

DRAFT v.2
Subject to change. Full
syllabus available in Canvas
Wednesday, August 12th.

Loyola Institute for Ministry
Loyola University New Orleans

The Jewish Roots of Christian Faith

LIM G711-Y1G0E

Fall 2026

Important! You will be notified by email to your Loyola email address when your course web site is available (normally the week before class begins). Please reply to the instructor's email when you receive it to confirm that you are ready to begin the course.

Course Description

This course introduces students to the literature, history, and theology of ancient Israel as embodied in the ancient Jewish scriptures, known to Christians as the Old Testament. It examines the major themes of election, exodus, and covenant in Israel's history from the time of its ancestral origins to the period of late Second Temple Judaism. In particular, the course highlights those texts, events, and beliefs of ancient Israel that form an indispensable background for understanding the New Testament.

Goals and Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- understand a variety of methods and models used to study and interpret the Old Testament (OT), with attention to the principles of Catholic biblical interpretation and to historical-critical, literary-critical, and contextual approaches.
- understand how to read the OT in light of its historical and cultural contexts, its varied literary forms, and the complex relationships among its traditions.
- understand the theological themes and religious traditions of the OT, both as they characterized the ancient Israelites and Jews in the Second Temple period, and as they were appropriated by the early Christian communities in the New Testament (NT).
- discern the religious, theological, and practical implications of the OT writings for their own lives and ministerial contexts, especially with respect to Catholic/Christian ministry.

Key Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- relate the main contours of the narrative presented by OT corpus and describe the major themes of the OT.
- read and interpret the OT writings critically—that is, with a greater ability to discern their variety of meanings in the past and present.
- reflect individually and with others on the interpretation of the OT writings in their historical and cultural contexts and with respect to their literary features, and on the implications of the OT writings to the students’ own lives and ministerial contexts.
- interpret OT texts by integrating the use of scholarly resources and critical interpretive methods within the LIM method of theological reflection.
- continue learning about the OT writings and their interpretation with the help of biblical commentaries and other scholarly resources that employ the methods of critical biblical scholarship, and engage in ongoing theological reflection to discern and “actualize” the meanings of OT texts in their lives and ministries and with respect to pressing religious questions and social concerns.

Course Texts

Please purchase the texts for this class as soon as possible from the bookstore of your choice or from the Loyola Bookstore.

Boadt, Lawrence. *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. Revised and updated by Richard Clifford and Daniel Harrington. Paulist Press, 2012.

- This text is also available in Canvas as an ebook whose pages you may download.
- ISBN 978-0-8091-4780-9 (paperback), list price: \$24.95. Retail price may vary.
- ISBN 978-1-6164-3670-4 (eBook), list price: \$19.96. Retail price may vary, and in the case of eBooks could be significantly less.
- Please note that this is the second edition of this book; be sure to order it using the correct ISBN.

Carvalho, Corrine L., ed. *Pastoral Essays in Honor of Lawrence Boadt, CSP: Reading the Old Testament*. Paulist Press, 2013.

- ISBN 978-0-8091-4838-7 (paperback), list price: \$18.95. Retail price may vary.

- ISBN 978-1-58768-250-6 (Kindle edition), list price: \$15.96. Retail price may vary, and in the case of eBooks could be significantly less.

The Catholic Study Bible. 3rd ed., edited by Donald Senior et al., Oxford UP, 2016.

- ISBN-13: 978-0-19-936277-6 (paperback).
- This study Bible contains the translation of the Bible we will be using as well as valuable essays that may be used for completing course assignments. Unless otherwise noted for a particular assignment, no other Bible is acceptable for use in class.

Gnuse, Robert K., et al. *The Jewish Roots of Christian Faith*. The Loyola Institute for Ministry Extension Program. New Orleans: Loyola U, 2009.

- PDF available in Canvas

Additional texts designated as assigned reading will be made available in Canvas. Other suggested/recommended resources and readings will be offered throughout the course.

For guidance on citations and referencing styles see the *LIM Guide to Written Theological Reflection* (available in Canvas under Resources » Writing Assistance).

Evaluation and Course Requirements

Course Schedule (Date and Session/Week)

Weekly sessions in this course run from Tuesday–Monday. Please note that all assignments must be completed by Midnight on Monday, the last day of the weekly session, except for Week 1; you must complete your personal introduction by Sunday, 8/23 by 11:59 pm Central Time, or risk being administratively dropped from the course.

Date	Topic	Assignments
Week 1 8/17–8/24	Personal and Course Introductions	Introduce self, complete readings, video
Week 2 8/25–31	Studying the Bible as the Word of God: An Invitation Biblical Interpretation	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions
Week 3 9/1–9/7	Introduction and Stories of Israel’s Ancestors (Sept. 7 Labor Day Holiday)	Readings, videos, discussion questions
Week 4 9/8–9/14	Exodus, the Wilderness, and Sinai	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions
Week 5 9/15–9/21	The Conquest and the Judges	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions; Optional

		Due: Tentative List of Scholarly Resources for Exegesis Paper if you wish feedback.
Week 6 9/22–9/28	The Monarchy	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions
Week 7 9/29–10/5	Eighth-Century Prophets	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions
Week 8 10/6–10/12	Judah until the Exile	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions, research; Optional Due: Rationale and Resources for Exegesis Paper if you wish feedback.
Week 9 10/13–10/19	Fall Break	No assignments. Work on Reflection Paper No. 1: Pastoral Essays, due Monday, Oct. 26
Week 10 10/20–10/26	Exilic Theology	Complete readings, videos, discussion question; Paper No. 1 due Monday, Oct. 26, 11:59 PM CT
Week 11 10/27–11/2	Post-Exilic Traditions, Part One	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions
Week 12 11/3–11/9	Working Break	No assignments. Work on Reflection Paper No. 2, due Monday Dec. 2
Week 13 11/10–11/16	Post-Exilic Traditions, Part Two	Complete readings, videos, discussion questions; Spiritual Formation Prayer Journal Due Monday, Nov. 16, 11:59 PM CT
Week 14 11/17–11/23	Working Break	No assignments. Work on Reflection Paper No. 2, due Monday Dec. 1
Week 15 11/24–30	Thanksgiving Break	No regular session assignments. Work on Reflection Paper No. 2, due Monday Dec. 1
Week 16 12/1–12/4	Final Assignment and Course Evaluation	Paper No. 2 due Monday, Dec. 1, 11:59 PM CT

Dec. 15: Due date for posting grades, 11:59 pm CT

Assessment

Each student's final grade will include the following:

		Percentage of Final Grade	
		Graduate	CEU
1	Substantive participation in weekly Canvas discussion and small group discussions	40%	95%
2	Spiritual Formation Prayer Journal	5%	5%
3	Paper No. 1: Pastoral Essays	20%	NA
4	Paper No. 2: Exegesis	35%	NA

1) Participation in Discussions (40% of graduate student assessment; 95% of CEU evaluation)

The modules of this course include assignments for reading, video segments, and discussion questions. These are provided in the weekly modules in our Canvas course. In addition to reading all the materials assigned and watching assigned videos, all students will also be expected to participate in the class discussions online.

You will also be asked to participate in two virtual small group sessions that you will initiate and assess. That is included as part of this participation grading.

Specific details regarding the schedule for posting, length requirements, discussion leaders, and small group meetings will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 12th.

2) Spiritual Formation Prayer Journal (5% of graduate student assessment; 5% of CEU evaluation)

Two 300+-word journal entries in light of your prayer and other material in the spiritual formation text are due at points during the semester. Full directions will be included in the final syllabus posted in Canvas the week of August 14th.

3) Reflective Essay 1: Pastoral Essays (20% of graduate student assessment; not required of CEU students)

A 7-9 page paper that reflects critically on how an essay on a topic or theme of your choice from *Pastoral Essays in Honor of Lawrence Boadt, CSP: Reading the Old Testament* (ed. Corrine L. Carvalho, Paulist Press, 2013) has changed your initial understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures. Complete details are located in the Canvas course.

4) Reflective Essay 2: Exegesis (35% of graduate student assessment; not required of CEU students)

A 10-12 page paper consisting of a careful, critical discussion of a selected passage from the OT, focusing on the meaning of the passage in its original contexts and in your contexts, especially your ministry. Complete details are located in the Canvas course.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	B-	80-82.9	D+	67-69.9
A-	90-92.9	C+	77-79.9	D	60-66.9
B+	87-89.9	C	73-76.9	F	0-59.9
B	83-86.9	C-	70-72.9		

Overall Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Quality Points	Characteristics of Student Work
A	4.0	Work done with distinction. An outstanding use of all four evaluation criteria as a catalyst for critical reflection.
A-	3.7	Work done with distinction, with a few minor corrections needed.
B+	3.3	Work of very good quality. The assignment is addressed in an exceptional manner with a good balance of personal insight and academic documentation.
B	3.0	The standard for the master’s degree. The assignment is adequately addressed in a clear and concise manner with appropriate documentation. If subsequent work meets this standard of quality, the degree will be awarded.
B-	2.7	The work is slightly below the standard for master’s level work. The assignment is addressed, but a number of corrections is needed to address the assignment in a clear and concise manner. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C+	2.3	Substandard graduate work. Evaluation criteria are not adequately met in the assignment. Moderate improvement is needed. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C	2	Less than graduate-level work. Evaluation criteria are not met. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C-	1.7	Below average, grade does not count towards graduation.
D+	1.3	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
D	1	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
F	0	Assignment not addressed at all, incomplete assignment, or not submitted on time.

Please note that the LIM grading scale uses B as the standard for graduate-quality work. A and B+ indicate graduate work done with distinction, with B- and below signifying levels below graduate standards.

Course Policies

Incomplete Grade Policy

Students are subject to the university policy regarding incomplete grades with the following additions to university policy. Grades of Incomplete are given at the instructor's discretion. Students must complete LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources » Policies, Forms, & Services section of their Canvas course. Students should first inquire of their instructor whether or not they are eligible for an incomplete; this must occur with sufficient time to complete the process explained here. To be eligible, students may not have received an Incomplete in the previous semester, must have completed at least 75% of the course work to date, and must have at least a C or above in the course. After the instructor makes an initial assessment of eligibility, including checking with the LIM Office to ensure there was no Incomplete in the previous semester and finds the student eligible, by the due date of the course's final assignment, a student must complete and obtain all signatures for LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources section of their Canvas course and submit it to their instructor, who will forward a copy to the LIM Director. LIM graduate students may not receive Incompletes in LIM courses in consecutive semesters.

Attendance & Participation

Students are subject to the university policy regarding attendance found online in the *Bulletin*. Students in online courses communicate their presence by active participation in weekly discussions. Each course's instructor sets requirements for how many times students must post on the Discussion Board in Canvas. Failing to post during the first week of class may result in removal from the course. If you foresee that you will be unable to post in a given week, please contact the instructor ahead of time. Extensions for posting are given at the instructor's discretion and for a valid reason may be granted if arranged ahead of time. In extraordinary circumstances, students may arrange with their instructor to post up to two weeks after a deadline, though this may entail a grade reduction. Posts and other assignments submitted more than two weeks late may be subject to a grade of zero. If students do not post in a given week, they are considered absent. Absence for more than one week without contacting the instructor may result in removal from and failure of the course.

University Policies

Please read Part 2 of the syllabus (located on LORA and in Canvas) for university policies on plagiarism, AI, accessible education, and more.