

BI 400/500 – Introduction to Biblical Hebrew

University of Dubuque Theological Seminary

Fall 2023 – Distance

INSTRUCTOR

Professor: The Rev. Dr. Matthew R. Schlimm

Preferred Title: Dr. Matt

Office: Van Vliet 316. This building does not have an elevator. If you would like to meet elsewhere, just email the professor.

Office Hours: By appointment (phone, Zoom, or Teams). Additionally, questions can be asked during our Monday optional homework review times from 1-2 pm CST.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a basic introduction to the syntax, grammar, and vocabulary of biblical Hebrew. As such, it introduces the linguistic tools that allow students to enter the world of the Old Testament in the original language and hence become better equipped to interpret and proclaim God's Word.

3 credits, letter grade or pass/fail

This is an elective course that is required by certain denominations (please check with your governing body) but it is highly recommended for all students of Scripture.

OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Remember basic biblical Hebrew vocabulary (i.e., be able to define Hebrew words).
2. Develop an understanding of many fundamentals of biblical Hebrew grammar.
3. Gain the capacity to hear and recognize individual Hebrew words read aloud.
4. Translate appropriate Hebrew phrases and short sentences.

In keeping with the stated purpose of the M.Div. degree ("to serve the one God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and prepare women and men for faithful, compassionate, and effective pastoral ministry"), this course meets the following M.Div. curricular objectives:

- Interpret the Christian Scriptures through faithful exegesis and in light of the Christian tradition.
- Preach the Word of God with faithfulness and clarity.

Additionally, this course helps meet the following MAMD curricular objective:

- Articulate and reflect critically and constructively on the biblical and theological foundations of God's mission to the world.

TEXTBOOKS

The following are required for this class:

Futato, Mark D. *Beginning Biblical Hebrew*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005. ISBN: 978-1575060224.
Pratico, Gary D., and Miles V. Van Pelt. *Zondervan Get an A! Study Guides: Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005. ISBN: 978-0310262954.
Schlimm, Matthew R. *70 Hebrew Words Every Christian Should Know*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2018. ISBN: 978-1426799969.

The following textbook is optional for this class. Dr. Matt is considering switching to it in future years, and he appreciates any feedback students want to give. It is especially useful for students who want another introductory grammar to supplement Futato.

Baker, David L. *Getting To Grips With Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Textbook*. Rev. ed. Carlisle, UK: Langham Global Library, 2022. ISBN: 978-1839736735.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The final grade for the course is based on quizzes (40%), a midterm exam (15%), a final exam (15%), and homework/participation (30%).

Key Assumption: This course assumes that students will watch all lectures. Moodle tracks whether they do so. Failure to watch all lectures can result in a significant reduction in grade (a letter grade or more).

Quizzes (40%): Students will usually take one quiz per week. The quizzes will usually include a combination of vocabulary and translation. They will tend to focus on the material most recently studied, though knowledge of material from any of the previous lessons may be tested. Unless otherwise specified, all quizzes should be taken closed-book in one sitting. See esp. course objectives 1, 2, & 3.

Midterm (15%): This exam will provide a comprehensive evaluation of all material previously covered. See esp. course objectives 1, 2, 4, & 5.

Final (15%): This exam will provide a comprehensive evaluation of all material previously covered. See esp. course objectives 1, 2, 4, & 5.

Homework/Participation (30%): Students will be required to do homework on a weekly basis. See esp. course objectives 1, 3, 4, 5, & 6.

- Students have an option for their homework and participation grade. They can join a virtual classroom via Zoom that meets for about an hour a week. The tentative time is Mondays at 1 pm CST. If students choose this option, they should do all homework ahead of time and be ready to discuss it, giving not only their answers but also the rationale behind their answers. Alternately, they can turn in a color scan or photo of their homework. If they choose the second option, they should grade their own work using the answer key in the back of Futato's book. The grading needs to be done in a different color pen than the work. See esp. course objectives 1, 3, 4, 5, & 6.

GRADING:

Your final grade will be determined by weighing the above components as follows:

Component	Percent of Final Grade
Quizzes	40%

Midterm	15%
Final	15%
Homework/Participation	30%

The grading scale is as follows:

93 – 100% A
90 – 92% A-
87 – 89% B+
83 – 86% B
80 – 82% B-
77 – 79% C+
73 – 76% C
70 – 72% C-
67 – 69% D+
63 – 66% D
0 – 62%