

## **HBR4930: Biblical Love (and other) Poetry**

<i>Instructor</i>	Dr. Dror Abend-David
<i>Meetings</i>	M, W, F 4 <sup>th</sup> Period
<i>Room</i>	LIT 0239
<i>Office</i>	Pugh 337
<i>Office Hours</i>	TW R 3, by Appointment
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### **Course Description**

The Hebrew Bible is not only fire and brimstone. It also contains some exquisite poetic works about love, philosophy, joy, sadness and national sentiment – containing some of the earliest principles of oriental (and later Arabic) poetry. The course will review the principles and functions of Biblical verse, contextualize some of the poems, offer various religious and lay interpretations, and teach various choice verses in the original Biblical Hebrew. We will be using Robert Alter's excellent book, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, as well Chana Bloch's *The Song of Songs – The World's First Great Love Poem* to read some of the most moving and exquisite texts in the Hebrew Bible.

The course will award students with skills for recognizing, reading and contextualizing Biblical verse from the perspective of Religious Studies, the Classics and the reading of the Bible as Literature.

Course discussion will include a reference and comparison with some of the original Hebrew text, but one does not need to know Hebrew in order to take the course (it will all be explained).

### **Grades**

(1) Class participation, including short weekly assignments (20%); (2) Written assignments (15%); (3) Student Presentation (5%); (4) Midterm paper (30%); (5) Final paper (30%)

### **Grading Scale**

100-93	A	A - 4.0
90- 92	A-	A- - 3.67
87- 89	B+	B+- 3.33
83- 86	B	B - 3.0
80-82	B-	B- - 2.67

77-79	C+	C+ -2.33
73-76	C	C - 2.0
70-72	C-	C- - 1.67
67-69	D+	D+ -1.33
63-66	D	D - 1.0
60-62	D-	D- -0.67
S-U	73%	E - 0, WF - 0, I - 0, NG - 0, SU - 0

### **Texts**

Alter, Robert, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. CA: Basic Books, 2011.

Bloch, Chana, *The Song of Songs – The World’s First Great Love Poem*. CA: Modern Library. 2006.

Online course document and various versions of the Bible available as full text at <https://www.biblegateway.com>.

### **Course Assignments**

**Participation and Attendance** – Class discussion will more often consist of active discussion and various activities than class lecture. Students are therefore expected to come to class prepared and ready to participate.

Attendance is mandatory and will be monitored according to the rules of the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Florida (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>). Each three unexcused absences will count for half a grade off the final grade in the course (e.g. from A to A-). Nine unexcused absences will result in a failing course grade. Students who need to miss a class for a legitimate reason should send an email message to the instructor ahead of time.

For an excused absence: Please do not contact the instructor. Contact the office of the Dean of Students at [umattter@ufl.edu](mailto:umattter@ufl.edu). The office of the Dean of Students will alert your instructor (and your other instructors for the relevant dates).

**Weekly assignments** – Students will be asked to prepare weekly assignments, often creative and in groups. These assignments will address reading and/or class discussions.

**Written Assignments** – There will be three short individual written assignments. In these assignments students will usually be asked to respond to a short text or an article we will later discuss in class.

**Presentation** – There will be one short (5-10 minutes) presentation in which students will apply some of the material to texts of their own choice.

**Midterm and Final Paper** – Each student will choose, in consultation with the instructor, a paper topic that addresses some of the topics and texts that are discussed in class. The topics of the midterm and the final papers must be different.

Each of the two assignments (the midterm and final paper) represents 30% of the final grade in the course.

Academic Honesty.

Students are expected to follow University of Florida Academic Honesty Guidelines.

These can be found at <http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/Rules/4017.htm>

Students may also wish to consult The University of Florida Student Guide Standard of Ethical Conduct found at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/stg/>

Students are also expected to follow the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures *Academic Honesty Guidelines*:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. An academic honesty offense is defined as the act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action.

Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines include but are not limited to:

Cheating. The improper taking or tendering of any information or material which shall be used to determine academic credit. Taking of information includes copying graded homework assignments from another student; working with another individual(s) on graded assignments or homework; looking or attempting to look at notes, a text, or another student's paper during an exam.

Plagiarism. The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the other's work is oral or written (including electronic), published or unpublished. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on written materials or in oral presentations; submitting work produced by an online translation service or the translation feature of an online dictionary as your own.

Misrepresentation. Any act or omission with intent to deceive a teacher for academic advantage. Misrepresentation includes lying to a teacher to increase your grade; lying or misrepresenting facts when confronted with an allegation of academic honesty.

Bribery, Conspiracy, Fabrication. For details see website below.

The UF Honor Code states: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

On all work submitted for credit the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action according to the judicial process.

For more details go to: <http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/Rules/4017.htm>

*Students with Disabilities.*

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Spring 2016 Calendar – Biblical Love Poetry

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Wk I		01.05	01.06	01.07	01.08
Wk II	01.11	01.12	01.13	01.14	01.15
Wk III	01.18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	01.19	01.20 1st Written Assignment	01.21	01.22
Wk IV	01.25	01.26	01.27	01.28	01.29
Wk V	02.01 2nd Written Assignment	02.02	02.03	02.04	02.05
Wk VI	02.08 Midterm Abstracts	02.09	02.10	02.11	02.12
Wk VII	02.15 Presentations	02.16	02.17	02.18	02.19
Wk VIII	02.22 Midterm Paper	02.23	02.24	02.25	02.26
Wk IX	02.29 Spring Break	03.01 Spring Break	03.02 Spring Break	03.03 Spring Break	03.04 Spring Break
Wk X	03.07 3 <sup>rd</sup> Written Assignment	03.08	03.09	03.10	03.11
Wk XI	03.14	03.15	03.16	03.17	03.18
Wk XII	03.21 Presentations	03.22	03.23	03.24	03.25
Wk XIII	03.28	03.29	03.30	03.31	04.01
Wk XIV	04.04 Final Abstracts	04.05	04.06	04.07	04.08
Wk XV	04.11	04.12	04.13	04.14	04.15
Wk XVI	04.18 Final Paper	04.19	04.20		