

**RELS 21 Course Outline as of Fall 2020****CATALOG INFORMATION**

Dept and Nbr: RELS 21            Title: JEWISH BIBLE & BIRTH GOD  
 Full Title: The Jewish Bible and the Birth of God  
 Last Reviewed: 4/22/2019

Units	Course Hours per Week	Nbr of Weeks	Course Hours Total
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled 3.00	Lecture Scheduled 52.50
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled 0	Lab Scheduled 0
		Contact DHR 0	Contact DHR 0
		Contact Total 3.00	Contact Total 52.50
		Non-contact DHR 0	Non-contact DHR 0

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00

Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category: AA Degree Applicable

Grading: Grade or P/NP

Repeatability: 00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

Also Listed As:

Formerly: HUMAN 10.1

**Catalog Description:**

A study of the emergence of the Bible of Judaism within the context of Egyptian and Mesopotamian religions, the emergence of the Jewish people and religion, and their impact on world cultures.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:****Recommended Preparation:**

Eligibility for ENGL 1A or equivalent

**Limits on Enrollment:****Schedule of Classes Information:**

Description: A study of the emergence of the Bible of Judaism within the context of Egyptian and Mesopotamian religions, the emergence of the Jewish people and religion, and their impact on world cultures. (Grade or P/NP)

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL 1A or equivalent

Limits on Enrollment:

Transfer Credit: CSU;UC.

Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

## **ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:**

<b>AS Degree:</b>	<b>Area</b>		Effective:	Inactive:
	E	Humanities	Fall 1981	
<b>CSU GE:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>		Effective:	Inactive:
	C2	Humanities	Fall 1981	
<b>IGETC:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>		Effective:	Inactive:
	3B	Humanities	Fall 1981	
<b>CSU Transfer:</b>	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 1981	Inactive:
<b>UC Transfer:</b>	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 1981	Inactive:

**CID:**

**Certificate/Major Applicable:**

Major Applicable Course

## **COURSE CONTENT**

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Use a critical-historical vocabulary to describe the composition, history and socio-historical contexts of the Hebrew Bible.
2. Compare and contrast the different religious ideas among texts of the Hebrew Bible.
3. Explain similarities and differences between the religions of Ancient Israel and Judaism.

**Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

1. Acquire the skills to read and discuss the biblical text with reasonable ease and comprehension.
2. Name the genre and describe the generic features of a passage from the Hebrew Bible.
3. Distinguish among the assumptions of traditional biblical interpretation and the methodology and conclusions of modern biblical criticism.
4. Distinguish between the assumptions and techniques of traditional biblical exegesis and the theory and methodology of modern biblical criticism.
5. Describe historical origins and redaction of biblical literature.
6. Discern the major literary and religious themes and recount their development.
7. Identify the major personalities, events and political geography of Ancient Israel.
8. Demonstrate familiarity with the unfolding story line of the biblical narrative.
9. Discuss the biblical text as the classical literature of an ancient people with sources in and shared cultural features with Mesopotamia, Egypt, Hatti and Canaan-Phoenicia, which has helped to shape the development of the western world.
10. Explain the evolution of the religion of Judaism from the matrix of Ancient Israel.

**Topics and Scope:**

- I. Introduction to Traditional Understandings of the Hebrew Scripture

## II. Modern Methods of Biblical Research

- A. Documentary Theory
- B. Comparative Near Eastern literature
- C. The theory of the original matriarchy, the nature of patriarchy and its literary heritage
- D. Midrash and biblical literary style compared with other narrative styles
- E. Contemporary historiographic and hermeneutic criticism

## III. The Covenant -- Tracing its Literary Presence in the Creation Story

- A. The flood and Abraham
- B. Abraham as ancestor of the Israelite and Ishmaelite traditions

## IV. The Akedah

- A. Its literary history, traditional interpretations
- B. Its connections to the sacrificial cult
- C. Its centrality in the history of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem

## V. Machpelah -- the Burial of Sarah and Narratives Concerning Claim to the Land of Canaan

## VI. The story of Sodom and the Code of Hospitality

## VII. The Jacob Tradition: Tribal History and Legend

## VIII. The Rape of Dinah and the Levitical Origins

## IX. Judah and Tamar and the Beginnings of the Judean Davidic Traditions

## X. Joseph and the Northern Israelite Traditions

## XI. The Exodus Story

- A. Testing the historical reality of the story
- B. Testing the durability and thematic credibility of the story
- C. Miracles, historiography and literary style
- D. The nature of prophecy and Yahwist understanding
- E. The evolutionary reality of the Mosaic traditions

## XII. The Book of Joshua: the Tribes of Yahweh and the Period of the Conquest/Rebellion

## XIII. The Book of Judges

- A. The period of the Settlement
- B. Israel facing the external threat of Canaanite and Philistine domination -- Deborah as prophetess and military leader
- C. Israel facing the internal threat of assimilation and acculturation -- the story of Samson and Delilah

## XIV. The Monarchy

- A. The tradition from Samuel to Saul with emphasis on the literary characteristics of these figures as they interact
- B. The beginnings of prophetic criticism of the monarchy
- C. The advent of David, his rise and reign
- D. The accession of Solomon
- E. The transformation of Israel from an agrarian, egalitarian, tribal confederation to an urban, military aristocracy

## XV. The Monarchies of David and Solomon

## XVI. The Divided Kingdoms and the Rise of the Literary Prophets: (Elijah), Hosea, Amos and Isaiah

Through the Assyrian Invasion and the Destruction of Israel

## XVII. The Nature and Content of Prophecy: Yahwist Social Criticism, the Yahwist Hermeneutic

## XVIII. The Deuteronomists and the Reform of Josiah

## XIX. The Babylonian Exile

## XX. Yahwism vs. Zoroastrian Dualism

## XXI. Isaiah and the Coming of Cyrus and the Persian Conquest

## XXII. Job

## XXIII. Ezra and Nehemiah--the Restoration of Judah and the Canonization of the Torah

## XXIV. Yahwist Wisdom Literature: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations and the

- Song of Solomon
- XXV. The Jewish-Roman War
- XXVI. The Mishnah and Rabbinic Judaism
- XXVII. The Jewish Diaspora

**Assignment:**

1. Weekly reading assignments of between 20-50 pages
2. One to three exegetical essays (explicating select biblical texts) using critical methods acquired in lecture and reading
3. One to three thematic essays which build a conceptual synthesis out of related narratives and aphorisms
4. Two to four exams of objective or essay or combined format
5. Final exam of objective or essay or combined format
6. Two to eight quizzes
7. Optional field trips and oral presentations

**Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:**

**Writing:** Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Exegetical and thematic papers and essays	Writing 40 - 80%
<b>Problem Solving:</b> Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.	
None	Problem solving 0 - 0%
<b>Skill Demonstrations:</b> All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.	
None	Skill Demonstrations 0 - 0%
<b>Exams:</b> All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.	
Multiple choice, true/false, matching items, completion, essay exams, text analysis	Exams 20 - 50%
<b>Other:</b> Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.	
Classroom participation, optional oral presentations, reports on interviews, museum visits, or field trips	Other Category 0 - 10%

**Representative Textbooks and Materials:**

The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of its Sacred Texts. Finkelstein, Israel and Silberman, Neil Asher. Touchstone. 2002 (classic)

A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible. Collins, John J. Fortress Press. 2018

How The Bible Became Holy. Satlow, Michael L. Yale University Press. 2014 (classic)

The Invention of Judaism. Collins, John J. UC Press. 2017

The Invention of God. Thomas Römer, Trans. Geuss, Raymond. Harvard University Press. 2015 (classic)