

# BRIERCREST

## BLST 717 The Former Prophets: Joshua through Kings Spring 2024

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Course Dates: June 3-7, 2024  
Online modular

3 Credit Hours

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. This class focuses on the narrative art of these books as a window to their portrayal of the Lord's covenant relationship with his people, the success or failure of Israel's leaders, and the application of these books to the church.

### COURSE TEXTS

Keith Bodner, *1 Samuel: A Narrative Commentary* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008) [paperback].

Keith Bodner, *The Theology of the Book of Kings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019) paperback.

All other course materials will be provided as handouts or electronically.

We should also bring a copy of the Bible – ideally two different reliable translations – for each lecture.

*Students are expected to refer Briercrest Seminary's Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <http://briercrest.ca/current/seminary/academics/important-documents/>.*

*These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <http://briercrest.ca/bookstore>.*

*Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (<https://briercrest.instructure.com>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.*

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To acquire a broad knowledge of the content and theology of the Former Prophets, and appreciate the unique contribution of this extended narrative to biblical literature as a whole.
2. To understand the range of characters and literary techniques used by Hebrew writers in this portion of the Scriptures, and recognize the theological value in attending to this facet of the biblical text.

3. To perform competent exegesis and interpretation of selected texts with sufficient literary discernment and theological depth.
4. To better appreciate the relationship between scholarly study of the Scriptures and application in ministry contexts, and recognize some of the various ways that the books of Joshua—2 Kings and the complexity of the narrative has been received and interpreted over the centuries.
5. To take preliminary steps toward disseminating the results of our study to various audiences in the academic world and the church.

### OUTLINE OF TOPICS

- Introduction to the subject and goals of our study
- The character of Joshua and his background in the Pentateuch
- Preparation for entrance into Canaan; the battle of Jericho and subsequent setbacks
- An absence of major leaders in the book of Judges
- Background and rise of kingship in emerging Israel; the profiles of Samuel and Saul
- David's rise and eventual establishment in Jerusalem
- Absalom and the bitter civil war in 2 Samuel
- The reign of Solomon and division of the kingdom into north and south
- Prophetic intervention in Omride political affairs, and the rise of Assyria
- Jerusalem's destruction, the passage to exile, and Jehoiachin's release at the end of the story

### ASSIGNMENTS

#### *Pre-Course Assignments:*

1. Write a three-page single-spaced report on one of our course textbooks (*1 Samuel: A Narrative Commentary*) due prior to the start of our course on Monday morning (**June 3, 2024**). The report should summarize the content of the volume, and provide a summary of what the student has learned (**10%**). Please email to the professor ([kbodner@briercrest.ca](mailto:kbodner@briercrest.ca)) as a WORD attachment.

#### *Mid-Course Assignments:*

2. End of course reflections: on Friday (**June 7**) there will be an "end of course reflection," providing an opportunity to respond to six questions from our class discussions (**20%**).

#### *Post-Course Assignments:*

3. Creative Responses: *The Workshop* (**40%**). Over the course of our week together we will work through a series of interactive questions (for example, "To whom is the book of Joshua (and the rest of the Former Prophets) presumably addressed? For what purposes? How does Deuteronomy feature in this equation?"). The student will provide a written response of approximately 300 words to each question, and the entire workshop should be emailed to the professor as a WORD file not later than **August 2, 2024**.

4. Research and Reflection essay: (**30%**). This is a standard 2000-word paper, single-spaced in Chicago format to be emailed to the professor as a WORD file no later than **August 2, 2024**. Since

one of our textbooks is devoted to the theology of 1 & 2 Kings, the topic could include one particular aspect of these books within the context of the Former Prophets. Ideally, the topic should be chosen during the week or in subsequent correspondence between the student and the professor.

## **SEMINARY CALENDAR**

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar:

<https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/academics/calendar/>.

### ***Attendance Policy***

In order to benefit fully from a seminary education, to be good stewards of time and finances, and to be considerate of their classmates and faculty members, students must be in class at every opportunity.

### ***Modular Courses***

Students are expected to attend 100 per cent of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible due to extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made with the course professor before the first day of class. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending class, a maximum of one (1) full day of class can be foregone. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

### ***Online Courses***

If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending scheduled meeting times, then up to 20% of meeting time can be foregone. Students missing scheduled meeting times should make every effort to inform the course professor prior to any time missed. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

### ***Semester-Based Courses***

All students missing more than two full weeks of a particular course from registration to the last day of classes will receive an automatic fail (0%). A student may appeal a course failure due to excessive absences. Successful appeals will be granted only in rare cases where all absences are clearly beyond the student's control. Appeals must be made through the Academic Appeal Process.

### ***Course Schedules***

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

### ***Assignment Submission***

All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the [academic calendar](#).

***Return of Graded Assignments***

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the [Seminary](#). If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

***Academic Honesty***

As members of the Briercrest learning community, students have a responsibility to conduct themselves with integrity and honour. Students who cheat on exams, plagiarize, inappropriately collaborate, or use generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) without instructor authorization in the preparation and/or submission of their assignments violate the trust placed in them by their instructors, fellow students, and the seminary. Any such actions constitute a breach of academic honesty and will result in serious consequences, such as failure of an assignment, failure of a course, or expulsion from the seminary.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or involuntary, is the submission of the work of others, published or unpublished, in whole or in part without acknowledgment or proper documentation. All information, ideas and/or direct quotations taken from other primary or secondary sources must be documented appropriately. Students are responsible to ensure they are using their sources with transparency and honesty. For more details, consult the [Seminary Calendar](#). In addition to being familiar with these pages, instructors assume that you have completed the Briercrest Academic Integrity course on [Canvas](#) and understand the information contained in it.

***Academic Accommodations***

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition (mental or physical) who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should contact the ARC Coordinator in person (L234 in the Library), by phone (1-306-801-6159), or by email ([arc@briercrest.ca](mailto:arc@briercrest.ca)). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.). It is recommended that students meet with their professors to discuss the requirements of their accommodations (i.e., how the student will receive lecture notes, or how the professor wants to receive extension requests).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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