## Introduction to the Septuagint Intensive

## Reformed Theological Seminary Washington, D.C.

## Spring 2022

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### Course Summary:

This course aims to introduce the student to the Septuagint and its role in biblical studies. At the heart of our Reformed tradition is the conviction that Scripture is our only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy God, and that it is by Scripture we are instructed in the knowledge of God and what He requires of us. Up to the second century, BCE, no translation project was as ambitious as the Septuagint. The role of the LXX sets the backdrop for understanding the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, Early Jewish hermeneutics, and many other aspects of the transmission, theology, and interpretation of Scripture by God’s people. As such, we will explore the Septuagint and grapple with how its study influences our modern biblical interpretation for teaching and preaching.

A working knowledge of Greek and Hebrew is not necessary for this course; language will necessarily be referenced but in a limited fashion and will be explained.

### Objectives:

1. To develop a working knowledge and application of basic vocabulary concerning the LXX and its transmission
2. To gain a grasp of the development and transmission of the LXX as a translation
3. To understand the theological significance of the Septuagint in Biblical Studies
4. To gain a knowledge of the modern study of the LXX and methods for its critical use
5. To study its role in the NT, and survey and apply various methods of intertextuality to uses of the OT in the New
6. To ask how our study of the LXX can be applied to local church ministry in preaching and teaching

### Course Protocols:

**1. Grading:**

* + Participation 30%
  + Book reviews 20%
  + Final Exam 20%
  + Intertextuality Paper and Presentation 30%

The letter grading scale is stipulated by the institutional catalogue and is summarized below.

97-100% A

94-96% A-

91-93% B+

88-90% B

86-87% B-

83-85% C+

80-82% C

78-79% C-

75-77% D+

72-74% D

70-71% D-

0-69% F

**2. Attendance and Late Assignments**. Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class session. Late assignments may be accepted with a penalty of one letter grade per day late.

**3. Electronics**. Voice recorders are not permitted in class. Please silence and keep out of sight all cell phones during class. Laptops may be used for note taking exclusively.

**4. Special Needs**. In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g. tape recorders, special adaptive equipment, special note-taking or test-taking needs) is strongly encouraged to contact the professor at the beginning of the course.

**5. Disclaimer.** This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the learning objectives, instructional format, and other information necessary for students to appraise the course. However, during the course of the term, the instructor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may appear necessary because of events and circumstances that occur during the semester.

### Requirements

**Class participation**

* + Participation in reading and discussing the assigned readings
  + Each student will be expected to read the assigned texts prior to class and come prepared to discuss them in detail
  + This is a seminar-style course and, as such, is primarily participation-driven; each student will be expected to make contributions to class discussion

**Introduction to the Septuagint readings:**

All students will read *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Jobes, Karen H. and Moisés Silva. *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015.) and one of the other books listed below. A three-page, 1.5 spaced (Times New Roman), book review is required for both.\* These assignments constitute 20% of the total course grade.

Select one of the following:

Law, T. Michael, *When God Spoke Greek: The Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible.* New York: Oxford, 2013.

Fernández Marcos, Natalio. *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible*. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

Jennifer M. Dines, *The Septuagint*. New York: T&T Clark, 2004.

McLay, R. Timothy. *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research*. Grand

Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

Gregory R. Lanier and William A. Ross, The Septuagint: What it is and Why It Matters. Wheaton: Crossway, 2021.

\*A book review should include summary of the content of the book as well as its thesis, if there is a clear thesis. A review should wrap up with how you felt the author executed their thesis and communicated their content, interaction with the content, and a recommendation to whom you believe should recommended. A book review, in short, should be on the book itself and not on what you wished the book would’ve been.

**Use of the OT in the New Paper:**

All students must read *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008). The student must write a paper that is 2-25 hundred words, 1.5 space (Times New Roman), approximately 1/3 of the paper is a brief description of each view, 1/3 is a defense of the view preferred by the student, and a final 1/3 is application of preferred method upon a selected LXX quotation in the NT. This paper will be presented in class. Please, prepare for questions regarding the implication of your research upon the teaching and preaching to a lay audience and training of lay leadership from the instructor and from your classmates.

**Final Exam on Basic LXX Issues and Terminology**

Recommended English LXX text:

Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds. *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title* (Oxford, 2007).

Other recommended secondary texts:

James K. Aitken, *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*. New York: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2015.