in class unprepared than not in class at all. Too many absences will affect your final grade (either by examination or adjustment by the instructor.)
2. Please do not ask for permission to be absent from class for one class or a series of classes. The student has to do what the student has to do. The instructor will do what the instructor has to do. The instructor

will not give permission to any student to act in a manner which is not in the student's best interest. Nor will I be an enabler to your addiction to absenteeism.

Evaluation:

The final grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

- 15% -- weekly vocabulary/grammar quizzes
- 15% -- Mid-Term Test
- 20% -- Word Study / Reference Works Project
- 10% -- Student's own synthesis of Hebrew grammar and demonstration of knowledge of Hebrew in class.
- 40% -- Final Examination

Although no points are given for attendance, absences will result in deductions.

Grade Assignment:

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

| <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>Description</u> |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| A+ | |
| A | Excellent |
| A- | |
| B+ | |
| B | Good |
| B- | |
| C+ | |
| C | Satisfactory |
| C- | |
| D+ | |
| D | Minimal Pass |
| F | Failure |

Please note that your final grade will be available to you through the student portal. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out. Your instructor will not report grades verbally nor by email.

Textbooks:

Policies:

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying

students of important matters (Cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, it is highly recommended that they forward all messages from the Ambrose account to the other account.

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may to enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty. These courses will not appear on the student's transcript. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a Request to Withdraw from a Course by the **Withdrawal Deadline**, please consult the List of Important Dates. Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. A grade of "W" will appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a **Revised Examination Request** form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically-enabled activities unrelated to the class during a class session. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Please do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "**Course Extension**" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or

alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control".

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Additional Policies Imposed by the Instructor:

1. **Office Hours.** These Office Hours on campus are subject to meetings called by higher authorities (president, dean, registrar), previously scheduled meetings with other students, the instructor's health (doctors' appointments, medical emergencies), snow storms, ice storms, highway closures, automobile failure, and/or "the crick didn't rise." Book an appointment via email to ensure that I'm here, that you will receive notification of cancellation or you will not be preempted by another appointment (the above notwithstanding).

- Monday Afternoons
- Tuesday Not on campus. By appointment only
- Wednesday Before class at 1:00 or after.
- Thursday After chapel after my morning block class.
- Friday Before class at 1:00 or after.

2. **Electronics in Class.**

- All laptops and electronic devices are prohibited in this course. Students must learn to write and print the languages; typing keys will not facilitate the learning of writing and printing the alphabet. Writing and printing will make your learning more efficient.
- The recording of class sessions by any means is absolutely prohibited under all circumstances.

3. **Classroom Etiquette.** The following activities are considered poor classroom etiquette:

- Coming in late,
- Talking while someone else is talking,
- Disruptive behavior,
- Consumption of meals as opposed to minor snacks,

(Definition. If a knife, fork, spoon or sticks are required it's a meal!)

- Consumption of snacks in a noisy, smelly and/or disruptive manner,
- Personal grooming,
- Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, i-pods, etc.,
- Use of laptops for purposes (e.g. watching videos, playing solitaire) not directly connected to the class, and
- The practice of any behaviours considered impolite in adult company or in contravention of the laws of Alberta, specifically those prohibited while driving a motor vehicle.

Depending on the degree and/or frequency of the breach(es) of etiquette, the professor may display his displeasure in any one or more of the following manners:

- Frown, scowl, rolling eye balls (his not yours),
- Utterance of sounds of disgust,
- Sarcastic comments,
- Utterance of specific prohibitions,
- Dismissal of a student from the class,
- Ending the class prematurely, or
- In extreme cases the professor's immediate departure from the classroom.

In extreme cases, in cases where the professor determines that a student's behaviour, attitude or consumables are affecting other student's negatively, the offensive individual and "theirs" will be summarily dismissed from the classroom for a "time out" the length of which will be determined unilaterally by the professor.