Biblical Studies

(Offered by the Departments of Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern Studies, and New Testament)

Telephone number 012 429 4711

1  Introduction

In Biblical Studies students are introduced to the biblical books and the world in which they were written. This entails a study of the peoples living in that world, their beliefs, their cultures, and their values. Students are equipped to read and understand the biblical books with cultural sensitivity in order to engage critically with the values found in these books.

2  General Information

Credit for a degree is granted for either BBS101 (or SCR101 or 111) and BBS102 (or SCR102 or 112) or BST100.

3  Transitional Arrangements

- Students who have passed BBS101D (but not BBS102E) by the time the new modules are introduced, will be required to take SCR112Y to complete the first level in Biblical Studies.
- Students who have passed BBS102E (but not BBS101D) by the time the new modules are introduced, will be required to take SCR111X to complete the first level in Biblical Studies.
- A student who passed a half-course on first-year level towards the old BTh curriculum, will retain credit for the half-course passed and must consult the transitional arrangements below in connection with conversion to the new modularised BTh curriculum. For details on these curricula, consult Part 5 of the Calendar.
- Students who passed both BSA200 and BSB200 must pass FOUR third-level modules in order to complete the major subject. Students who passed only ONE of BSA200 or BSB200 retain credit for the paper passed and must register for FIVE third-level modules to complete the major subject.
- Students who have not passed the four papers at third level must complete their third level by passing the relevant number of outstanding modules.

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<th>Study unit passed</th>
<th>Modules which may not be taken</th>
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<td>BST100</td>
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4  Biblical Studies as a Major Subject

Compulsory modules for a major subject combination:

First level: BBS103, 104 or (BBS101 (or SCR101 or 111), BBS102 (or SCR102 or 112), BBA101 (or 102))


5  Syllabus

**FIRST-LEVEL MODULES**

**BBS103F**  *Old Testament texts in their ancient contexts (S1 and S2)*

*Purpose:* to make students aware of historical circumstances which resulted in the development and production of the books of the Old Testament.

**BBS104G**  *New Testament texts in their ancient contexts (S1 and S2)*

*Purpose:* to make students aware of historical circumstances which resulted in the development and production of the writings of the New Testament.
SECOND AND THIRD-LEVEL MODULES

NB
These modules may be taken on second and/or third level.

**BBS301K** Bible, religion and spirituality (S1 and S2)*
*Purpose:* to interpret the Bible in the milieu of spiritual experience and subjectivity in religious life, by focussing on the Bible as resource for Christian spirituality, religious life and practice.

**BBS302L** Interpreting the Bible today (S1 and S2)*
*Purpose:* to recognise the importance of the historical context of the Bible and explain different methods of Biblical interpretation by reflecting upon the format of the Bible; history of biblical interpretation; guidelines for Biblical interpretation; the way in which texts communicate; and the historical and literary approaches to the Bible.

**BBS303M** The ethics of Bible reading (S1 and S2)*
*Purpose:* to make students aware of factors that influence their reading of the Bible (illustrated by a selection of texts) by dealing with the ethics behind hermeneutical options (faith commitments, frameworks of understanding, generation of knowledge) within specific cultural contexts (African, Western, oral, literate).

**BBS304N** The Bible and Africa (S1 and S2)
*Purpose:* to enable students to discover the contribution of Africa to the background, shape and contents of Christianity as portrayed in the Christian Bible.

**BBS305P** A brief history of creation (S1 and S2)*
*Purpose:* to enable students to read and assess Old Testament creation theology against the background of African, Ancient Near Eastern and contemporary scientific pictures of the origin of humanity and the universe.

**BBS306Q** Propheticism and social issues (S1 and S2)*
*Purpose:* to enable students to comprehend and analyse the phenomenon of prophetism in the Old Testament by focussing on specific themes related to social justice and the role of power politics.

**BBS307R** Politics, society and religion in ancient Israel (S1 and S2)*
*Purpose:* to become aware of the political, social and religious factors that determined the life of the people of Ancient Israel.

**BBS308S** Sexuality and body in early Christianity and antiquity (S1 and S2)
*Purpose:* to introduce students to a comparative study of the construction of sexuality, the body and personhood in the ancient Biblical world by dealing with contemporary relevant aspects such as sexual orientation, procreation, body awareness and personality.

**BBS309T** The Bible and coping with life crises (S1 and S2)*
*Purpose:* to enable students to use biblical texts meaningfully and responsibly in attempts to cope with life crises, and to reflect critically on the use of biblical texts in such situations.

**SCR309E** The Bible and gender (year module)
See subject chapter Scripture Studies for purpose statement.