



**OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES II:
Latter Prophets and Writings (BE 502)**

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Shepherds Theological Seminary
WEST Institute (MTS)

Course Syllabus
October 13–17, 2025

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This three-credit course provides the second part of a detailed overview of the Old Testament (Chronicles–Malachi, English Bible). The course combines the disciplines of OT introduction (special and general) together with OT theology. The students will gain an understanding of the importance of the OT and the problems involved with studying it in traditional and contemporary scholarship. The course will take a special look at interpretive issues related to authorship, literary structure, purpose, and content of each book. Because of the nature of this intensive modular course, assignments will be due before, during, and after the course. The teaching component of the course takes place October 13–17, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (MST).

STATEMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (MTS):

STS STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: MTS	
1. To interpret Scriptures accurately from the perspective of historical-grammatical hermeneutics, understanding a text in relation to the teaching of Scripture in all of its parts.	
2. To articulate and defend the great doctrines of inerrant, authoritative, and sufficient Scripture with an appreciation of the erudition of former generations of Christian thinkers.	
3. To serve both the body of Christ and society through contributions in ministry and scholarship.	
4. To exemplify Christ-like service in both private and public contexts.	
5. To interpret Scriptures accurately from the perspective of historical-grammatical hermeneutics, understanding a text in relation to the teaching of Scripture in all of its parts.	

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

There are four main assignments: textbook and supplemental reading, study questions, biblical book summaries, and position papers. The requirements for these assignments are outlined below:

1. Course Reading

This course requires 500 pages of extrabiblical source reading. This reading will include the appropriate sections from the course textbook (pp. 330–560) (230 pp. total):

Merrill, Eugene H., Mark F. Rooker, and Michael A. Grisanti. *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2011.

Supplemental reading of 270 pages should be completed from the course bibliography included at the end of this course syllabus. The supplemental reading **MUST INCLUDE** the following sources, which will be posted electronically in Populi:

Dunham, Kyle C. “Structure and Theology in Proverbs: Its Function as an Educational Program for Novice Leaders in Ancient Israel.” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 29 (2019): 361–88.

———. “‘I Am Poor and Needy’: The Worshipper’s Posture within the Psalter’s Structure.” *Perichoresis* 22 (2024): 4–26.

———. *The Pious Sage in Job: Eliphaz in the Context of Wisdom Theodicy*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016. (**Chapters 1 and 4**: Pages 1–14; 115–74)

McCabe, Robert V. “The Message of Ecclesiastes.” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 1 (Spring 1996): 85–112.

Unger, Merrill. “The Character of Old Testament Prophecy.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 108 (Apr 1951): 167–71.

The rest of the supplemental reading is at the student’s discretion and should consist of sources listed in the course bibliography at the end of this syllabus. The sources marked with an asterisk (*) indicate the professor’s recommended resources and the preferred options for completion of the student’s supplemental reading. A final reading report must be submitted in Populi no later than the due date on **October 24, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.** as listed in the course schedule below.

2. Study Questions

- Type out answers to the study questions at the end of each chapter for the books covered in this course within *The World and the Word*.
- The answers may be brief but should be thorough.
- Submit the answers via Populi no later than the due dates of **October 13, October 17, and October 24, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.** as noted in the course schedule below.

3. Biblical Book Summaries

- Read through each book of the Bible covered in this course in an English version that falls in line with “essential literalness,” such as NIV, NASB, CSB, LSB, or ESV.
- In one document, with the student’s name at the top and a bold, centered heading for each book, describe the theme of the book in 1–3 sentences. Then in brief paragraph(s) (of 3 or more sentences) summarize the contents of each major part of the book and, if helpful, how that part relates to the main theme of the book. **NOTE WELL:** To do this, please **use the outlines for each book provided by *The World and the Word*** to discern what the major parts of a book are. E.g., the outlines for Hosea (p. 417) and for Nahum (p. 462) show three parts for these books, while the outline for Isaiah (pp. 371–72) has six parts and for Jeremiah (pp. 387–88) has five.
- **NOTE:** The student does not need to replicate these outlines for this assignment.
- The biblical book summaries should be uploaded in Populi no later than **October 31, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.** per the course schedule below.

4. Position Papers

- The student is required to write **TWO position papers**.
- Each response paper must be **2–4 pages single spaced**.
- There are **no citations required** for these papers, but the student is expected to write in his or her own words and not to use extended quotes.
 - If the student needs to refer to a source, he or she should reference it in parentheses in an informal way.
- The student is expected to consult sources as necessary to help answer the questions. **NOTE** that these papers are position papers, meaning that the student should argue for a position rather than merely stating the available interpretive options. The presupposition is that the student has undertaken the necessary reading and research to come to what he or she believes is the correct conclusion on the question being addressed.
- The goal of these papers is to simulate writing a blog post or a letter to a friend who is asking about these issues. As such, it is a bit more informal in style, but the content must be appropriate and thorough as these papers address important issues.
- As course calendar indicates, paper should be turned in no later than **October 31, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.** as indicated in the course schedule below.
- The position papers may deal with one of the following topics.

Note: If you have another issue you would like to write on, ask me and I will likely approve it. This list contains suggested topics. Any other topic chosen must be approved by the professor.

- What is the theme and purpose of Chronicles, especially as it relates to the history accounts in 1–2 Samuel and 1–2 Kings?
- What can we learn as Christians from Lamentations?
- Is there evidence for the deity of Christ in the Old Testament (with a focus on Chronicles–Malachi)?
- Should Esther be viewed as a role model (cf. Bush and Whitcomb)?

- Which interpretive approach is best in Song of Solomon, literal or typological/allegorical?
- Why is the chronology of Ezra and Nehemiah important to understand for the postexilic period?
- Is Job a parable or a record of historical events and how does this affect our understanding of the characters' speeches?
- How does the Davidic covenant influence how we read the Psalms?
- How do the Old Testament prophets contribute to our understanding of eschatology?
- What are Leviathan and Behemoth in Job?
- What is a Messianic Psalm?
- How should Christians interpret the imprecatory psalms?
- What is the difference between the Mosaic covenant and the New Covenant?
- How should a Christian read proverbs?
- What is the worldview of the author of Ecclesiastes?
- Is Isaiah 7:14 about the Virgin Birth?
- How should we interpret the temple of Ezekiel 40–48?
- How should we understand the millennial sacrifices in Ezekiel 40–48?
- How should we interpret Daniel's 70 weeks?
- What is the background or context of [Prophetic Book]?
- What is the Day of the Lord?
- What does the Old Testament say about the New Covenant?
- What is the meaning of Amos 9:11–15 and the restoration of David's booth?
- Who is the messenger of Malachi 3:1?
- Is there such a thing as "conditional prophecy" (cf. Chisholm and Barrick)?

COURSE GRADING

The grading for the position papers will be assessed by the following rubric:

AREAS OF ASSESSMENT	MAXIMUM POINTS
1. Introduction and Conclusion: (a) Appropriate introduction to the issue; (b) secures attention of the reader; (c) provides evidence of importance of the topic; (d) clear thesis statement; (e) appropriate conclusion; (f) weaves together and summarizes argument; (g) demonstrates good logic and sound theology.	20
2. Syntax and Style: (a) Quality of prose; (b) use of precise language and well-defined terminology; (c) overall linguistic facility with English syntax, grammar, and semantics; (d) argument flow and connection; (e) proper spelling.	20
3. Language and Formatting: (a) Appropriate margins, fonts and sizes, indents, pagination, and spacing; (b) footnotes correctly formatted; (c) bibliography correctly formatted.	20

4. Analysis and Understanding: (a) Solid presentation and critical engagement; (b) grasp of the issues and central difficulties; (c) engagement with various perspectives (interacting opposing viewpoints); (d) proper and thorough use of data.	20
5. Methodological Rigor: (a) Consistency with historical-grammatical hermeneutics; (b) understanding texts in relation to the whole canon of Scripture; (c) sound exegetical treatment (precise study of key texts); (d) bibliography demonstrates interaction with high-quality sources.	20
Total	100

Each assignment of this course will be weighted as follows:

ASSIGNMENTS	PERCENTAGE
Biblical Book Summaries	25%
Course Reading	20%
Study Questions	20%
Position Papers	35%
Total	100%

Academic credit will be measured in semester hours. A unit of credit equates to three course hours of student work per week (1 hour of lecture plus 2 hours of homework or 3 hours of assignments) for the span equivalent to a semester of 15 weeks. The grading system is as follows:

GRADE	GRADE DEFINITION
A	Indicates <u>exceptional mastery</u> of material plus creative resourcefulness in the use of knowledge gained.
B	Indicates <u>good mastery</u> of subject material plus evidence of ability to use to good advantage the knowledge gained.
C	Indicates <u>average mastery</u> of subject material plus evidence of ability to use profitably the knowledge gained.
D	Indicates <u>poor mastery</u> of subject matter. It signifies work which in quality or quantity falls below the acceptable standard. It is, however, sufficient weight to be counted in the hours for graduation if balanced by superior work in other courses. This grade is not usually accepted by another institution in student transfer.
F	Failure
I	Incomplete. Indicates that the semester's work is incomplete, and the instructor has given the student a specified extension of time to complete the course requirements. No incomplete grade may be extended longer than the end of the semester following the semester in which the incomplete was received. Any

	incomplete not cleared up within this time will be replaced with an appropriate grade determined by the instructor's evaluation of the student's completed work.
W	Withdrawal before the 10 th class (before 2 nd day of Winter or Summer Session classes). This is not computed in the grade point average.
WF	Withdrawal after the 10 th class (after 2 nd day of Winter or Summer Session classes). If you register for a class and do not attend, you will receive a WF. This is computed as a 0 in the grade point average.
AU	Class audited. The course is not taken for credit and not included in the student's grade point average.

Official Percentage Grade Breakdown

LETTER GRADE	PERCENTILE	GRADE POINTS
A	96–100	4.0
A–	94–95	3.7
B+	92–93	3.3
B	88–91	3.0
B–	86–87	2.7
C+	84–85	2.3
C	80–83	2.0
C–	78–79	1.7
D+	76–77	1.3
D	72–75	1.0
D–	70–71	0.7
F	≤69	0

CLASS HOURS AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

STS defines a semester credit hour as one hour of classroom instruction in combination with two hours of out of class work. This definition applies to each week of the normal academic term which consists of 15 weeks including an academic reading week. Winter and summer modules, as well as course intensive modules, conform to this standard.

Attendance is expected at all class sessions, except in cases of emergency. In such cases, students should contact the professor prior to the class or as soon after as possible. A student who misses more than 20% of the class—eight hours or one full day of the intensive module—will receive a grade of F.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY

All STS students must comply with the seminary's academic dishonesty policy.

Ephesians 4:28—“He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good...”

Seminary education is based upon certain shared values concerning the nature of learning and the pursuit of knowledge. One of the most basic assumptions is the respect for intellectual property and right of recognition for this pursuit of knowledge. Violation of this basic assumption includes such practices as cheating, plagiarism, abuse of technology, falsification of research data, unapproved collaborative research and other deceptive academic practices. Sometimes these abuses are unintentional, but much intentional abuse is found in higher educational institutions, even Christian seminaries. For the details of the parameters, procedures, and penalties with respect to academic dishonesty, please see the STS student handbook.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Below is the tentative schedule for the course. The professor has sole discretion for adjustments to the course schedule. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on the designated due date. Assignments will be collected in Populi unless arranged otherwise with the professor beforehand.

Course Schedule and Assignment Dates			
Date	Lecture Topic	Reading Due	Homework Due
10/13/2025	Introduction to Class; Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job	<i>The World and the Word</i> , 330–429	Study Questions, Chapters 20–28
10/14/2025	Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes		
10/15/2025	Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel		
10/16/2025	Daniel, Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Amos		
10/17/2025	Micah, Hosea, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	<i>The World and the Word</i> , 430–458	Study Questions, Chapters 29–32
10/24/2025		<i>The World and the Word</i> , 459–560; Supplemental Reading of 270 pages (see course syllabus for instructions)	Study Questions, Chapters 33–44
10/31/2025			Biblical Book Summaries (see

			course syllabus for instructions)
10/31/2025			Position Papers (see course syllabus for instructions)

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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