

**RELG 305 - Biblical History/Archaeology Course Syllabus**  
**Prof. Sarah Yeomans**

**Course Information:**

RELG 305, Fall 2012  
E-Campus online course  
August 20 – December 14, 2012

**Instructor Information:**

**Email:** Sarah.Yeomans@mail.wvu.edu

**Required Textbooks:**

**1.) Coogan, Michael D., ed. The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha, New Revised Standard Version, Fully Revised Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.**

**2.) Assigned readings as posted on e-Campus “List of Tasks.” These are located in eReserves.**

**Course Description:**

Course will explore the Biblical world and history within the context of archaeological science, and how the evolving scientific methods and approaches of archaeology have impacted the study of the Bible. In the process of this archaeological and historical examination, the course will introduce the history and methodologies of field archaeology and examine how the evolving science of archaeological fieldwork has come to influence our understanding of the Biblical world. The course is divided into 5 distinct units:

1. Introduction to Biblical History and Archaeology
2. The Pre-Israelite World
3. The Kingdom of Israel
4. The Post-Exilic World (Babylon/Persia/Greece)
5. The Roman/New Testament Era

### **Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Situate Biblical writings into their respective historical periods via textual, historical and archaeological analysis.
2. Explain the various methodologies involved in a professional archaeological dig

### **Course Policies/Requirements:**

1. Course Modules – The course consists of 5 units, which are divided into 15 weekly modules. Each module is a self-contained unit with readings, lecture material and may contain additional material such as images and video. All 15 modules must be completed in order to receive credit for the course.

2. Assignments-Students are expected to complete each module in a timely manner. This includes Biblical reading assignments, any assigned scholarly readings, discussion participation and unit exams. There are no make-up exams under ordinary circumstances. If extraordinary circumstances allow for a make-up exam, its format may differ from the original.

3. Honesty-Dishonesty and/or plagiarism are serious offenses. Clear cases will result in appropriate academic discipline and an unforgivable “F” may be given for the entire course. I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing actions, please see the students conduct code at <http://arc.wvu.edu/rightsa.html>. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me *before* the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

4. Conduct Policy- Discussion and online interaction is a valuable and useful learning tool that should enrich each student’s online class experience. Any disagreements in the discussion forum are expected to be conducted in a polite and constructive manner. Any student who conducts him- or herself in a disrespectful manner toward fellow students or the instructor will be will be penalized and could be expelled from the course.

### **Assignments:**

Students will be responsible for the following assignments:

1. Unit Examinations-There will be 4 exams on units 1, 2, 3, and 4. Each examination will be worth 60 points and will constitute 15% (all four exams will comprise 60% of your total grade) and will contain questions pertaining to the class material for the particular unit. Examinations will consist of multiple-choice, true/false and short answer questions.
2. Class participation- Engagement and participation in online class discussions will be worth 60 points (15% of the total grade).
3. Final exam-The final exam in this class will be worth a total of 100 points and will constitute 25% of your total grade. Approximately 2/3 of the exam will

be concerned with material from Unit 5, while the remaining 1/3 will cover material previously covered in Units 1-4.

\*\*\*Please check your eCampus e-mail regularly as that is how I will communicate with the class.

When you take your exams, you will be required to activate software called Respondus Lockdown Browser. This prevents any other internet browser windows from opening while you are taking the exam. If you don't know what this is or have trouble downloading it, please contact OIT at 1.304.293.4444. I recommend that you have it downloaded and installed before you take your exam – you don't want to waste valuable exam time.

The exams are structured in such a way that you are required to memorize and/or have very organized notes on the material. You may take notes and use them during the exam, but if you are not prepared beforehand you will not have enough time to complete the exam.

**Grades/Grading:**

Grades will be calculated based upon one's percentage of total points (out of 400):

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89.9%

C = 70-79.9%

D = 60-69.9%

F = below 60%

There is no grade curve.

**Videos:**

Please note that many of the course modules contain videos. For some of these, Apple QuickTime is required to view them. If you do not already have QuickTime installed on your computer, you may download it for free at <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download>

**Course Schedule:**

**UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY**

<b>Module</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	- Introduction to the 9 <sup>th</sup> Century Landscape of the Biblical world - Is the Bible a History Book? - What is "Biblical archaeology?" <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, August 24</i>
2	- Methods of Biblical inquiry - The History and Evolution of Biblical archaeology - Minimalists vs. Maximalists <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, August 31</i>
3	- Archaeological Terms and Tools

	- Setting Up and Conducting an Archaeological Excavation <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, September 7</i>
<b>UNIT 1 EXAM – FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7</b>	

**UNIT 2: THE PRE-ISRAELITE WORLD**

4	- Israel before the Bible: Introduction to the Major Players of the Pre-Israelite World <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, September 14</i>
5	- Borrowing from the Neighbors: Creation Myths and Syncretism <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, September 21</i>
6	- The Patriarchs - Moses and the Exodus <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, September 28</i>
<b>UNIT 2 EXAM – FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28</b>	

**UNIT 3: THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL**

7	- The United Monarchy <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, October 5</i>
8	- The Divided Monarchy <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, October 12</i>
9	- Period of Exile <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, October 19</i>
<b>UNIT 3 EXAM – FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19</b>	

**UNIT 4: THE POST-EXILIC WORLD**

10	- Return to Zion - Rebuilding Jerusalem and the Holy Temple <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, October 26th</i>
11	- New Cultures, New Religions: Judaism and the Grecian World <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, November 2</i>
12	- Judea after Alexander the Great - The Maccabean Revolt - The Herodians <i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, November 9</i>
<b>UNIT 4 EXAM – FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9</b>	

**UNIT 5: THE ROMAN/NEW TESTAMENT ERA**

13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Romans</li> <li>- First and Second Jewish Revolt</li> <li>- Judaism in the First Century</li> <li>- Life of Jesus in Judea</li> <li>- Jesus seen through the Gospel of Matthew (vs. Mark)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, November 16</i></p>
<p><b>THANKSGIVING BREAK NOVEMBER 19-23</b></p>	
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finding Jesus through Archaeology</li> <li>- The James Ossuary</li> <li>- Spreading the Gospels</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, November 30</i></p>
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Book of Revelation</li> <li>- The Archaeology of Revelation: The Seven Churches</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Discussion Question due by 11:59pm on Friday, December 7</i></p>
<p><b>FINAL EXAM – WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12</b></p>	

**Statement of Non-Discrimination**

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veterans’ status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Disability Services (293-6700).