SCHOOL OF DIVINITY, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

ACADEMIC SESSION 2017-2018

DR2047 History and Religion of Ancient Israel

15 Credits, 1 - 11 Weeks

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:

The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your MyAberdeen page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure.

You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR/COURSE TEAM

Dr Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer
Email: l.s.tiemeyer@abdn.ac.uk
Tel. 01224-272629
Office Hours: By appointment

Discipline Administration:

Mr Warwick Brown
50-52 College Bounds
Room CB001
01224 272366
divrs@abdn.ac.uk
TIMETABLE
Please consult the portal/MyTimetable.

Students can view their university timetable at
http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course discusses the issues involved in reconstructing the history and religions of ancient Israel and Judah.

INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES
This course aims to provide an overview of the history and religions of the ancient Near East (Mesopotamia, the Levant) with focus on the ancient Israelites. Who were they and where did they come from? What did they do and how did they interact with the nations around them? The course will explore the available archaeological and textual evidence and discuss ways in which these artefacts enable us to reconstruct the history of ancient Israel. In doing so, it will question the extent to which the biblical material can convey or indeed intend to convey historical data.

Throughout the course of the semester, the student should learn:

1. to read biblical and extra-biblical texts in an informed and critical manner.
2. to reflect independently and critically on the problems related to historical reconstructions of the history of Ancient Israel.

To interpret the religious texts of Ancient Israel and its social and cultic phenomena in their historical and cultural contexts.

LECTURE/SEMINAR PROGRAMME
See MyAberdeen for further details.
READING LIST, IF APPLICABLE

UNIVERSITY WEEK 7

1. Introduction to the Ancient Near East

2. Mesopotamian History and Religion

UNIVERSITY WEEK 8

Tutorial 1: Gilgamesh Epic
   - Genesis 6-9


UNIVERSITY WEEK 9

1. The Minimalists and the Maximalists – Ideology and Biblical research
2. What can we learn from archaeology?

- W. Dever, *What did the Biblical Writers Know and When did they Know it? What Archaeology can tell us about the Reality of Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, Mich. William B. Eerdmans, 2001), pp. 53-95. 221.93 Dev

UNIVERSITY WEEK 10

Tutorial 2:


1. What can we know historically about the Patriarchs?


2. Were the ancient Israelites ever in Egypt?


UNIVERSITY WEEK 11

1. The book of Joshua and archaeology: was Canaan ever conquered?


2. Early Israel according to archeology

UNIVERSITY WEEK 12

Tutorial 3:
- Finkelstein, A. Mazor, B.B. Schmidt, *The Quest for the Historical Israel* (Atlanta, SBL, 2007), pp. 35-66. 933 Fin

1. Were there ever kings such as David and Solomon?

2. Israel and the Neo-Assyrian Empire, I

UNIVERSITY WEEK 13

1. Israel and the Neo-Assyrian Empire, II

2. Judah and the Neo-Assyrian Empire III

UNIVERSITY WEEK 14

Tutorial 4:
- M. Bishop Moore, “Writing Israel’s history using the Prophetic Books”, *Israel’s Prophets and Israel’s Past: Essays on the Relationship of*
1. Judah and the Neo-Babylonian Empire

2. Judah’s experience in exile and at home

UNIVERSITY WEEK 15

1. Restoration I

2. Restoration II

UNIVERSITY WEEK 16

Tutorial 5:

1. The Religion of Ancient Israel I: West-Semitic origins of the Israelite Religions
   - M. Dijkstra, “El, the God of Israel – Israel, the People of YHWH: On the Origins of Ancient Israel Yahwism”, *Only One God? Monotheism in Ancient Israel and the Veneration of the Goddess Asherah* (ed. B.


  Note: This lecture will not be given in class but instead uploaded on MyAberdeen

UNIVERSITY WEEK 17

1. The Religion of Ancient Israel III: The archaeological evidence


  Note: This lecture will not be given in class but instead uploaded on MyAberdeen

2. The Religion of Ancient Israel IV: Women’s religion


UNIVERSITY WEEK 18

I am happy to meet for revision on the scheduled times in week 18. If you are interested in structured revision, please contact me by email no later than 25th
Nov, 2017. Please specify which particular topics you would wish to have addressed. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer

SECONDARY READING, IF APPLICABLE

Many of the primary texts that are mentioned and discussed during the lectures appear in:


This book can be found in the Divinity Library.

ASSESSMENT

PLEASE NOTE: In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

If you submit your work on time, you can expect that feedback will normally be provided within three working weeks (excluding vacation periods) of the submission deadline.

1 two hour written examination (50%); continuous assessment (50%) consisting of 1 essay (25%); and 1 web-based quiz on MyAberdeen (25%).

The examination and the quiz are based on both the lectures and the accompanied reading.

To view the CGS Descriptors please go to MyAberdeen- Organisations- Divinity, History, & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates. The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

ESSAYS

The essay should be between 2000 and 3000 words long, including footnotes.
The essay should be carried out in critical and informed dialogue with relevant and up-to-date scholarly secondary literature. All interaction with secondary literature must be annotated with footnotes. Failure to do so will be penalized.

- Try being concise and to the point!
- Do not include material that is irrelevant to the topic at hand.

If you have any questions or concerns about submitting work, ask the course co-coordinator before the essay is due.

**LIST OF ESSAY/EXERCISE TOPICS**

The essay topic and essay instructions can be downloaded from MyAberdeen.

**ASSESSMENT DEADLINES**

ESSAY: Due University Week 15, Thursday 10th November, 2017.

If the essay is handed in late without written permission by the course-coordinator, 1 point will be deducted per 2 days or part thereof (Saturday, Sunday and other days when the University is closed are counted together as a single day).

All course work must be submitted to the course co-ordinator no later than Friday 2nd Dec, 2017. Failure to do so will disqualify the student from taking the final exam AND the resit.
SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Submit a .doc or .docx and include the word count.

Submit by the due date, no hard copy will be required unless directly requested by the course coordinator through MyAberdeen.

In advance of uploading, please save the assignment with your student id number listed in the filename, i.e. 59999999 DRXXXX Essay 1.

When asked to enter a title for the assignment, please enter a title identical to the name of your saved assignment, i.e. 59999999 DRXXXX Essay 1.

Please note: failure to submit by the due date (unless a prior arrangement has been made) will result in a deduction of marks. Where no submission is received, this will result in a mark of zero.

Please note: Safeassign text matching software will be used, however the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy reserves the right to also submit material to TuritinUK when deemed necessary.

EXAMINATION


The mid-term exam will cover the lectures and the readings of university weeks 7-11. The students will be given a list of essay questions prior to the exam. Two of these questions will appear on the exam.

Failure to take the mid-term examination will disqualify the student from taking the final exam AND the resit.

The final exam will fall into three sections. Sections 1-2 will cover the lectures and the accompanying reading of weeks 12-27 and section 3 will cover all the five tutorials and the accompanying reading. Each part will contain a choice between two questions. Students must answer three questions in total.

General exam guidance will be given in the Student Handbook.)
RESIT INFORMATION

The resit is a two-hour written examination (100%)

Access to the resit which is provisional on:

- All submitted coursework having been submitted and graded at CGS E3 or higher.
- Student having a valid Class Certificate. Students with C7’s are not eligible for resits.

Past exam papers can be viewed at http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/.

Please Note: Candidates whose first language is not English may refer to English/native tongue dictionaries, when permitted by their Schools to do so. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted in the examination venue. Invigilators are entitled to request inspection of dictionaries prior to the examination, thumbing through them to check that there is no extra written material present.