Module title: Introduction to the Old Testament

Module co-ordinator: Ann Jeffers

Module staff: Deborah Rooke

Programme(s) for which chiefly intended (as core or option):
- Core: BD/BA Theology, DipHE Theology, CertHE Theology, BA Theology with English
- Option: N/a

Course aims:
To enable students to achieve familiarity with, and be able to discuss and analyse the selected key texts below which cover the most essential aspects of the geography, history and writing of the Old Testament:

- the Pentateuch (Gen. 1–11; Exodus 1–15; Deuteronomy)
- the so-called deuteronomistic history (1 and 2 Kings)
- the so-called writing prophets (Amos, Hosea, Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah, Haggai and Zechariah 1–8).

Note: the texts are not set for strictly exegetical purposes but serve as a basis for introducing the main elements of the Old Testament (OT).

Learning outcomes:

Knowledge and Understanding
Students will be able to:
- Describe and discuss the texts from geographical, historical and literary perspectives;
- Describe and discuss the historical background and context that shape and structure the texts;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the texts’ diverse genres;
- Outline the composition and editorial process of the texts.

Intellectual and Cognitive Skills
Students will be able to:
- Identify, describe and examine the essential teachings, messages and issues of the texts;
- Identify the influence of ideologies in the texts;
- Critically question biblical accounts, taking into account the nature of history and the sources available to the historian;
- Analyse and distinguish the literary patterns and forms in the texts.

Practical and Transferable Skills
Students will be able to:
- Show a developing ability to assess texts from
geographical, historical and literary perspectives;
- Select and organise material from a range of sources;
- Conduct a detailed critical analysis of texts and ideologies and debate the issues in an open-minded and rigorous way;
- Produce clear, well-structured written work;
- Show some ability to manage their own learning, including working effectively to deadlines.

**Indicative course content**

Topics studied include:
- Introducing the Hebrew scriptures;
- Torah;
- Deuteronomistic history and 1 and 2 Kings;
- Prophets in pre-exilic times;
- Prophets in exile;
- The return: Haggai and Zechariah.

**Learning and teaching methods**

Resources available on the Virtual Learning Environment may include:
- Subject guide
- Articles, extracts from longer texts, and/or links to other electronic resources
- Course discussion forum

Opportunities for formative feedback include:
- Essay-marking service
- Tutoring at a supporting institution

**Selected Bibliography:**

**Introductory textbooks**

One of the following:


**Other accessible introductions**

One of the following:


Dillard, R.B. and T. Longman III *An Introduction to the Old
<table>
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<th>Collections of ancient texts</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Testament.</strong> (Leicester: Apollos, 1995) [ISBN 0851106536]. (This is strongly conservative.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soggin, J.A. <em>An introduction to the History of Israel and Judah.</em> (London: SCM Press, 1993) [ISBN 0334025346]. (Outlines main historical developments of the period c.750–c.520 BCE. Beware of the many 'histories of Israel', a trend initiated by John Bright's classic, but conservative <em>History of Israel</em> first published in 1946.)</td>
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<td>One of the following:</td>
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<td>Charlesworth, J. M. <em>The Old Testament pseudepigrapha.</em> (London: Dart, Longman &amp; Todd, 1983) [ISBN 0385096305 (volume 1); 0385188137 (volume 2)].</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hallo, W.W. and K.L. Younger <em>The context of scripture.</em> (Leiden: Brill, 2000) [ISBN 9789004135677 (volume 1); 9789004135685 (volume 2); 9789004135693 (volume 3). (This replaced Pritchard's <em>Ancient Near Eastern texts (and Pictures)</em> 1950 and offers more detailed notes.)</td>
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<td>One of the following:</td>
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<td>Freedman, D.N. et al. <em>The Anchor Bible dictionary.</em> (New York, Doubleday, 1992.) [ISBN 0385193513 (volume 1); 0385193602 (volume 2); 0385193610 (volume 3); 0385193629 (volume 4); 0385193637 (volume 5); 038526190X (volume 6)].</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sakenfeld, K.D. et al. <em>The new interpreter's dictionary of the Bible.</em> (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2006) [ISBN 0385193602 (volume 2); 0385193610 (volume 3); 0385193629 (volume 4); 0385193637 (volume 5); 038526190X (volume 6)].</td>
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<td>Selected other recommended texts &amp; resources</td>
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**Assessment**  
Three-hour examination

**Student evaluation opportunities**  
Annual online student feedback survey

**Indicative student time allocation**  
300 hours

**Date of module description development or modification**  
16/11/2011