An Historic Survey of Religions  
[Formerly: The History and Literature of the Bible]

Richland College  
Dallas, TX  
Division: Humanities, Fine and Performing Arts  
972-238-6250  
Fall Semester, 2012

Course Information:  
PHIL1317.8001  
Credit hours: (3)  
Class meets: TR 1100am-1220pm in Yegua Y106

Required Texts:  
- Various articles and resources will be provided throughout the semester. However, students are encouraged to find their own resources as well.

Course Description:  
In this course, we will attempt to answer the question: What is the Bible? To answer this question, we will examine the historical background to the Biblical Texts, the ideas of Oral and Written Tradition, the various Books of the Bible and their literary types and genres. We will also survey ways in which the Bible has been interpreted since the time of its authorship. Students are encouraged to examine and interpret the various passages of the Bible covered in class.

Course Prerequisites:  
Developmental Reading 0093 or English as a Second Language (ESOL) 0044 or have met the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) standard in Reading.

Purpose of the Course:  
In this course we will undertake a broad examination of certain passages contained within the Bible. The course will focus particular attention upon the world-view and historical background that serve to shape each text. We will be reading and discussing many primary texts and taking a look at how these texts have been interpreted by their respective religious communities.
Course Objectives (Things you will take with you from this class if you apply yourself):

1. Familiarize yourself with the general historical background of the peoples and communities who authored the Biblical Texts, and understand the historical and cultural contexts which gave rise to such a unique and historically/culturally significant collection of writings.
2. Identify the Books of the Bible and grasp the various literary types and genres contained in each book: e.g., creation story, genealogy, poetry, lament, narrative, prophecy, apocalyptic, and ethical treatise.
3. Be able to interpret from a historical and a literary perspective various passages from the Biblical Text.

Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies:
PHIL 1317 satisfies the following Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:

1. **Reading**: the ability to analyze and interpret a variety of printed materials – books, documents and articles – above 12th grade level.
2. **Writing**: the ability to produce clear, correct and coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion and audience – above 12th grade level.
3. **Speaking**: the ability to communicate orally in clear, coherent and persuasive language adapted to purpose, occasion and audience – above 12th grade level.
4. **Listening**: the ability to analyze and interpret various forms of spoken communication, possess sufficient literacy skills of writing, reading – above 12th grade level.
5. **Critical Thinking**: the ability to think and analyze at a critical level.

Exemplary Educational Objectives:
PHIL 1317, as part of the Core Curriculum, satisfies the following Exemplary Educational Objectives set forth by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:

1. To demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
2. To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
3. To respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
4. To articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
5. To demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences.

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:
- Attendance & Class Participation: 20%
- Reading Quizzes: 35%
- Student Interpretation Workbook: 20%
- Final Project: 25%
Grading Scale:
A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F = 59 or below.

1. Attendance & Class Participation
   According to school guidelines, attendance is mandatory for you to receive credit for the course. This is because there is simply no way to recreate portions of this course, particularly class lectures and group discussions/reports. If you arrive after attendance is taken, it is your responsibility to make sure that you are not marked absent. You are permitted three absences without a penalty. After that, the Attendance portion of your final grade may drop significantly for absences beyond this maximum. After the withdrawal date [Nov. 17], excessive absences may result in a failing grade in the course. Please come to class and be on time. Three tardies will equal an absence.

   If you simply have to miss class, it is your responsibility to make sure that you get the notes from another student on what you missed, and to keep up with the required reading. Remember: your absence is not an excuse for turning in an assignment late and/or missing a reading quiz. If you are out sick or have another emergency, please do not wait until you return to class to notify me.

   This is a college level course. I assume that you will be prepared for each session. Your Class Participation grade will be based in part on how you interact with me, the Instructor, as well as with your co-students.

2. Reading Quizzes
   There will be brief quizzes on your assigned readings and course lectures (all of these are listed in the Course Calendar). You are encouraged to be present in order to complete each quiz on the date listed in the Course Calendar. Unless discussed with me ahead of time, there are no make-ups on any of the quizzes. Do not wait until you return to class to ask me if you can make up a missed quiz.

3. Student Interpretation Workbook
   During the semester, you will keep a notebook to be used as your Interpretation Workbook. Each week, we’ll be going over Biblical texts, and you will write down your thoughts and interpretations concerning the particular passage, as well as other related information. I will have you choose three of the passages that we read in class to do an in-depth analysis [I will hand out a guide on this assignment].

4. Final Project
   Instead of a Final Exam, you will have the choice of either writing a final paper (3-5pp) in which you will provide your own interpretation of a Biblical passage of your choosing (to be approved by the Instructor); or doing an in-class presentation of a topic related to the History and Literature of the Bible. Powerpoint will be helpful if you choose to do an in-class presentation. I am flexible if you want to be creative. Remember that this constitutes one fourth of your final grade. The due date for the Final Project is 5pm Friday, Dec. 7, no exceptions.
Plagiarism [i.e., copying from a book, website, or from another student’s work and presenting this as your own work] will not be tolerated. If you are caught [and I will catch you], you will receive a 0 on the Final Project and your overall grade for the course will be seriously affected. If you are not clear as to what constitutes Plagiarism, please ask me after class and I will clarify this for you.

Ground Rules and Expectations:
• This class is intended to be interactive. Let us attempt to carry out our discussions in a respectful manner. However, if you ever feel uncomfortable with the in-class discussions, it will be important for you to communicate and share your concerns with me.
• Electronic devices [cell phones, iphones, laptops, etc.] are not to be on during class
• It's always best to keep me posted. If you have a concern about a deadline, or if you're having problems, please contact me by email, office phone, and/or visit me during my posted office hours. I am reasonably sympathetic, except in cases of laziness and/or negligence.

Office Hours:
Please visit me during my office hours from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays.

• To help ensure your safety on campus, please watch this video on keeping safe in a campus emergency at http://video.dcccd.edu/rtv/DO/emergency_dcccd.wmv

• The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as necessary.
## Institution Policies

### Stop Before You Drop

**6Drop**

For students who enrolled in college level courses for the first time in the fall of 2007, Texas Education Code 51.907 limits the number of courses a student may drop. You may drop no more than 6 courses during your entire undergraduate career unless the drop qualifies as an exception. Your campus counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions.

Remember that once you have accumulated 6 non-exempt drops, you cannot drop any other courses with a “W”. Therefore, please exercise caution when dropping courses in any Texas public institution of higher learning, including all seven of the Dallas County Community Colleges. For more information, you may access [https://www1.dcccd.edu/6drop](https://www1.dcccd.edu/6drop).

### Withdrawal Policy

If you are unable to complete this course, it is your responsibility to withdraw formally. The withdrawal request must be received in the Registrar’s Office by 11/15/12. Failure to do so will result in your receiving a performance grade, usually an “F.” If you drop a class or withdraw from the college before the official drop/withdrawal deadline, you will receive a “W” (Withdraw) in each class dropped. For more information about drop deadlines, refer to the current printed Credit Class Schedule, contact the Admissions/Student Records office at 972-238-6100 or 6101 (Thunderduck Hall, T170), or contact the division office.

### Repeating a Course

Effective for Fall Semester 2005, the Dallas County Community Colleges will charge additional tuition to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. All third and subsequent attempts of the majority of credit and Continuing Education/Workforce Training courses will result in additional tuition to be charged. Developmental Studies and some other courses will not be charged a higher tuition rate. Third attempts include courses taken at any of the Dallas County Community Colleges since the Fall 2002 Semester. [See Third Attempt to Enroll in a Course at http://www.dcccd.edu/thirdcourseattempt/](http://www.dcccd.edu/thirdcourseattempt/)

### Financial Aid

If you are receiving any form of financial aid, you should check with the Financial Aid Office prior to withdrawing from classes. Withdrawals may affect your eligibility to receive further aid and could cause you to be in a position of repayment for the current semester. Students who fail to attend or participate after the drop date are also subject to this policy.

### Academic Honesty

Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.

As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the [DCCCD Code of Student Conduct published in the DCCCD Catalog at http://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm](http://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm) (Select Purpose).

### ADA Statement

If you are a student with a disability and/or special needs who requires accommodations, please contact the college Disability Services Office at 972-238-6180 (Voice/TTY), visit Thunderduck Hall, suite T120, or go to [http://www.dcccd.edu/Current+Students/Student+Services/Disability+Services/](http://www.dcccd.edu/Current+Students/Student+Services/Disability+Services/) (CTRL + Click to access “Current Students” site to “Student Services” to “Disability Services”).

### Religious Holidays

Absences for observance of a religious holy day are excused. A student whose absence is excused to observe a religious holy day is allowed to contract with the instructor to take a make-up examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

### Food, drink, cell phones, etiquette, etc.

As a college student, you are considered to be a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the [Student Code of Conduct published in the Richland College and DCCCD catalogues, which can also be found online at http://www.dcccd.edu/cat0102/conduct/htm](http://www.dcccd.edu/cat0102/conduct/htm).