

University of Dubuque Theological Seminary  
BI 411/511D – God’s Word: The Old Testament  
Fall Semester 2019  
Online & Residential

Faculty Information:

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Professor: The Rev. Dr. Matthew R. Schlimm  
Preferred Title: Dr. Matt  
Office: Severance 210  
Office Phone: 563/589-3101  
Email: [mschlimm@dbq.edu](mailto:mschlimm@dbq.edu)  
Website: [www.MatthewSchlimm.com](http://www.MatthewSchlimm.com)

Course Description:

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This course provides an introduction to the content, historical background, canon, theological and critical issues of the Old Testament. This course fulfills the M.Div. basic first-year requirement in Old Testament studies (3 credits, letter grade only), but is open to all UDTS students.

Course Objectives:

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Students who complete this course will:

1. Develop a sound understanding of the fundamentals of the Old Testament's content;
2. Gain proficiency in recognizing and articulating the context of biblical passages;
3. Become trained in expounding upon the Old Testament's theological depth and homiletical power; and
4. Enhance their ability to interpret Scripture.
5. Acquire skills for critically assessing Old Testament scholarship;

In keeping with the stated purpose of the M.Div. degree (“to serve the one God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and prepare women and men for faithful, compassionate, and effective pastoral ministry”), this course helps meet the following M.Div. curricular objectives:

- Be formed by, live in, and minister out of Scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the church.
- Interpret the Christian Scriptures through faithful exegesis and in light of the Christian tradition.
- Preach the Word of God with faithfulness and clarity.

Additionally, this course helps meet the following MAMD curricular objective:

- Articulate and reflect critically and constructively on the biblical and theological foundations of God's mission to the world.

Additionally, this course helps meet the following MACL curricular objective:

- The student will be able to identify and interpret key themes from the Christian scriptures.

## Required Textbooks:

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Davis, Ellen F. *Opening Israel's Scriptures*. Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN: 978-0190260552.

Fretheim, Terence E. *About the Bible: Short Answers to Big Questions*. Revised and Expanded Edition. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2009. ISBN: 9780806657677.

Green, Joel, et al., eds. *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Common English Bible, 2013. ISBN: 978-1609260286.

Schlimm, Matthew R. *This Strange and Sacred Scripture: Wrestling with the Old Testament and Its Oddities*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015. ISBN: 978-0801039799.

Additionally, students should purchase ONE of the following two atlases. They are essentially the same. The first is recommended for students who want a new atlas. The second is recommended for students comfortable with buying a used copy for less (often available online):

Aharoni, Yohanan, et al. *The Carta Bible Atlas*. 5th Revised and expanded edition. Jerusalem: Carta, 2011. ISBN: 978-9652208149.

OR:

Aharoni, Yohanan, et al. *The Macmillan Bible Atlas*. 3rd edition. New York: Macmillan, 1993. ISBN: 978-0025006058.

## Summary of Course Requirements:

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1. Exam 1: focused on Gen–Ruth. (25%)
2. Exam 2: focused on Sam–Eccl. (25%)
3. Exam 3: focused on Isa–Malachi. (25%)
4. Five reading reflections, either [1] asking a question about the Bible, [2] asking a question about the assigned readings, or [3] expressing disagreement with the assigned readings. (25%)
5. It is assumed that students will view all lectures and material posted to our course website within a week of their being posted. Moodle tracks whether students do this. Any student failing to do this will receive a significant reduction in final grade, which may entail failing the course.