English 245 – The Bible As Literature  
Credit Hours: 3 Credit Hours  
Total Contact Hours: 47 Hours  
Prerequisites: A grade of C or better in English 131.  
Course Grading Scale: A - E  

Instructor: Adam R. Hazlett  
Office: L206  
Office Hours: M & W – 10 am – 1 pm  
T & R – By appointment  
F – 8 – 10 am  

Contact Information:  
Email: ahazlett@hfcc.edu  
Phone: 313-845-6406  

Webpage:  
http://hfccenglish245.blogspot.com/  

Required Materials:  
• All required texts  
• Internet access  
• Dictionary and/or encyclopedia access  
• General computing knowledge  

Required Texts:  


Suggested Texts (for the obsessively interested):  


Optional Materials:  
*Webster's College Dictionary and Thesaurus*  

Course Description:  
The course will consist of reading, discussion, and written analysis of major literary selections from the Old and New Testaments. The Bible will be studied not as a religious document but as a source of ideas and style reflected in various works of world literature.  

Teaching Philosophy:  
I will strive to lead lessons on this text that offer deeper insight into the literary issues present. While I do believe that religious interpretations are among the many that exist for these stories, they are not solitary. I will check my spiritual beliefs at the door and strive to approach this text from a literary perspective; I require you to do the same. If this is a problem, I can provide you with places that can assist you in strengthening your personal interpretation (but it won’t be this class).
**Expectations of the class:**

1. **Classroom Respect:** When writing about and expressing viewpoints *THINK*. Beyond personal responsibility and *respect* for others, you must have *RESPECT* for yourselves and responsibility of how they perceive you. In this class, we will be sharing and expressing divergent viewpoints on a number of issues. Therefore, it is important to remember that ideas are not always indicative of the person espousing them.

2. **Attendance:** While this is an online class, you will be expected to come to campus for a midterm examination and a final examination. I will be announcing the dates/times of these exams shortly after the beginning of the semester. You should note, also, that taking online classes requires you to not only log onto the websites but also complete reading in a timely fashion and complete other independent research on your own time.

3. **Academic Dishonesty:** Plagiarism is probably the number one offense in the realm of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is defined as intentionally trying to pass another’s writing, work, words or ideas off as your own. We will learn that academic writing requires us to cite, paraphrase and quote another’s work, but we will also learn that we must cite from where we received that information. I always follow the rule that it is better to have too many citations then none at all. When in doubt…CITE! See college academic dishonesty policy on the webpage and/or catalog. Beyond the stated policy however, I take personal offense to acts that assume me to be a moron.

4. **Late Work:** I do not accept late work! The deadlines and due dates are clearly stated in the syllabus. As this class is online you must take it upon yourself to set a schedule and complete work early if you have other engagements. Life happens and I understand this; you should, however, take into account that sometimes internet access is slow and sometimes the electric goes out. Have a back-up plan and a back-up to the back-up plan.

   If you fail to turn in your work on time, you will have missed the opportunity to receive feedback from me, you will receive a zero for that assignment and you will forfeit your opportunity to revise the assignment for a better grade – NO EXCEPTIONS. I will give you plenty of notice about exams and essay due dates. If you are not going to be present the day a project is due, you need to make arrangements to complete the assignment EARLY. I do not grant extensions at H-Hour; if you have LEGITIMATE problems, get a hold of me early. When in doubt, call me and let me know what is going on.

5. **Availability:** My office hours are clearly marked on this syllabus. You should make all attempts to see me during these times. If you do plan to come into campus, give me notice so that I can section off some time for you (my online students take priority in face-to-face meetings). If these times do not work, please contact me to make other arrangements. I am sometimes on campus in the evening for unscheduled work.

6. **Reading:** I expect every student to complete all reading assignments. Likewise, handouts that are given in class are given because they will benefit you. Therefore, treat all classroom handouts and assignment sheets as reading assignments; read them thoroughly.

7. **Collegiality:** This course is a college course and I expect everyone to act as such. On top of the other policies in this class a few other things should be mentioned. All course communication should occur with the notion that you are contacting an English teacher. Proper sentence structure, punctuation and letter format are not only desirable, they are **required**! Any email that is not will be returned pending revision; this is a writing class.
This is an academic environment where your commodity is an opportunity for an education. You neither pay for a grade nor a lecture; you pay for the environment in which you may foster knowledge, responsibility and proper communication/thinking skills and overall knowledge.

8. Study Cells: After the first week of class, you will be assigned a study cell. You will share contact information in order to let this group of three people will act as a support group for any member. When you have an interesting argument you’d like to bounce off someone, forget how to complete an assignment, have a clarification question, etc., your study cell members will be the ones to assist you. This system has worked wonderfully in some of the world’s finest liberal arts institutions. Since this is a liberal arts class, this system will work for us wonderfully as well.

Assignments:

- Reading response questions – ongoing (posted to UCompass weekly)
- Midterm & Final examination – objective and essay questions
- Major writing project – 1500 word researched literary analysis

Reading Response Questions: This semester this course will be using the “Shared Inquiry Method” to analyze the Bible as a piece of the world’s greatest literature. Many anthologies and lists of great works of art list this book as a major influence in Western art, literature, thought and philosophy. Therefore, you will be using the “Shared Inquiry Method” to prepare interpretive and evaluative questions about your readings in order to explore further what you are studying.

You are required to post these questions weekly to the UCompass Discussion board. You must also post at least two responses to your other classmates’ questions. These responses might include multiple posts but you want to engage the questioner in a conversation about the topic. This conversation requires you to also monitor your own questions to engage with those who attempt an answer at your questions.

These posts will act as an organic reading journal and will be graded monthly. Your questions are due by Wednesday at 8 pm every week and your responses must be completed by Saturday at 8 pm.

Midterm and Final examinations: There will be two (2) objective & short answer examinations in this course. The Midterm will take place during the week of the following:

- Monday, October 19th – Friday, October 23rd

The Final examination will take place during the scheduled finals week running December 15th – 19th.

These exams will consist of twenty (20) objective multiple-choice questions and two (2) essay questions. These exams cannot be made up after the scheduled dates. If you cannot be in class on the above days, please make advanced arrangements with me to take the exams early.

Major Writing Project: This 1500 word minimum (5-6 page) essay will do the following:

- Discuss the essential qualities of a particular genre such as myth, epic, poetry, narrative, proverb, legend, prophecy, epistle, parable, sermon
- Identify the relevance of a specific literary passage in the Bible to the Testament in which it appears in terms of theme and genre

This project should have a thesis, primary evidence from the Bible and secondary evidence from credible, academic sources. Also, you should follow MLA guidelines for works cited information as well as in-text citation or footnotes. More information will be posted on the blog and UCompass pages.

The essay is due Tuesday, December 1st by Noon! You will be submitting it via UCompass.
Measurable Course Objectives:
1. Formulate an interpretive thesis (as opposed to one which merely reports something factual)
2. Compose an essay which either:
   a. Discusses the essential qualities of a particular genre such as myth, epic, poetry, narrative, proverb, legend, prophecy, epistle, parable, sermon; or
   b. Identifies the relevance of a specific literary passage in the Bible to the Testament in which it appears in terms of theme and genre.
3. Identify a range of the following key terms that are essential to an understanding of the Bible as literature: testament, literature, genre, myth, allusion, epic, plot, character, setting, theme, allegory, simile, metaphor, irony, proverb, prophecy, dramatic narrative, epistle, parable, midrash, apocalypse, millennium, exegesis, Pentateuch, Apocrypha, Synoptics, and Wisdom.
4. Identify the primary historical periods and locations that serve as the “setting” of the Bible.
5. Identify the eras during which the Bible evolved from oral tradition to written document.
6. Identify languages in which principle Biblical testaments were originally written.
7. Identify the English translation of the Bible that has most directly influenced English and American literature.
8. Identify Biblical passages that focus on the theme of racial, ethnic, cultural, national, class, or gender identity.

Grading:
Major Writing Project (Due Dec. 1st) 30%
Midterm Examination 20%
Final Examination 20%
Weekly reading questions and responses/conversations 30%

Schedule:
See blog at http://hfccenglish245.blogspot.com

One final word…
Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not; it is the first lesson that ought to be learned; and however early a man's training begins, it is probably the last lesson that he learns thoroughly.

Thomas H. Huxley
COURSE INTELLECTUAL/THEORETICAL POLICY:  

Because this course’s primary text is one that has caused many a controversy throughout history, a stated theoretical lens for this course should be explicitly made. The ground rules for classroom conversation, academic research, and writing should be as follows:

1. The Bible should be treated as a human document. Whether it is the manifest word of God is a query for each individual’s personal faith and should remain outside of this academic realm.
2. The Bible is a collection of texts written, revised, edited and collected by different people at various periods of history. All of these collectors had their own contemporary aims and objectives, and all are distant in time and culture from the members of this course. We will not read the text in its original language but in an academic translation, and every translation is in some way an interpretation. To read and interpret the Bible as if its meaning were simple, clear and obvious to the casual reader, is to, according to Becker, “violate all that we know about language as well as all that we know about social and cultural change.”
3. There is a long lineage of scholarly writing/argument about the Bible that has lead to an existing body of knowledge. It is a general rule of courses like “The Bible as Literature” to introduce the student to such a body of knowledge. Some may see a scholarly application of literary theory to such sacred texts as sacrilegious and evil and practitioners of said theories as atheists, pagans or enemies of God. This attitude does not help one pass a college “Bible as Literature” course. However, as Becker reminds us “it is also true that most biblical scholarship is carried on by people who are practicing members of the various biblical faiths, and that among these scholars the Bible is no longer a source of religious division. There is much general agreement among scholars, whether Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, or non-believing.” See Becker’s notes on fundamentalism.
4. Being that this course is the rare instance where knowledge may confront religious faith, we will adhere to the “assumption that human knowledge may not only call religious faith into question but may enrich it as well. Thomas Aquinas defined theology as ‘faith seeking understanding’; in other words, a critical intellectual understanding of what one believes is a good thing.”

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1 Adapted from Dr. John E. Becker (Fairleigh Dickinson University) at http://alpha.fdu.edu/~jbecker/index.html
2 http://alpha.fdu.edu/~jbecker/bible/fundamentalism.html
3 http://alpha.fdu.edu/~jbecker/bible/biblesyll.html
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>READING DUE</th>
<th>PROJECTS DUE</th>
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<td>Starting Aug 31st</td>
<td>Introductions to course and the Bible as literature – Creation Stories</td>
<td>Handouts &amp; <em>FATA</em> Chpt. 1</td>
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<td>Genesis 1:1-2:4; 2:5-25</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Moses and the Shaping of a Religion</td>
<td>Exodus (Story of Moses outline in <em>FATA</em> pp. 22)</td>
<td><em>FATA</em> Chpt. 4</td>
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<td>The Prophets (Joshua 5:13-7:26; 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings readings from page 33 in <em>FATA</em>)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>The Late Hebrew Period</td>
<td>Song of Songs</td>
<td><em>FATA</em> Chpt. 6</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Wisdom Literature &amp; Poetry</td>
<td>Psalms 1, 2, 8, 18, 22, 23, 90, 104, 150; Proverbs 1-5</td>
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<td>Job</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Oct 19-23 Midterm Week!</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Mark and Matthew</td>
<td>Mark &amp; Matthew</td>
<td><em>FATA</em> Chpt. 8</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>John continued</td>
<td>Revelations</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>The New Evangelists</td>
<td>Acts 1-12</td>
<td><em>FATA</em> Chpt. 9</td>
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<td>Paul (Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians, Romans)</td>
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<td>The Cutting Room floor documents</td>
<td>Non-canonical Gospels (handed out in class)</td>
<td>Major Writing Project Due December 1st</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Influences in the modern/not-so-modern world</td>
<td>Handouts of literature</td>
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