Administrative Unit: Humanities Department
Course Prefix and Number: ENGL 124
Course Title: The Bible as Literature
Number of: Credit Hours: 3  Lecture Hours: 3  Laboratory Hours: 0
Catalog Description: A literary and historical approach to major biblical selections and their influence on western literature, culture, and philosophy. Cross-listed as RELI 124. Occasional offering.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): None
Text(s): In addition to a well-edited and annotated text of the Bible, with Apocrypha, and Pseudepigrapha, the instructor may want to assign a one-volume commentary for student use, but appropriate ones for a non-religious approach by freshman students are not plentiful. Alternatively, the instructor may compile suitable class handouts.

Required:

OR

Optional:


Alter, Robert. The Art of Biblical Narrative.
Course Objectives:

• To use literary terminology and analysis to recognize the style and structure of biblical narrative, including Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. Passages will be selected specifically for their suitability to this objective.
• To explain the historical and cultural setting of Biblical narrative.
• To explain the problems of authorship, translation, reductive composition, and canon formation.
• To demonstrate the influence of the Bible on the tradition of literature in English.

Measurable Learning Outcomes

• Demonstrate knowledge of the historical and cultural setting of biblical narrative.
• Explain the complexities of biblical transmission, including authorship, redaction, and translation.
• Demonstrate knowledge of the literary styles and strategies of the Bible.
• Understand the influence of the Bible on the tradition of literature in English.
• Properly apply the terminology of literary analysis to the Bible.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):

• Historical and physical Setting
• Authorship problems
• Typology, Theophany, Theodicy, Prophecy
• Image and Metaphor
• Literary forms:
  • Myth, Epic, Heroic Narrative
  • Wisdom Literature, Parable, Paraenesis
  • Pastoral, Satire, Encomium
  • Epistle, Oratory, Gospel
• Apocalyptic literature

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 30

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Dr. Edward Christie

Date: September 12, 2005

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.