**Course Overview (QM Standards 1.2)**

**Course Description:**

Because this is a Literature and not a Theology course, we will be looking at the Bible as a whole library of literature rather than, primarily, as a guide for living. As part of this literary approach, we will be treating the Bible as a text, constructed by human authors through human means. Of course, it is a unique text because believers in three major world religion (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam) hold that it is the divinely inspired word of God. Therefore, we will not be arguing the truth or falsehood of any passage in the Bible, or the truth or falsehood of any of the theological ideas presented in the Bible. Instead, you are invited to read this important text as a literary and cultural critic.

**Course Goals and Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, student will be able to:

- Retell selected stories from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament
- Explain how basic historical, cultural, and geographic facts affect Biblical interpretation
- Apply New Historicist/Cultural, Reader Response, Textual, and Genre criticism to Biblical narratives
- Identify different forms and translations of the Bible
- Identify and define literary and rhetorical strategies used in the telling of Biblical stories
- Define major genres and sub-genres of the Bible
- Analyze the narrative structure of different stories and books in the Bible
- Apply techniques for close reading and literary analysis to Biblical passages
- Synthesize an awareness and understanding of the literary conventions and characteristics of literature in the Bible by applying them to a focused case study on a specific Biblical genre.

**Pre-Requisites (QM Standard 1.6)**

There are no course pre-requisites for this class; however, it will be helpful if students have some basic research and research writing experience.

**Minimum Technical Requirements and Online Resources (QM Standards 1.5 & 1.7)**

Please refer to the WVROCKS Student Policy "Minimum Technical Skills" at this link:
https://softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/muZRlpQTg6P2zL/html

Please refer to the WVROCKS Student Policy "Supported Technologies" at this link:
https://softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/r6NRvGuwc1sWTl/html

**Required Course Materials (QM Standard 4.6)**

*The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*: Oxford UP, ISBN 978-0195289602
*Reading the Bible as Literature: An Introduction* by Jeanie C. Crain, Polity, ISBN 98-0-7456-3508-8

Rent or stream one of the following films for Module 8:

*The Seventh Seal*
*The Day After*
*Outbreak*
*The Matrix*
*Independence Day*
*Armageddon*
*Deep Impact*
*An Inconvenient Truth*
*Children of Men*
*The Book of Eli, or*
*The Road.*

**Online Resources:** This course makes use of many online resources. Every effort is made prior to the start of courses to make sure that the links are up to date. However due to the ever changing nature of the web, students may find that a resource is temporarily unavailable or has been removed. If this should happen, please create a help ticket using the WVROCKS Help Desk top frame tab so that your instructor or course designer can correct the broken link as soon as possible. Please email your instructor as well.

**Instructor Information (QM Standards 1.8 & 5.3)**

Individual instructors complete this information.

**Virtual Office Hours**

I am available in my Virtual Office in this course by appointment only. Send me an email to set up an appointment.

**Personal Commitment**

My personal commitments to you as a participant include:

- Reply to course mail messages within 24 hours
- Read all discussion postings and reply, where appropriate within 3 days
- Acknowledge receipt of every course message immediately upon reading it. If unable to reply to the request initially, you will receive an estimated time frame for the next reply.
- Notify you if I am to be absent from the course space for more than a day or two via email or course announcement
- Regularly update information regarding due dates, unanticipated technical issues, etc. via email and course announcements.

**Grading Policy (QM Standard 3.2)**

Your final grade for the course will be based on the percentage of total points possible which you earn. Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:

A= 90-100
B= 80-89.4
C= 70-79.4
D= 60-69.4
F= 59.4 or below

Your grade will be rounded up if it is within 0.5% of the next higher letter.

**Module Objectives and Assessments (QM Standards 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.4, 3.5, 5.1)**

**Module 1: Reading the Bible as Literature: A Way of Understanding and Biblical Pre-History**

After you have completed the readings and content for this module, you will be able to:

- Identify different forms and translations of the Bible. (**M1A1 Content Quiz**)
- Discuss traditions in Biblical interpretation. (**M1A2 Biblical Traditions Discussion**)
- Discuss modern literary theory in the context of Biblical interpretation. (**M1A2 Biblical Traditions Discussion**)
- Retell selected stories from the Old and New Testaments. (**M1A3 Reflection #1**)
- Analyze culture and religion in Ancient Israel and the Jewish world view. (**M1A2-3 Biblical Traditions & Reflection #1**)
- Apply techniques for close reading and literary analysis to Biblical passages. (**M1A3 Reflection**)

**Module 2: Style, Tone, and Rhetorical Strategy: A Way of Using Language**

After you have completed the readings and content for this module, you will be able to:

- Identify examples of literary and rhetorical strategies. **(M2A1 Content Quiz)**
- Discuss the ways literary and rhetorical strategies are used in Biblical passages. **(M2A2 Literary Conventions Discussion)**
- Retell selected stories from the Old and New Testaments using rhetorical strategies. **(M2A3 Reflection #2)**
- Compare and contrast the rhetorical styles of different authors in Biblical passages. **(M1A2-3 Literary Conventions Discussion & Reflection #2)**

## Module 3: Image, Metaphor, Symbol, and Archetype: A Way of Meaning

After you have completed the readings and content for this module, you will be able to:

- Define image, metaphor, symbol and archetype. **(M3A1 Content Quiz)**
- Identify images, metaphor, symbols and archetypes in Biblical passages. **(M3A2-3 Metaphor Discussion & Reflection #3)**
- Compare and contrast the unifying images of light, darkness, fire and water. **(M3A2-3 Metaphor Discussion & Reflection #3)**
- Discuss the five metaphors of divine-human relationship. **(M3A2-3 Metaphor Discussion & Reflection #3)**
- Discuss archetypal encounters of the divine and human. **(M3A2-3 Metaphor Discussion & Reflection #3)**
- Retell selected stories from the Old and New Testaments using images, metaphors, symbols, and archetypes. **(M3A3 Reflection #3)**

## Module 4: Major Genres: A Way of Seeing

After you have completed the readings and content for this module, you will be able to:

- Define major genres, related definitions, and genre criticism. **(M4A1-2 Content Quiz & Genre Discussion)**
- Identify the primary tenets of genre criticism as applied to Biblical passages. **(M4A1-3 Content Quiz & Reflection #4)**
- Discuss the narrative of Biblical stories with structured plots. **(M4A2 Genre Discussion)**
- Link episodes in the New Testament to the Old Testament. **(M4A3 Reflection #4)**
- Analyze the narrative structure of selected Biblical stories. **(M4A2-3 Genre Discussion & Reflection #4)**

## Module 5: Sub-Genres: A Way of Clarifying and Mapping

After you have completed the readings and content for this module, you will be able to:

- Identify the recognizable conventions of different sub-genres in Biblical narratives. **(M5A1 Content Quiz)**
- Compare and contrast the sub-genres of song, allegory, parable, and prayer in Biblical passages. **(M5A2-3 Sub-Genre Discussion & Reflection #5)**

- Discuss the objections to genre criticism**. (M5A2-3 Sub-Genre Discussion & Reflection #5)**
- Analyze metaphorical function in various sub-genres in the Old and New Testaments. **(M5A2-3 Sub-Genre Discussion & Reflection #5)**

**Module 6: Character: A Way of Identifying**

After you have completed the readings and content for this module, you will be able to:

- Define characterization as it relates to Biblical characters. **(M6A1 Content Quiz)**
- Identify character types in the context of Biblical stories. **(M6A1-2 Content Quiz & Characterization Discussion)**
- Discuss traditional approaches to reading the Bible. **(M6A2 Characterization Discussion)**
- Analyze Biblical characterizations through their actions, language, and description in the context of multiple genres and sub-genres. **(M6A2-3 Characterization Discussion & Reflection #6)**

**Module 7: Themes and Motifs: A Way of Unifying**

After you have completed the readings and content for this module, you will be able to:

- Identify definitions of the themes and motifs in Biblical stories. **(M7A1 Content Quiz)**
- Discuss themes and motifs in specific Biblical passages. **(M7A2-3 Themes/Motif Discussion & Reflection #7)**
- Compare and contrast objections to thematic analysis of Biblical stories in the context of traditional approaches to reading the Bible. **(M7A2-3 Themes/Motif Discussion & Reflection #7)**
- Analyze major themes in the Bible (i.e. Decalogue, Noahic Covenant, Abrahamic Covenant, Davidic Covenant, God's Mercy, God's Justice, Heroic Quest). **(M7A2-3 Themes/Motif Discussion & Reflection #7)**

**Module 8: Putting it all Together: Apocalyptic Literature—A Case Study**

After you have completed the readings and content for this module, you will be able to:

- Identify the conventions and characteristics of apocalyptic literature as a genre in Biblical narratives. **(M8A1 Reflection #8)**
- Synthesize an awareness and understanding of the conventions and characteristics of apocalyptic literature in the Bible. **(M8A2 Apocalyptic Analysis)**
- Apply genre criticism as it relates to the Bible in an analysis of an apocalyptic film in contemporary culture. **(M8A2 Apocalyptic Analysis)**