BS 6005 Texts and Methods  
Dr. Barbara Green, O.P., instructor (DSPT)  
Fall 2014; 3 units  
Tuesdays 2:10-5 DSPT 2

Central Course Questions: How can we explore, fully and responsibly, faithfully and fruitfully, the narrative of David in 1 Samuel 16 through 1 Kings 2? What are the methodological opportunities and constraints enabling and supporting such work? Why do it? What gain? For whom?

Course Outcomes: We (I orchestrate and you show competence) will progress on this central question-set by accomplishing and demonstrating tangibly the following things in class discussions and in written assignments:

- Competence with reading the Hebrew text of 1 Samuel 16-2 Samuel-1 Kings 2;
- Familiarity with and use of current and classical materials as needed;
- Familiarity with basic issues comprising the scholarly historical study of the material;
- Use of a general and adequate interpretation-of-texts/hermeneutical theory;
- Sufficient knowledge of contemporary literary-critical methods that they can be named, employed, shown productive;
- Ability to situate smaller-scale work within the whole corpus under consideration;
- Capacity and willingness to learn from and assist learning of other members of the class;
- Effective presentations of research to the class (on four occasions).

Course Requirements: Please expect to be responsible for accomplishing the following things:

- Regular, prepared, effective, tangible participation in all course sessions;
- Effective collaboration with others on problems and presentations;
- Effective planning teaching, and critique of the seminar:
  - present, with others, a problem (in classes 3-6) (see seminar leadership below);
  - present an artistic afterlife (in class 7);
  - present a text (in classes 8-12);
  - present your/another’s term paper (in classes 13-15);
- Include the productive use of Hebrew in these sessions;
- Read enough historical, hermeneutical and literary methodology so that you can make comfortable and productive use of it in your work, customized to your interests;
- Take responsibility for finding and making use of the resources you need;
- Do a couple of short writing assignments to “limber up” (in classes 1-2);
- Produce a term paper that meets the hallmarks described (below);
Required Materials:
Some of these you need to count on having steady access to (*=library reserve; # = exegesis shelf; or buy them, share them):

• Masoretic text and all tools needed for reading it;


• A basic, fresh literary commentary: (Berit Olam series recommended):
  #David Jobling, 1 Samuel (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998);
  ISBN 9780814650479;
  #Craig E. Morrison, 2 Samuel (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013);
  ISBN970814650431;


  ISBN 9780802864109;


• Some of the standard literary-critical material that emerged in the 1980s or so, a sort of first wave of general work, often using David narratives as a sample: these are useful but not sufficient; draw on them, go farther;

Anticipate reliable access to other things that you may not choose to buy:
• General and literary standard works on the David narrative/on literary theory and this narrative by the following scholars (easily accessible, so I am not listing all their details nor putting them on reserve; see Andersson, pp. 4-5 for a list).

Recall that the GTU library’s exegesis shelf and electronic resources offer vast resources.

Grading: Your grade will be achieved as follows (you need a B+ to pass this requirement):
• General attendance and participation: 1/9;
• Problem-solving leadership/teamwork: 1/9;
• Presentation of artistic interpretation: 1/9;
• Seminar leadership: 1/9;
• Andersson 1/9;
• Miscellaneous short writing assignments: 1/9;
• Term paper/project: 3/9.
Relevant Policies: Be advised of several:

• Students are expected to attend every class, prepared and participating helpfully for the whole group; if you need to miss a session, please inform the instructor by e-mail either before or shortly thereafter; no notification will be construed as an un-excused absence. When you miss a session, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and get any handouts that were available; you might have a “buddy” that will do automatically this for you/you for him or her.

• All written work must be presented in conformity with Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Research papers, Theses, and Dissertations (Chicago: U Chicago Press, 2007); the current edition is the 8th, but if you began before 2014, use the 7th.

• Assignments need to be completed and turned in on time and will be graded down if they are late; assume there is no revision option. Exceptions to deadlines are sometimes possible but rare and gained ahead of time (by mature citizens). Ask ahead if you are uncertain. Anticipate that I can be helpful to you, but likely not at the last minute.

• Be sure you know, understand, and follow the policies on academic honesty that are pertinent to GTU, DSPT and your own school.

• The GTU and DSPT policies relating to disability pertain and are available on websites.

Course Communication:

• We will learn each others’ names and use them in our discussions.

• To make an appointment with the instructor, please e-mail: bgreen@dspt.edu or telephone (510 883-2076). Brief matters can be handled after class. There are no standard office hours but your requests for consultation time will be addressed promptly. In general, I am available Mondays through Thursdays but not Fridays. My office is at DSPT, room 208.

• Assume that you will work collaboratively with the instructor (timely consultation appointments are encouraged), with other students, with a partner or two on assignments (if you wish); a list of your names and e-mail addresses will be available once you have released that information for us to share.
Course Schedule: (information here will be supplemented as specific plans solidify):

**part one:** introductions and to course and three general sets of methodology: *historical, literary, hermeneutical*: the role of questions in organizing fields of discourse

**session # 1 September 2:** introduction to course; consideration of historical material;  
*in preparation:*

**read:** syllabus; Green, “The David Story and History”; Davies, *Memories*

**focus question:** what do we/you need to know about “history” to proceed?

**anticipate:** class discussion, possibly with dyads

**prepare to turn in at the end of the first class session:** a 2-pg statement (1 page for each reading) of your critical response to the material provided for your consideration; *use this format:* what is the question? what the main point? where do you agree and where disagree, and why? what questions do you come prepared to present? Leave a space to fill in at the end of the class, what was your most important insight from the discussion? You can’t be complete, of course, so be strategic in how you respond.

**session # 2 September 9:** general interpretation theory; contemporary literary theory;  
*in preparation:*

**read:** essay: Green, “
  
  Birns, *Theory*, preface, chs. 1, 2 and 7
  Thiselton, *Hermeneutics*, chs. 1, 2, 11, 12, 16, 17

**focus question:** what are interpretive frameworks and how do they work?

**anticipate:** we will work together, seminar style, on the questions on the syllabus supplement

**prepare to turn in at the end of the class session:** for the questions you select to work on (on your syllabus supplement), prepare a 2-pg statement of your preparation to engage the question in class (1 pg for Thiselton, 1 for Birns); Leave a space to fill in at the end of the class, what was your most important insight from the discussion?

After this part one with its two short written assignments, our shared hope must be that you understand the high standards of careful preparation, participation, and writing for this course.
part two: presenting some problematic issues: the point in this section of the course is to train our eyes to see multiple possibilities and weigh them in various ways, not necessarily to resolve them but to see how they may work productively;

session # 3 September 16: 1 Samuel 16-20: Whose Son: Meeting the Narrator; the problem to explore is discerning and classifying the choices of our narrator about how to provide the information we are given; ponder the issue of where “the David material” begins, or re-frame that point if you can do so; Andersson ch. 1

session # 4 September 23: 1 Samuel 21-26: How David Learns his Role: How the Narrator Appears to Have “Chunked” the Material; the problem to explore is how to make suitable and helpful observations about the arrangement of material in this section of the narrative, attentive to all the cues available; Andersson ch. 2

session # 5 September 30: 1 Samuel 27-2 Samuel 1: David and the Death of Saul: Genres—The More, the Better; the problem to explore is how to identify the major and minor genres and consider ways in which they seem to function here; Andersson ch. 3

session # 6 October 7: 2 Samuel 2-9: Consolidation or Overreach: Narrative Choices about “Chunks” and Genres; and Considerations about “Nested” Readers; the problem to explore is how to make simultaneous use of the three sorts of problems we have examined and explored in the past three weeks; Andersson ch. 4

part three: afterlives and reception: The point of this section of the course is to find and select one non-verbal interpretation of the David stories and present it briefly so that we become aware of narrative media: what operates in a verbal text and what operates in a non-verbal text

session # 7 October 14: artistic afterlives of the David story: Reading and Interpretation

part four: the heart of the narrative: The challenge here is to come to some provisionally best decisions about the material with which we are dealing, making use of the tools we have worked with so far and employing some others; but now be less open and tentative, more decisive.

session # 8 October 28: 2 Samuel 10-14: Overreach and Infidelities: Plotting; The challenge here is to offer two possible and even plausible detailed plots of this material.

session # 9 November 4: 2 Samuel 15-20: Consequences: Characterization; The challenge here is to offer detailed characterizations of the key players, noting how, verbally, some points can be suggested while others are left open for negotiation (avoid how characters talk).

session # 10 November 11: 2 Samuel 15-20 (cont.): Consequences: Character Discourse; The challenge here is to continue (by agreeing or disagreeing) our discussion of how characters are
presented but by focusing now exclusively upon character discourse.

session # 11 November 18: 2 Samuel 21-24: More to Accomplish: Varieties of Intertextuality; The challenge here is to find and name intertexts (biblical or wider) and talk about the gain from noting them as well as classify how direct they are (running from direct citation to possible allusion).

session # 12 November 25: 1 Kings 1-3: Which Son: Narrator Choice of Beginnings and Endings; The challenge here is to converge the tools we have used to date and offer proposals about the way in which the narrative we have examined begins and ends or does not but is, in any case, embedded in another narrative.

**part five: presentations and reflections on them**; we will talk specifically about how to do this, with options being to present you own work or that of another (who presents yours);

session # 13 December 2: presentations of term papers

session # 14 December 9: presentations of term papers

**Supplementary Information**

**syllabus supplement: what it is and how to use it**

The *syllabus supplement* allows for specification of the general course syllabus, which needs to be finished (or close) much sooner than the classes actually develop. This small genre also allows for seminar leaders to communicate their plans, again, as they develop while we are in the semester. The form will be standard, so copy these first couple as you prepare for your own time of leading the seminar: we should know the desired outcomes, how to prepare, the plan for the class session, an evaluative focus for all participants. It needs to be in our hands ideally at the end of the previous class session and in any case several days before the class it suits.

**seminar leadership/preparation : expectations**

*How to choose your time?* You need to do one of them earlier (during classes # 3-6) and one later (classes # 8-12); choose either: by the date by the topic; for your first presentation of a problem, you must work with at least one other person; for your presentation of an artistic afterlife, you may work alone or with someone; for your text presentation, you will be working on your own.

*What does leadership comprise?* Watch what happens in the first two sessions to pick up some good practices (and see what not to do as well!). One of the things those with seminar leadership
need to do is to advise the rest of about is how to come to a session as prepared as possible to assist the general learning. That means, of course, that you as leader have a pretty focused sense of how you will use the time you have, what you intend to accomplish, how it fits in to our general course outcomes, and how we can do it with you as successfully as possible. (The leaders of a given day should confer with each other, though you can proceed somewhat independently of each other if that’s your choice. But be sure you know what the others have in mind.) Please confer with me at least minimally. To that end, you will prepare a “syllabus supplement” as soon as you can do so when you have a session coming up (not at the last minute, please). It is part of your leadership responsibility to be prepared far enough ahead that you can tell us how to prepare so that the seminar can be maximally helpful; if you are ‘last-minute prone,’ we will not be very well prepared or be able to help you make your seminar successful. Set it up as follows:

* outcomes (what do you hope/plan that we will accomplish?)
* preparation (what shall we do to arrive prepared for what will be asked?)
* process (what, specifically, can we expect?)
* assessment (how, specifically, can we evaluate how it went so as to be helpful to you?
  Single out what you will want a bit of feedback on)

We can be specific about times once some basic decisions are made (e.g., enrollment). There will be a specific format provided for the afterlife the artistic afterlife and the term paper at the end of the semester.

Seminar participation is what we all do if we aren’t leading. The expectation is that you need to speak aloud, responding to the plans of the leader and contributing usefully for the group; in a seminar, not speaking is not acceptable. We need everyone, and everyone needs to talk, often. You will always be given a grade for your participation (when you are not the leader; ask me if you want to know what these assessments are; else I’ll provide them at the end of the course).

 seminar paper

A competent graduate-level research paper for this class includes the following: This list tells you what the instructor values, anticipates, and will hold you to. It is foolish to disregard such a wonderful guide when preparing your paper!

* your paper will take shape around a key passage set and be set up in terms of a developing question;

* your paper will have a thesis that is explicitly name and demonstrated steadily and compellingly throughout the paper, so that by the end, we reading can at least see your point even if we don’t agree;

* it will offer your own situated reasons for your choice of topic, related, presumably to your biblical area and reasons for taking this course—perhaps more;

* it will indicate what your plan is, including both the order of your argumentation and the main methods you will use; these, as you know, come from biblical studies and are available in my
"This Old Text" and other places, notably in the essays with which we began the course; the plan for your paper and the methods are not the same thing, but each is a crucial part of what you want to communicate to your reader;

• it will involve consideration of your "macro-approach" as well as of other tools you will use, and it will demonstrate thoughtful consideration of the work of other scholars; in this course, your macro-approach must include contemporary literary theory and hermeneutics; the paper will in some responsible and appropriate way address other biblical issues, likely the sorts of exegetical matters that are part of a good discussion of your text, including Hebrew language issues;

• as your paper develops, it will integrate your thesis, your interests, your plans, your methods, your dialog with your sources and with your texts, all smoothly (takes time and many revisions);

• it will follow the specifications of Turabian’s A Manual for Writers, 7th (or 8th) edition;

• it will be written in competent, persuasive English and be free of errors; it is advisable to have one really excellent editing of your work by someone who is alert to what is needed for a paper at this level; you will learn new things about your writing!

• it will end with a conclusion and implications;

• if you wish a draft reviewed by the instructor, with helpful suggestions, it must come in, hard copy in decent shape (minimally, Turabianized) by 11/20, 4:30 p.m.; this is an optional step, though often helpful—but impossible to do unless you are fairly far advanced and have a decent draft; this is an incredibly generous offer and will be immeasurably helpful, so try to be ready to take advantage of it;

• it will be generally understandable to all within the context of our class and be able to be presented by another (some key aspect of it).

Assignment due: final editions of your papers are due to the instructor by 12/11, 4:30 p.m. (unless we make some other arrangement); please include a stamped and self-addressed envelope for return of the paper to you (if no envelope arrives, you may look for your paper at the DSPT reception desk, but there is no guarantee that it won’t be lost is some great shuffle if abandoned there); if you need a research readiness review, be sure to include that form at the time the paper is turned in.

First seminar leadership in part two of the course; sign-up: a problem: work with 1 - 2 others:

class # 3: ____________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________

class # 4: ____________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________

class # 5: ____________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________

class # 6: ____________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________

Presentation of the artistic afterlife:
class # 7: order and process tba; everyone will do this step today:

*Second seminar leadership in part four of the course*: presentation of a text:

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*Presentation of term papers*:

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