INSTITUTIONAL SYLLABUS

(Check One)

_____ New Course (OR)      Date of Last Review _____

_____ Substantive Change in Existing Course

I. Course Title: The Bible as Literature

II. Course Prefix/Number: ENG 358

III. Credit Hours: 3

IV. Prerequisites: Eng 210 or instructor’s permission.

V. Catalog Description: This course analyzes the Bible as literature, examines the use of biblical motifs, imagery, and themes in post-biblical texts, and explores the First Amendment challenges confronting those who plan to teach Bible-as-literature courses in the public schools.

VI. Curricular Relationships: This course serves as an elective for all emphases within the English major, as well as for the English minor. It is particularly germane to the Liberal Arts Emphasis and the Secondary Education Emphasis. The course also enhances students’ critical reading, writing, and thinking skills and deepens their understanding and appreciation of a variety of literary works. This course may also be used in partial fulfillment for requirements in the religious studies minor.

VII. Student Learning Outcomes: Upon successfully completing this course, students will—

A. Identify key themes and literary strategies of a variety of biblical texts and be able to relate those texts to their historical, theological, and philosophical contexts.

B. Recognize biblical themes, motifs, and images in a variety of post-biblical texts.

C. Define key terms such as exegesis, hermeneutics, apocalypticism, and theodicy and identify key aspects of source criticism, translation theory, and the formation of the scriptural canons.

D. Place the public-school teaching of the Bible as literature in the context of relevant First Amendment jurisprudence.
E. Demonstrate their writing and critical thinking abilities.

VIII. Content Outline: The course outline varies. Students will read and analyze key biblical texts in a variety of translations. Students will also read and analyze a variety of post-biblical texts, ranging from literary works to contemporary films and popular music, with particular attention to how they affirm, subvert, or otherwise appropriate key biblical themes. Primary readings will be supplemented by at least one nontechnical secondary text.

IX. Course Procedures: Students will stand for up to three formal exams and a final, produce and acceptable upper-division term paper, and stand for reading quiaaes.

Grading Scale:

| Tests 1-3 | 100 pts. Ea. | A = 550-495 |
| Final     | 150 pts      | B = 494-440 |
| Term paper| 100 pts.     | C = 439-385 |
| Quizzes   | 50 pts.      | D=385-330   |
|           |              | F=below 330 |

X. Required/Recommended Readings: The Jahwist and Priestly creation accounts; Cain and Abel; the Flood; Sodom and Gomorrah; the Binding of Isaac; the Joseph story, the Exodus, and the conquest of Canaan; David, Bathsheba, and Nathan; selections from Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Isaiah; the Book of Ruth; selections from the Psalms; the Song of Songs; Ecclesiastes; Proverbs; and Job. Required primary texts from the New Testament will include the Gospels and selections from Acts and Paul’s letters.

Students will also read at least one relevant nontechnical secondary text, such as Jack Miles’ *God: A Biography*. Biblical primary texts will be read in a variety of translations, both church-sponsored and secular. Post-biblical primary texts will include songs (e.g., the Negro spirituals, the Byrds’ “Turn! Turn! Turn!”) and films (e.g., *Jesus of Montreal*).

XI Any Issues Unique to this Course: N/A

XII Additional Issues of the Department's Choosing: N/A

XIII Syllabus Statement Regarding Course Adaptations or Accommodations: Should the student require course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability, the student shall provide the instructor with the appropriate documentation as specified by applicable law and institutional policy.