Modesto Junior College  
Course Outline of Record  
ENGL 156

I. OVERVIEW
The following information will appear in the 2009 - 2010 catalog

ENGL 156  The Bible As Literature: The Hebrew Canon and Intertestamental Writings  3 Units

Formerly listed as: ENGL - 156: The Bible As Literature-The Hebrew Canon
Prerequisite: Satisfactory completion of ENGL 50
Advisory: Before enrolling in this course, students are strongly advised to Eligibility for 101

Literary criticism and an appreciation of historical background and textual transmission of selected books of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and Intertestamental Writings (also known as the Apocrypha) in translation Field trips might be required. Course is applicable to the associate degree. General Education: CSU-GE - C2
IGETC Category: IGETC - 3B

II. LEARNING CONTEXT
Given the following learning context, the student who satisfactorily completes this course should be able to achieve the goals specified in Section III, Desired Learning:

A. COURSE CONTENT

1. Required Content:

   a. Introduction: The critical approaches to the Bible and their strengths and weaknesses.

   b. The Hebrew Bible in translation

      i. Theories regarding the authorship of the Pentateuch; Etiology.

      ii. From Canaan to Kingdom; Judges, Samuel and Kings

          a. Deborah, Samson and Gideon

          b. Saul, David and Solomon

      iii. The Pre-Exilic prophets: divided kingdom and foreign intrigue

          a. Amos, Hosea, Isaiah (1-39), Micah

          b. Zepheniah, Nahum, Habbakuk

          c. The Deuteronomic Reform and the reaction of Jeremiah

      iv. The Exile

          a. Ezekiel: new directions in Judaism

          b. Deutero-Isaiah (40-55): vicarious suffering

      v. The Return: post-Exilic legalism and separatism
a. Haggai and Zechariah
b. Ezra and Nehemiah

vi. Hebrew Poetry
   a. Psalms
   b. Song of Solomon

vii. Wisdom Literature: Secularized religion
   a. Song of Songs: Sensational Motifs
   b. Proverbs, Sirach: Wisdom in Parallelism
   c. Ecclesiastes: Treatise “On Pessimism”

viii. Early Jewish Novella Writing
   a. Jonah, Ruth
   b. Esther, Judith

ix. Apocalyptic Revolt
   a. 1 and 2 Maccabees
   b. Daniel

B. ENROLLMENT RESTRICTIONS

1. Prerequisites
   Satisfactory completion of ENGL 50.

2. Advisories
   Before enrolling in this course, students are strongly advised to Eligibility for 101

3. Requisite Skills
   Before entering the course, the student will be able to:
   a. Write compositions as assigned, employing sound rhetorical and organizational skills.
   b. Requisite Skill: Write clear introductions, theses, body paragraphs, and conclusions in essays.
   c. Requisite Skill: Use a variety of academic sentence structures.
   d. Requisite Skill: Adhere to the conventions of standard edited English.
   e. Requisite Skill: Revise and improve essay drafts.
C. **HOURS AND UNITS**

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**METHODS OF INSTRUCTION (TYPICAL)**

_Instructors of the course might conduct the course using the following method:_

1. Assign readings of Biblical texts and authoritative writings about the texts,
2. Direct class discussions about the texts,
3. Play recordings or show film and video presentations,
4. Facilitate the preparation and presentation of group or individual projects,
5. Administer essay or objective examinations to test ability to analyze, criticize, and show understanding of the assigned readings.
6. Facilitate the examination of selections from the Hebrew Bible and the Intertestamental Writings, a. determining the way in which the ideas of the passages reflect the historical period, b. demonstrating the validity of the argument in support of their theses by using specific, relevant evidence, c. evaluating the validity of the arguments in support of theses made by other class participants.
7. Facilitate the formulation of theses about the recurrence of themes and ideas in the various books of the Hebrew Bible and the Intertestamental Writings, a. basing conclusions on an examination of the texts and on current research, b. demonstrating the soundness of their theses with sufficient, relevant Biblical evidence, c. judging other points of view objectively.

E. **ASSIGNMENTS (TYPICAL)**

1. **EVIDENCE OF APPROPRIATE WORKLOAD FOR COURSE UNITS**

_Time spent on coursework in addition to hours of instruction (lecture hours)_

Students will typically be assigned

1. weekly reading assignments of primary literature, as well as supplementary reading in literary criticism or history.
2. out-of-class writing assignments, which could include essays, response papers, journal writing, blogging, class projects, and preparation for oral reports.
3. preparation for in-class essays, quizzes and exams, such as a midterm and final.

2. **EVIDENCE OF CRITICAL THINKING**

_Assignments require the appropriate level of critical thinking_

- Sample Exam questions:
  - What problems might scholars have faced in trying to compile a reliable text of the Hebrew Canon?
  - Discuss oral tradition and its relationship to the Hebrew Canon.
  - Identify regions on a map of ancient Israel and Palestine.
Sample Essay Questions:

- Discuss the challenges a post-modern American faces when reading ancient near-eastern texts.
- How can modern scholarship help us better understand the Hebrew Canon? Discuss ways to distinguish essential religious experiences with these texts from secular, or academic, experiences with these texts. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each? How can devout scholars keep them separate?
- Discuss the impact of genre studies on the Hebrew Canon. How does this classification impact a reader’s interpretation of text.

F. TEXTS AND OTHER READINGS (TYPICAL)

5. Other: [Although they have not been reissued as new editions, all of the following textbooks are still in print and commonly in use for this course at the college level. As these books represent the foundational scholarship for study in this field, students transferring with this course would be expected to have read (or be familiar with) these specific texts and/or the material reprinted therein.]

III. DESIRED LEARNING

A. COURSE GOAL

As a result of satisfactory completion of this course, the student should be prepared to:

Demonstrate the ability to identify and define literary techniques relevant to the study of the Hebrew Canon, mythology, and the oral tradition; demonstrate the ability to describe genres, periods, and themes relevant to the study of the Hebrew Canon, mythology, and the oral tradition; and demonstrate the ability to analyze and explain the literary, historical, and cultural significance of important works of the Hebrew Canon, mythology, and the oral tradition.

B. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

Mastery of the following learning goals will enable the student to achieve the overall course goal.

1. Required Learning Goals

   Upon satisfactory completion of this course, the student will be able to:
   
   a. State the effects of translation on Biblical texts,
   
   b. State the distinction between a literal and symbolic reading of Biblical texts,
   
   c. Identify the various literary genres in the Hebrew Bible and intertestamental writings, such as Hebrew poetry, prophecy, history, narrative, law, biography, epistle, psalms, and apocalypse,
   
   d. Identify the major Hebrew Bible and intertestamental personalities and their contributions to the writings and events of their times, people such as Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Jeremiah,
Isaiah, Ruth, Deborah, Judith, etc.

e. Identify the major historical Biblical events, such as the passover, the wilderness wanderings, the union of the twelve tribes under David, the split of twelve tribes into two separate states, the Babylonian captivity, the Maccabean War, etc.,

f. Analyze and criticize the Hebrew Bible with theses that demonstrate an understanding of the writings (e.g., note salient literary characteristics of particular passages, compare and/or contrast different passages, demonstrate trends in themes, etc.)

g. Analyze Biblical texts according to a variety of critical approaches, such as feminist criticism, source criticism, narrative criticism, etc.,

h. Demonstrate clear, effective writing skills, (e.g., unity, coherence, specificity, directness, conciseness, etc.)

i. Demonstrate logical thinking in their theses by
   a. presenting all of the information about a particular subject, not just choosing passages that prove the thesis while ignoring passages that do not,
   b. presenting sufficient evidence, (not over-generalizing),
   c. presenting evidence that is accurate,
   d. avoiding emotional arguments,
   e. avoiding mistaken causal relationships and false analogies,
   f. sticking to the thesis, (not rambling,) 
   g. using authority to support the thesis.

IV. METHODS OF ASSESSMENT (TYPICAL)

A. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

1. Reading quizzes, unit exams, essays, or presentations.

B. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

1. Final essay, final presentation, and/or final exam.