

THE CONTENT OF THIS DESCRIPTION IS NOT A LEARNING CONTRACT AND THE INSTRUCTOR IS NOT BOUND TO IT. IT IS OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AND INTENDED AS A HELPFUL GUIDE TO THE STUDENT.

TITLE: Ancient Texts Related to the Old Testament

TERM: Spring 2019-2020

PROFESSOR: R. E. Tappy

CREDIT HOURS: 3

REGISTRATION: LIMITED TO _____
AUDITORS _____

UNLIMITED X
NO AUDITORS _____

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will stress the importance of epigraphic finds in archaeological research and in achieving a reliable understanding of the social, political, and cultural history of the biblical world. After a brief introduction to the history of alphabetic writing, students will engage in a study of selected extra-biblical inscriptions that relate directly to the history of Old Testament Israel. The corpus of inscriptions will include texts such as the Mesha Inscription, the well-known collections of ostraca from Samaria, Lachish, and Arad, as well as other, more recently discovered epigraphic finds. The class will analyze these inscriptions in their original languages (Hebrew and other local, cognate languages) and will investigate the historical circumstances surrounding each inscription. The class shall address issues of historiography as the different genres of texts (private letters; public display inscriptions; etc.) emerge from our study sample.

CLASS OBJECTIVES: Completion of this course will require that students:

- a) learn the ancient script of old Hebrew inscriptions (week #1);
- b) display a reading knowledge of a corpus of 10–15 ancient inscriptions;
- c) identify and discuss the grammatical features of the inscriptions in the study sample;
- d) understand the circumstances (including the archaeological context when available) behind the discovery of each inscription;
- e) evaluate how the circumstances of discovery effect one's interpretation of the writing;
- f) gain a familiarity with the scholarly literature pertaining to each inscription;
- g) describe in detail the historical circumstances that gave rise to each inscription and how those circumstances shed light on our understanding of biblical history (and theology)

PREREQUISITES: OT210, OT220

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS/READING:

A selection of articles dealing with each inscription.

Students will also use the following tools from their OT210, OT220 classes:

- *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, F. Brown, S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs, ISBN: 978-1607963080, \$53.65 **AND/OR**
- *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, William L. Holladay, ed., ISBN: 978-0802834133, \$25.32

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING:

- 1.) to participate daily in class (45%)
- 2.) to draw an ancient inscription and a script chart (10%)
- 3.) to lead a seminar on a particular inscription (chosen in consultation with the professor) (30%)
- 4.) to complete a brief final exam during the final class meeting (15%)

ATTENDANCE: Absolutely required