
Web Instructions

OT 3114 - WISDOM LITERATURE

OT 3116 - WISDOM LITERATURE

Every student in this class should be registered for both this course and one precept section.

In MyLutherNet, the course and the precept will show as separate course sites.

ALL of you will post SOME work online.

OTHERS, will be completing ALL the preceptorial work online.

All online components in this course are conducted from the course site inside MyLutherNet.
(We will not be using the Precept site for our online work.).

Navigation to be used:

Course Links

Full Class Discussion

Precept Circles (Online Precept only)

- you will see only the circle discussion group to which you have been assigned

To log onto this course, you need to:

Login to MyLutherNet

- for help with this step, go to: Student HELP page - http://www.luthersem.edu/orientation/unit2_intro.aspx

Once inside MyLutherNet, find the section “ALL MY COURSES”

Click on the course link OT 3114 - Psalms and Wisdom Literature to view course site

ALL Students:

You are encouraged to do all your primary work first in a word processor and then cut and paste it to your online posting. This way you can work with and correct the document before posting, as well as keeping an archived copy on your computer/hard disk.

1. by Tuesday, September 15

All students are required to post the verse number and at least one translation of their chosen proverb

3. weekly

By **Wednesday at 6pm** each week all students should fill out a short survey about their experiences during that week's lecture. These reflections will be anonymous. The survey can be found on the course web-site under the "weekly survey" tab.

4. optional (encouraged)

- a) Post any of your written work on the Paper Postings Forum (Note differences in assignments for OT 3114 (full credit) and OT3116 (half credit) on syllabus.)
 - i. by September 17: mini report on an individual proverb
 - ii. October 8: prepare to argue the part of one persona of one of Job's four friends
 - iii. October 22: insights from one article on Job
 - iv. October 29: 1-2 page paper answering questions about Job
 - v. November 5: your questions for Bible study on Qoheleth, chapter 9
 - vi. December 3: report on wisdom in a book in the New Testament
 - vii. December 8: 1 page preview of major paper including topic & anticipated list of resources

- b) Read the posted mini papers by the other students (and respond if you wish)

5. by Tuesday, December 15

All students who write a final paper should post that paper for others in the class to read.

6. Community Discussion forum (encouraged)

All students are free to post comments or questions in the Community Discussion forum

7. Questions (or comments for Professor Jacobson

All students are free to post questions specifically addressed to Professor Jacobson

8. Syllabus and other documents

You will find the syllabus from the syllabus link

You will find the weekly outlines, the bibliography from the Course Links link

ONLINE Precept Students:

1. Circle discussions
 - Each online precept student will be assigned to a Circle
 - Each circle will have 3-4 students. Only the instructor and the students in your circle will have access to the discussion that takes place inside your circle. Each week you will have very specific instructions.
 - To access your circle discussions, click on your Circle in the left-hand navigation in MyLutherNet
 - Remember to also fill out the weekly survey as instructed on the previous page.
2. Participation Expectations
 - Each student is required to post a minimum of three times a week. Students who are taking the course for half credit may skip three of the twelve weeks...but please keep your group members informed of your plans.
3. Normal precept pattern
 - The normal pattern for each week of precept will be as follows.
 - by **Wednesday at 9 am**, each student will submit his or her initial posting. These initial postings will either answer the questions of the week (normally three paragraphs) or submit the short paper for the week.
 - by **Friday at 6 pm**, each student will respond to two other folks in his/her circle with an observation, an argument, a question, a suggestion or some such form of interaction. Normally these are one paragraph for each response.
 - by **Monday at 6 pm**, each student will add at least one final comment
 - i. that includes at least one insight from the week's conversation and at least one question that remains.
4. Notice precepts #2 and #3 ...
 - you will be working for two weeks on one proverb.
 - Notice as well that this is the one time when using Hebrew might be helpful. I am afraid that either you are doomed to transliteration or you can hand something to the others in your circle during class.
 - For these two precepts, I will add some follow-up questions for the second week so that you can begin a second round of discussions about your individual proverbs.

The questions for each precept are as follows:

Sept. 8-14 Precept #1 Considering Wisdom

1. Introduce yourself to the other online precept folks.
2. Name at least three people, living or dead, famous or not, who you would consider "wise." You might know them personally or know of them.
3. What constitutes their wisdom? That is, what makes them wise? What are they wise about? How does their wisdom work?
4. Who are the "professional" wise folk in our society/time?
5. For your final contribution by Monday, try working inductively from all the folks your circle has listed to come up with some modern categories of wisdom. List at least three "types" of wise people.

Sept. 15-28 Precepts #2 and #3 Proverbial Sharing

Pick out **one** proverb from your reading of Proverbs 10-31 that you find particularly meaningful and/or interesting. Post the verse number and at least one translation of your chosen proverb in the Full Course Discussion by Monday, September 15. Use whatever Hebrew you have to study the proverb. Compare at least three translations and read about your proverb in some of the newer commentaries or other

books. Consider the proverb's meaning for you personally, for today's society, for the church, etc. Write an initial one-to-two page paper on your proverb. As your conversation with each other proceeds, some of the questions you might want to consider are as follows:

- What drew you to this proverb?
- Is this proverb prescriptive or descriptive? Is it true?
- How does the poetry work? Note the Hebrew if you are able.
- What imagery is used and what is its effect?
- Is there a class ethic implicit in the proverb?
- Do you hear someone else's proverb very differently that they do?
- What happens to your interpretation when you switch the imagined context (parish, family, Africa, etc.)
- What from your own experience influences how you hear the proverb?

Sept. 29-Oct.5 Precept #4 Considering Proverbs 1-9

Throughout the first nine chapters of Proverbs, we are encountered with the figure of Woman Wisdom. Discuss your understanding of Woman Wisdom's relationship to God, to the world, and to humanity. What images of this figure do you find most intriguing and why? How do you account for the presence of this figure in the text of Proverbs? Are you surprised, angry, intrigued, heartened, and/or repelled by her presence in the text?

Oct. 6-12 Precept #5 Job: The Friends

Think first about how the friends see Job. Note my suggestion in this week's outline to check out Prov.14:24,26; 18:6; 19:3; 26:4.

Now take on the persona of one of Job's four friends. To prepare to argue as that friend become familiar with one of the following sets of chapters: Eliphaz (4-5; 15; 22); Bildad (8; 18; 25); Zophar (11; 20); or Elihu (32-37). Make certain each of the friends is covered by at least one of you.. As that friend, outline your basic argument to Job. As the week progresses, think about how you react to these arguments. Do you agree or disagree? Respond to one another from both Job's perspective and your own.

Oct. 13-19 Precept #6A Job: Reading Texts with One Another

Choose one or two passages from Job that you find particularly intriguing, disturbing, comforting or challenging. Discuss these passages with one another. Make certain you put the texts in context and use them as a lens to get at some of the larger questions in the book of Job.

Oct.20-26 Precept #6B

Post a review of one article about Job and then respond through questions and observations about the text to the posted reviews of others in your precept.

Oct. 27-Nov. 2 Precept #7 Sharing your answers to questions about Job

Answer and then post your answers to 2 of the following 4 questions. Then proceed with your normal weekly interaction.

1. In the Prologue of Job we are introduced to three major characters: Job, God, and the Satan. Choose a characteristic or trait of each of the three and speak about how that trait or speech raises questions that are addressed throughout the book. Do you think the issues raised are resolved or adequately addressed?
2. Discuss some aspect of God's response in Job 38-41 specifically in terms of this response's answering or resolving any of the poem's formal or theological movements.

3. Picture yourself in a grocery store parking lot collecting charity for a new half-way house being sponsored by your home congregation. A distraught woman first drops some money into your collection can and then turns and says, "So you clearly are a religious leader. What is God up to any way? He is supposed to be a loving father. How can he let his children suffer? Why doesn't God do something?" What might you respond and how would your response be informed by your study of the book of Job?
4. How does the book of Job speak to us about the worldwide AIDS epidemic?

Nov. 3-9 Precept #8 Qoheleth: Teaching Chapter 9

We will engage a four part Bible study of Qoheleth, chapter 9, based on the four methods described in chapter 3 of Opening the Book of Faith. Each student, using one method, will help lead our study using one of the methods, asking questions of the others in the precept. Each student must respond to the questions of each of the methods and then keep the discussion going in his or her own method. Then post a final reflection of how the methods did or did not work for exploration of this biblical passage.

Nov. 10-16 Precept #9 Sirach: On History and Women

This week's assignment is divided into two parts. First, consider how you would talk about the history of the Old Testament. Which biblical characters would you include? What would be your organizing principle?

Next, read the final chapters of Sirach (Chapter 44ff.). Ask this question: What is the view and organizing principle of history found here and how does it differ from my own?

Second, think about Sirach's View of Women

Warren Trenchard outlines five categories of women as follows:

1. Good wife (26:1?4,13?18; 36:21?26)
2. Mother and Widow (3:1?16; 7:27?28; 23:14; 41:17a; 4:10; 35:14?15)
3. Bad wife (26:6?9; 25:13?26) [7:26; 9:2; 33:19; 47:19, etc.]
4. Adulteress and Prostitute (9:1?9; 23:22?26)
5. Daughter (7:24?25; 22:3?5; 26:10?12; 42:9?14)

Concentrating on the last three, think about how Sirach's view of women compares to views of women that have come before (esp. in Proverbs) and after (particularly in Paul). What questions does this material raise for you?

Nov. 17-23 Precept #10 Reading Texts in Wisdom of Solomon

Looking at the distributed outline on Wisdom of Solomon, comment on changes you see from Proverbs and/or Sirach in Wisdom of Solomon's attitude toward the Soul (pre-existence; immortality; incorruption) or Ethics. Now think about Wisdom of Solomon's picture of Wisdom. Note particularly chapters 8-9 and Wisdom's action in history in 10-11. What is notable in these pictures? How does Wisdom of Solomon prepare us for reading the New Testament?

Dec. 1-7 Precept #11 Sharing insights about Wisdom in the New Testament

Each of you will be responsible for reading and reporting on at least one book of the New Testament wearing a pair of "wisdom glasses" and taking note of what you see.

Look for wisdom influence in one of the following: - Matthew; - Luke; - Paul: I Corinthians, Romans; - Colossians, Ephesians; or - James

(I will do John in class)

Dec. 8-14 Precept #12 Exploring Wisdom in the New Testament

How do you think theologically about the presence of Wisdom in the New Testament? Can you speak of a wisdom Christology? What are the strengths and weaknesses of such thinking? Where is the Spirit in this picture? Where is the Trinity? Does the presence of wisdom in the New Testament have an effect on ethics? Does the presence of wisdom in the New Testament have an effect on your view of the historical Jesus? What contemporary church issues does such thinking raise? How does one hold the canon together? Choose one or two of these questions and go at it. Or add some questions of your own. If any of you wish to do secondary reading, many of the books and articles on the bibliography are very helpful.

Dec. 16 and on

This is your opportunity to post any closing comments you might have or perhaps share with one another some insights gleaned from your final papers.

Notes on Circle's Online Discussion

In posting messages to the online discussion activities, please follow these guidelines:

Post your initial message as early as possible so people will have time to read and respond to your contribution.

1. Keep your messages concise and clearly written.
2. Be respectful of other's ideas, opinions, and beliefs. It's fine to disagree with someone, but please respect their right to think differently.
3. A message that demonstrates substance contributes to the understanding and application of ideas by doing one or more of the following:
 - a. **Reflection about meaning:** Describe thoughtfully what something means or what new insights it provides, or raise a question as a seed for clarification or further discussion.
 - b. **Analysis:** Discuss relevant themes, concepts, main ideas, components, or relationships among ideas. Or, identify hidden assumptions or fallacies in reasoning.
 - c. **Elaboration:** Build on ideas of others or ideas found in the readings by adding details, examples, a different viewpoint, or other relevant information.
 - d. **Application:** Provide examples of how principles or concepts can be applied to actual situations, or discuss the implications of theory for practice.
 - e. **Synthesis:** Integrate multiple views to provide a summary, a new perspective, or a creative refashioning of ideas.
 - f. **Evaluation:** Assess the accuracy, reasonableness, or quality of ideas.
4. Make use of the questions implied on the Narrative Tips handout
5. Avoid using all caps. IT SEEMS LIKE SHOUTING!
6. Maintain the privacy of participants, including privacy of comments made during electronic conversation that is to be shared only with those participating in the course.
7. Abide by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act rules that find academic information to be confidential and forbid disclosure of academic information without the participant's consent.
8. Use emoticons (smileys) if you wish to convey emotion, especially if you want people to know that you are using humor or joking:
 - :-) happy, humorous
 - :-(unhappy
 - :-O shocked
 - ;-) winking
 - :-} wry, ironic