

**York University - Department of Humanities**

**AP/HUMA 1870 6.0**

**THE HEBREW BIBLE/OLD TESTAMENT AND THE ARTS**

**2016-2017**

**Wednesdays 2:30-4:30 PM**

**CLH-H**

**Prof. Ehrlich**

**758 Kaneff Tower, x-20191**

**[ehrich@yorku.ca](mailto:ehrich@yorku.ca)**

**Office Hour: TBA (or by appointment)**

**T.A.: Carrie Bettel, M.A.**

**[cbettel@yorku.ca](mailto:cbettel@yorku.ca)**

**Office Hour: Mondays @ 11:30 in 029A Vanier College**

**Course Secretary: Rita Parente**

**210 Vanier College, x-77389**

**Tutorial Leaders:**

**Professor Ehrlich – Tutorial 1**

**Ms. Bettel – Tutorials 2 and 3**

This course looks at selected passages from the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and their interpretative reflection in the western artistic tradition, including pictorial/representational art, music, literature, and cinema.

The Hebrew Bible/Old Testament is one of the most influential works of western literature. Over the course of the centuries it has been the subject of myriad interpretations. In addition to traditional sectarian and scholarly readings, the text has served as the inspiration for countless artistic creations, ranging from novels, plays, short stories, paintings, and sculptures, to operas, oratorios, movies, and television shows (including *The Simpsons!*). Each one of these representations and retellings of these time-worn tales is also an interpretation, reflecting the specific perspective of the author/creator. In this course, we will read selected biblical stories and compare them to selected examples of their re-imagined and reinterpreted versions. The aims of the course are to teach first-year students (1) how to read texts in their broadest sense, (2) how to interpret texts, (3) how to compare differing versions of the same tale/tradition, (4) how to identify and comprehend the ideology and/or theology underlying a text, (5) how to read different types of texts, and (6) how to appreciate various types of artistic creations whose study and enjoyment may be new to them. In addition, the wide range of artistic creations examined in this course serves to introduce students to the temporal and genre-based wealth of the western cultural tradition.

## Assignments and Grading

Classroom participation	10%	based on attendance <i>and participation</i> in tutorial sections
Essay proposal (300 words)	10%	Due November 9, 2016
First Term Exam	20%	During Exam Period
Essay outline	10%	Due February 8, 2017
Final Essay (3000 words)	30%	Due March 29, 2017
Final Exam	20%	During Exam Period

### Two additional tasks:

1. A one-page mini-essay on a topic to be announced in lecture on September 21, 2016 and to be handed in to your tutorial leader at the lecture on September 28, 2016. This is a diagnostic exercise to allow your instructor to evaluate your writing skills and identify any potential problems that may arise. While this is not a graded assignment, you will lose 5 (five) points from your final grade for non-completion. Late submission is not allowed.
2. Submission of proof of completion of the Academic Integrity Tutorial to be found at [http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic\\_integrity/index.html](http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/index.html). This proof must be handed in to your tutorial leader by October 5, 2016. While this is not a graded assignment, you will lose 5 (five) points from your final grade for non-completion. Late submission is not allowed.

## Required Texts

- Diamant, Anita, *The Red Tent* (New York: Picador, 1997).
- Grossman, David, *Lion's Honey: The Myth of Samson* (Translated from the Hebrew by Stuart Schoffman; Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2006).
- Heym, Stefan, *The King David Report* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1997).
- Hurston, Zora Neale, *Moses, Man of the Mountain* (New York et al.: Harper Perennial, 1939, 1991, 2009).
- Kohn, Rebecca, *The Gilded Chamber: A Novel of Queen Esther* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2005).
- Maine, David, *The Book of Samson* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2006).
- Roth, Joseph, *Job: The Story of a Simple Man* (Translated from the German by Ross Benjamin; Brooklyn, N.Y.: Archipelago Books, 2010).
- *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures* (Philadelphia / Jerusalem: Jewish Publication Society, 1985).

## **Tutorials**

Tutorial 1 (Wednesday 4:30) – Prof. Ehrlich  
DB (TEL) 0006

Tutorial 2 (Monday 9:30) – Ms. Bettel  
DB (TEL) 0009

Tutorial 3 (Monday 10:30) – Ms. Bettel  
BC 322

## **Note on Academic (Dis-)honesty**

Faculty of Arts regulations on Academic Dishonesty are set out in the York University Undergraduate Calendar and are attached to this syllabus. Please read these regulations carefully. Also note that once the described process is initiated, “a student accused of academic dishonesty may not drop or be deregistered from the course in question until a final decision is reached.”

## **TurnItIn.com**

In order to counter cases of academic dishonesty, this course subscribes to TurnItIn.com, an internet-based service that helps instructors detect and evaluate possible cases of plagiarism by comparing student submissions to on-line texts and TurnItIn.com’s own extensive database, covering books, journals, and paper-selling services. All students in this course will be *required* to submit their *final papers* both in hard copy to their instructor and in electronic form to TurnItIn.com. In order to do this, each student will have to open a personal TurnItIn.com personal profile and account. Instructions on how to do this can be found at [https://guides.turnitin.com/01\\_Manuals\\_and\\_Guides/Student/01\\_Student\\_QuickStart\\_Guide](https://guides.turnitin.com/01_Manuals_and_Guides/Student/01_Student_QuickStart_Guide), where you may also view a tutorial on TurnItIn.com. Basically this service is relatively simple to use.

Please note that no one other than your instructor will be able to access your work.

### **Illness and Missed Work**

You are expected to attend all classes and are responsible for all information conveyed in class and in the readings. Should you have to miss a class or even an exam on account of illness or a pressing personal matter, please be sure to contact your instructor and submit a detailed doctor's note or a valid equivalent.

### **Late Work**

You are responsible for handing in all of your assignments on time. Late work will not be accepted unless you have made a prior arrangement with your instructor (and have a very good excuse). Please be aware that good time management is an essential critical skill that will be of inestimable value in completing your university education in a successful manner.

### **Course Withdrawal Date**

February 10, 2017, is the last date to drop the course without receiving a final grade. And in case you do decide to drop the course, please let your tutorial leader know. S/he promises not to bite your head off 😊!

### Tentative Class Schedule: Fall Term

Week Number (& Dates)	Lecture Subjects	Tutorial Assignments/Readings
1 (September 14)	Introduction	n/a
2 (September 21)	The Hebrew Bible and Genesis ( <i>mini-essay topic announced</i> )	Book of Genesis
3 (September 28)	Genesis in Art ( <i>mini-essay due</i> )	Diamant, <i>The Red Tent</i> , pp. 1-71
*4 (October 5)	Musical Genesis/Genesis at the Movies ( <i>proof of completion of Academic Integrity Tutorial due</i> )	Diamant, <i>The Red Tent</i> , pp. 75-210
*5 (October 12) – Yom Kippur	NO LECTURE!!!	Diamant, <i>The Red Tent</i> , pp. 213-321
*6 (October 19)	Moses & the Exodus in Art ( <i>essay topics &amp; instructions distributed</i> )	Exodus 1-24; 32-34; Numbers 11-20; Deuteronomy 34
*7 (October 26)	Musical Moses	Hurston, <i>Moses</i> , pp. 1-84
8 (November 2)	Moses in Hollywood	Hurston, <i>Moses</i> , pp. 85-195
9 (November 9)	The Ten Commandments in Film ( <i>essay proposal due</i> )	Hurston, <i>Moses</i> , pp. 196-288
10 (November 16)	Seriously Job	Book of Job
11 (November 23)	Job: Book and Art	Roth, <i>Job</i> , pp. 9-114
12 (November 30)	Job and Faust	Roth, <i>Job</i> , pp. 117-204

**\*-Please note that owing to the Jewish holidays, there will be no lecture or tutorial (#1) on Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup> (Yom Kippur), nor will there be any tutorials (#2 and #3) on the following Mondays in October: 3<sup>rd</sup> (Rosh Hashanah), 17<sup>th</sup> (Sukkot), and 24<sup>th</sup> (Shmini Atzeret), Students are still responsible for reading the assigned texts. However, those who wish may attend other tutorials during these weeks, as space permits.**

### Tentative Class Schedule: Winter Term

Week Number (& Dates)	Lecture Subjects	Tutorial Assignments/Readings
13 (January 11)	Samson & Delilah in Bible and Art	Judges 13-16
14 (January 18)	Samson & Delilah in Opera and Oratorio	Grossman, <i>Lion's Honey</i>
15 (January 25)	Samson & Delilah at the Movies Part I	Maine, <i>Samson</i> , pp. 1-117
16 (February 1)	Samson & Delilah at the Movies Part II	Maine, <i>Samson</i> , pp. 118-229
17 (February 8)	King David in Bible and Art ( <i>essay outline due</i> )	1 Samuel 16-2 Kings 2
18 (February 15)	The "Sweet Singer of Israel" in Song	Heym, <i>King David Report</i> , pp. 5-88
(February 22)	READING WEEK	NO CLASSES
19 (March 1)	David in Hollywood Part I	Heym, <i>King David Report</i> , pp. 89-177
20 (March 8)	David in Hollywood Part II	Heym, <i>King David Report</i> , pp. 178-254
21 (March 15)	Esther in Text and Song	Book of Esther
22 (March 22)	Esther in Art	Kohn, <i>Gilded Chamber</i> , pp. 1-115
23 (March 29)	Esther at the Movies Part I ( <i>final essay due</i> )	Kohn, <i>Gilded Chamber</i> , pp. 117-233
24 (April 5)	Esther at the Movies Part II	Kohn, <i>Gilded Chamber</i> , pp. 235-353