I can be reached at my office — Clough 404, office phone: 843-3379, home phone: 309-8821 (before 9:00 PM, please); E-mail: morelandm@rhodes.edu.

Office Hours: Students should feel free to consult with me about the course and their work. Often this works best if you see me after class at which time we can arrange a mutually convenient time for us to meet.

My office is Clough 404.

I will be there Monday, Wednesday & Friday 10-11 AM, 2-3 PM and by appointment.

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION
   Religious Studies 101 is designed as the introductory course to the “Life: Then and Now” sequence. As such, it has several aims:

   • to introduce you to the academic study of the Bible (this differs from a “confessional” approach that is often offered by the church).
   • to introduce you to the contexts — historical, religious, literary, and social — in which the various texts of the Bible arose.
   • to introduce the study of the idea of canon and the processes by which the Jewish and Christian biblical canons were formed.
   • to introduce you to hermeneutics, the method of biblical interpretation over history and within various cultural contexts.
   • to introduce you to the major questions involved in the study of religion in general and especially in the traditions known as “Abrahamic,” “Western,” or “Judaico-Christian.”

   A primary objective of the course is to enable you to appreciate the wide range of understandings of the deity present in the biblical tradition. During the semester we will examine the Bible as literature, as narrative, as philosophy, as history, as revelation, and as myth. As literature, the Bible has influenced the whole history and development of ‘Western’ literary tradition. As narrative, it has provided the basis of the ‘Western’ culture’s stock of stories, influencing and shaping both the arts and society. As history (or historiography), it has shaped the understanding of the meaning of the past for many generations. As scripture, it has provided the religious images and mythical structures which have been perceived as truly meaningful by Jews, Muslims, and Christians. As a combination of all of these, the Bible has been a source of significance throughout the ages and still can be, even for "non-religious" individuals.
No knowledge of the Bible, especially as a subject of academic study, is presumed. The class will consist of several types of instruction: information-giving (lecture, background); intensive reading and study of the primary texts assigned; response to and discussion of the ideas contained and questions raised by these texts; and testing of the knowledge gained.

2. ACTIVITIES OF PARTICIPANTS
1) Attend class sessions and participate in the course dialogue. You must be prepared to speak in class and lead class discussions.
2) Read assigned books and articles.
3) Complete the written assignments (sometimes using WebCT).
4) Participate in two sectional exams and a final exam.
5) Complete quizzes throughout the semester (sometimes using WebCT).

3. DETERMINATION OF FINAL GRADE
A grade will be based on the percentage of the total number of points accumulated during the semester. Grades will be given as follows:

A (94-100), A- (90-93), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (63-66), D- (60-62), F (below 60)

4. HONOR CODE
All work for this course is to be done under the auspices of the Rhodes Honor Code. If you have any questions about plagiarism (and how to avoid it), please ask me or consult with the staff at the Writing Center.

5. INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE
The following “Inclusive Language Policy Statement” is in effect in all Religious Studies classes:

In accordance with the editorial policy and practice of the majority of publications in our field, and consistent with the policy of official Rhodes publications, the department of Religious Studies will require students in their written work to avoid the use of the term “man” (including also “men,” “mankind,” “family of man,” “brotherhood,” and the compounds of “chairman,” “clergyman,” etc.) as a generic term, and to use inclusive terms (e.g., “human being,” “human,” “humanity,” “humankind,” “people,” “minister,” etc.) to designate both individuals and groups. [This applies to humans only and not to the deity.]

Consistent with this policy, the pronoun “he” is not regarded as generic. Sound policy is to use appropriate pronouns when the antecedent is known. The MLA Handbook is recommended as a guide to good inclusive style for both editors and authors.

Quotations are of course to represent the original exactly. Translations are to reflect as precisely as possible the translator's understanding of the original text with regard to gender.

6. REQUIRED TEXTS

Scanned Readings on WebCT.

The New Oxford Annotated Bible. With the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books. New Revised Standard Version. 3d ed. Michael D. Coogan, ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. [*This is the best modern English translation now available, and is the only version of the Bible that will be used in this class. If you possess other versions or translations of the Bible for your personal use, they are not recommended for classroom use.*]

7. GRADED ASSIGNMENTS
The most important requirement of this course is active involvement, by which I mean reading the assignments and interacting with them critically in class discussions and written work. Completing the following requirements will constitute the final grade:

2 in-class, sectional exams, 15% each, for a total of 30% of the final grade
1 final exam, 20% of the final grade
Active participation in class activities and discussions, 15% of the final grade
Quizzes and short assignments, 35% of the final grade
In general, these will be quizzes, or written responses to particular questions that will be related to the specific day’s reading. Each quiz or writing assignment must be completed prior to the class meeting (sometimes on WebCT).

All tests, final exam, papers, and comments or questions are due on the dates specified (either the dates listed in the syllabus or the dates I announce in class). **NO EXTENSIONS OR EXCEPTIONS OTHER THAN THE FOLLOWING:** If you are absent from class for travel to athletic competitions or for other college-sanctioned purposes, your name must be on a list submitted by your coach or other responsible person, and you are expected to make up all the work missed. If you know that you will be traveling prior to a test, you need to make preparations to study for that exam ahead of time. If you are missing a test on the scheduled date because of athletic or other approved college travel, you need to schedule a time to make up the test, preferably prior to the scheduled date. *The only other possible exceptions are serious personal illness or death in the family.*

8. ATTENDANCE POLICY AND DUE DATES:
The lectures and classroom discussions are critical components of the learning process; therefore, regular attendance will be expected of all students. If you miss one class, you will miss a large portion of material. More than four unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade. Only absences for travel to athletic competitions or other college-sanctioned events are considered “excused.”
### 9. ACCOMMODATION OF SPECIAL NEEDS:
I make every effort to accommodate special needs of students with respect to speech, hearing, vision, seating, or other concerns. You should consult the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) at Rhodes College (x 3994, Tuthill Hall) if you have any needs or concerns.

### 10. COURSE SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

**HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed., Aug. 25:</td>
<td><strong>Introductions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri., Sept. 3:</td>
<td><strong>Ancient Texts and the Modern Bible.</strong></td>
<td>Aageson, pp. 27-33, 43-50; “Translation of the Bible into English” NOAB, pp.466-471 [Essays]. It has often been said that ‘all translation is interpretation.’ With reference to the readings for today, write a two paragraph response to that statement as it may (or may not) be applied to the Bible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon., Sept. 6:</td>
<td><strong>Labor Day, no class meeting</strong></td>
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**MYTHOLOGY OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST**

**Wed., Sept. 8: A Creation Account from the Ancient Near East**
Reading: Atlas pp. 58-59; “The Enuma Elish Story.” Get the story on-line here, print it out (23 pages), read it, and bring your copy to class.

**Fri., Sept. 10: Creation Stories**
“Introduction to the Pentateuch,” NOAB, pp 3-7 (HB); “Genesis,” Intro. NOAB, pp. 9-10 (HB); “Beginnings,” NOAB, pp.507-508 [Essays]; Genesis 1-4.

Writing Assignment: 1-2 page paper: Locate the two creation stories at the beginning of Genesis. Compare the two stories and discuss the similarities and differences between the role of the humans and the role of the deity in the two stories.

- From this point forward in the semester daily assignments and quizzes can be found on WebCT, or they will be distributed in class.

**Mon., Sept 13: The Documentary Hypothesis: Creation and Flood Examples**
Reading: Genesis 5-11; Atlas pp. 14-15; Documentary Hypothesis Online; Flood Story (I suggest that you print out these web pages and bring them to class after you read them.)

**Wed., Sept. 15: Ideas about the Deity in Genesis: Creation and Flood Examples**
Reading: “To Hear and to See,” Aageson, pp. 51-62.

**Fri., Sept. 17: Choice and Election:**
Reading: Gen. 12-24; “Be It History or Literature?” Aageson, pp. 63-69.

Writing Assignment: 1-2 page typed paper: How do the “Ancestral Narratives” attempt to explain the origins of Israel’s “election” by their deity?

**Mon., Sept. 19: “Jacob Have I Loved and Esau Have I Hated”**

**STORIES OF ISRAELITE ORIGINS**

Reading: “Exodus,” Intro. NOAB, pp. 82-84 (HB); Exod. 1-15; Atlas pp. 20-27.

Writing Assignment: 1-2 page typed paper: Why are the stories about the Exodus from Egypt considered the defining events that make Israel a new nation?

**Fri., Sept. 24: “And You Will Be My People”**
### Mon., Sept. 27: “And You Will Be My People”

### Wed., Sept. 29: 1st Exam

### Fri., Oct. 1: The Short Road to Victory

### Mon., Oct. 4 (Yom Kippur): The Long Road to Victory

**Writing Assignment:** 1-2 page typed paper: What are the major similarities and differences between the stories of the Hebrews entering Canaan in Joshua and Judges?

### KINGSHIP IN ISRAEL AND JUDAH

### Wed., Oct. 6: “Give Us a King Like Other Nations”
Reading: “1 Samuel,” NOAB, pp. 398-399 (HB); 1 Sam. 1-20; 24-31; “2 Samuel,” NOAB, p. 446 (HB); 2 Sam. 1-4; Atlas pp. 46-47.

### Fri., Oct. 8: “These Will Be the Ways of the King”
Reading: 2 Sam. 5-7; 11-18; “1 Kings,” pp. 487-489, NOAB (HB); 1 Kings 1-3; Atlas 48-51.

### Mon., Oct. 11: “Do You Now Govern Israel?”
Reading: 1 Kings 9-22; “2 Kings,” p. 533, NOAB (HB); map on p. 535; 2 Kings 9-11; 17-25; Atlas pp. 52-57, 62-63.
THE RESPONSE OF THE PROPHETS

Reading: “Introduction to the Prophetic Books,” pp.969-973, NOAB (HB); “Amos,” pp. 1302-1303, NOAB (HB); Amos 1:1-9:10; “Hosea,” pp. 1278-1279, NOAB (HB); Hos.1-4; 11.

Writing Assignment: 1-2 page typed paper: Who were the ‘prophets’ in ancient Israelite culture? How were they connected to the monarchies of Israel and Judah?

Fri., Oct. 15: Southern Prophets
Reading: “Isaiah,” pp. 974-977, NOAB (HB); Isaiah 6-11; Atlas pp. 64-65, 72-73.

Mon., Oct. 18: Fall Break!

Reading: Isaiah 40-55.


Mon., Oct. 25: 2ND EXAM

RESPONSES TO EMPIRE

Reading: “Job,” pp. 726-727, NOAB (HB); Job 1-14; 26-31; 38-42.

Fri., Oct. 29: “Love Is As Strong As Death”
Reading: “The Song of Solomon,” pp. 959-960, NOAB (HB); Song of Solomon.

Mon., Nov. 1: “Your God Will Be My God”
Reading: Ezra 9-10; “Ruth,” p. 391, NOAB (HB); Ruth (all); “Jonah,” p.1321, NOAB (HB); Jonah (all).

Wed., Nov. 3: “How Shall We Sing the LORD’s Song?”
Reading: “The Psalms,” pp.775-777, NOAB (HB); Psalms 1, 2, 8, 23, 29, 30, 51, 82, 93, 133, 137, 139, 150.
Fri., Nov. 5: The Intertestamental Period and Diaspora Judaism
Reading: Dt. 5:1-6:10; “This Canon Has One ‘N’,” Aageson, pp. 101-110; Introduction to the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books,” pp. 3-10, NOAB (AP); “Judith,” pp. 32-33, NOAB (AP); Judith; “Ecclesiasticus” (Sirach), pp. 100-101, NOAB (AP), Sirach 24-25; Atlas pp. 92-95.

Writing Assignment: 1-2 page typed paper: Why is Judith considered an “anachronistic” piece of writing? How does Judith represent the Jewish people under attack during the Hellenistic period? What methods and strategies does she use against her opponents?

TRADITIONS ABOUT JESUS’ LIFE

Mon., Nov. 8: Introduction to the New Testament

Wed., Nov. 10: Jesus according to Mark
Reading: “From a Hunch to a Hypothesis,” Aageson, pp. 35-42; “The Gospel According to Mark,” pp. 56-57, NOAB (NT); Mark (all).

Writing Assignment: 1-2 page typed paper: Where does Jesus spend most of his time according to the story in Mark? What places are mentioned?

Fri., Nov. 12: A New Moses
Reading: “The Gospel According to Matthew,” pp. 7-8, NOAB (NT); Matthew (focus on 1-7; 16; 22-23); “Like an Everflowing Stream,” Aageson, pp. 77-84; Atlas pp. 114-115.

Mon., Nov. 15: “Blessed Are the Poor”

Wed., Nov. 17: Earliest Stories of Jesus’ Followers

Fri., Nov. 19: “The Secret Words the Living Jesus Spoke”
Reading: Gospel of Thomas (on-line, bring a printed copy to class); “What Is Truth?” Aageson, pp. 93-100.

Mon., Nov. 22: Paper due on topic to be determined in consultation with professor, meet with me in my office prior to NOV. 14 in order to determine your topic.
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<tr>
<td>Wed., Nov. 24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Recess</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri., Nov. 26</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Recess</td>
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**PAUL AND THE EARLY CHURCH**

**Mon., Nov. 29:** “I Made You Apostle to the Gentiles”: Paul of Tarsus  

**Wed., Dec. 1:** God in Christ  

**Fri., Dec. 3:** Paul in Corinth  
Reading: “The Letter of Paul to the Corinthians,” pp. 267-269, NOAB (NT); 1 Corinthians 1-15 (focus on 7, 11-13, 15).

**Writing Assignment:** 1-2 page typed paper: What are the major problems facing this early Christian group in Corinth? How does Paul typically respond to these issues?

**Mon., Dec. 6:** “In the Beginning was the Word”  
Reading: “The Gospel According to John,” pp. 146-147, NOAB (NT); John (focus on 1; 3; 4; 11; 20).

**Wed., Dec. 8:** Last day of class: Review

**Final Exam:**  
Section 1: Dec. 15 at 8:30 AM  
Section 4: Dec. 11 at 8:30 AM