Course Profile

Course # and Title: RHS 406, Israel’s Prophets (online)
Instructor: Mercedes García Bachmann
Semester/Year: Spring 2019

Course Rationale and Description
(Why do we offer this course? Which of LSTC’s degree program learning outcomes does it address?)

This course is part of a sequence in which you are introduced to the literary genres, the development and the interpretation of an important part of our literary religious tradition, the Christian Bible. This course covers the prophetic books. This course will help you to develop a thorough and comprehensive understanding of this part of the Bible to effectively communicate and embody the witness of scripture and to demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to communicate the Christian heritage in its Lutheran expression in a way that is faithful to scripture, ecumenically sensitive and intellectually defensible. You will develop the ability to think contextually about texts from the prophetic books and to creatively engage a pluralistic world in ways that are culturally sensitive. The course will also reflect on how to preach on texts from the prophetic books.

Course Learning Outcomes (Learners will be able to):
(What difference will this course make to students’ knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practices?)

This course enables students to understand their religious heritage in the form of the scripture of the Old Testament (Learning outcome MDiv # 2; MATS # 2; MAM # 2).

By the end of the semester you will be able to:

1. Locate the biblical prophets of the Old Testament within the Ancient Near Eastern prophetic tradition (MDiv #2, 3; MAM #2, 3; MATS #2, 3);
2. Use methodological tools to read prophets historically, literarily, and theologically (MDiv #2; MAM #2; MATS #2);
3. Be able to work with a primary ancient source; discuss the literary forms of prophetic books and the transformations of their theological foci (MDiv #2; MAM #2; MATS #2);
4. Discuss contextual translations and approaches to prophetic literature: e.g. Luther’s, feminist/gender approaches, post-holocaust, liberation theology readings (MDiv #4, 5; MAM #3, 4; MATS #4);
5. Communicate the ideas, contents and concepts of the Old Testament in preaching and teaching in a contemporary parish setting (MDiv #5; MAM #5; MATS #3).

Strategies for Learning):
(How shall we go about achieving these outcomes?)
Translations and readings of short prophetic texts for most sessions, to be used as basis for analysis of a prophetic text. Longer passages will be studied in English (or another modern language of your choice).

Reading assignments in the biblical prophets.

Informed participation in class discussions through activities on the LMS (Moodle course); these activities will be wikis, discussions at forum, answering questions, etc., even some quizzes.

Through these activities, you will acquire or refine (depending on whether this is your first exegetical course or not) your exegetical and hermeneutical abilities.

You will apply these tools to a paper dealing with one prophetic text. The text and topic of the paper must be cleared with the instructor. This paper can be:
- a thorough reflection on a biblical text from the prophets (18-20 pages) or
- an annotated curriculum, i.e., a detailed bible study in four modules or sessions (20-30 pages).

The paper must deal with the biblical text in an appropriate way, using the historical critical method and based on the text in Hebrew. You will submit several drafts through the course, so that you refine your methodology throughout the semester.

Assessment:
(How shall we know if we—students and instructors—have been successful in achieving the outcomes?)

Class Participation will make up half of the final grade, and the final paper the other half.
You will receive:
- Regular feedback from the instructor on compulsory and optional activities;
- Written criticism and evaluation of every quiz;
- Written criticism of each step requested to complete your final exegetical paper or Bible study (for instance, translation, literary criticism, etc.)

Bibliography:
We will not follow one book, but will use several ones, available through the library or online.

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