I. Course Description

This is a guided exposition of the book of Isaiah with emphasis on the historical/cultural and literary contexts. The literary structure and possible purpose statement will be explored as a part of the process of interpreting and communicating the message of specific passages.

II. Objectives

1) To identify the literary structure (natural basic outline) of the Book of Isaiah and to suggest a purpose statement for the book in order to assist each student:
   (a) to acquire an over-all view of Isaiah;
   (b) to begin to master the subject matter of Isaiah (namely, knowledge of the contents of each chapter or natural division).

2) To help the student to learn a proper method of interpreting individual passages in the text of Isaiah in light of two important contexts: the historical-cultural background and the overall structure and purpose of the book.

3) To emphasize the proper hermeneutical approach to Isaiah--namely, understanding the text in light of both historical/cultural and Biblical contexts.
   a) To formulate and learn some hermeneutical guidelines for Isaiah to promote accurate interpretation of each passage.
   b) To apply these guidelines in Bible study and exposition.

4) To guide the student in teaching or preaching from Isaiah with emphasis on making valid applications to life situations in the 21st century.
   a) To seek to derive timeless principles from the Book of Isaiah (true to the original context and yet relevant to our modern society).
   b) To try to determine some homiletical guidelines to encourage maximum communication of God's truths.

5) To assist the student in developing analytical and research skills.

III. Requirements

A. Reading

Each Master’s student will read all three books in their entirety: Wolf (about 290 pages), Smith (vol 1: 1-39 (~640 pages); vol2:40-66 (~730 pages) + ) as well as reading the biblical text (see class schedule below).

Recommended works include: 1) J. Alec Motyer, The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary 2) John N. Oswalt, Isaiah, NIVAC and 3) Bryan E. Beyer, Encountering the Book of Isaiah. (See also works with an asterisk in bibliography). Reading “reports” on special reading slips will be filled out and turned in weekly. Late reports will suffer a grade penalty.

B. Term paper and report

Each Master’s student is responsible for a term paper of about 12 to 15 typewritten pages, consisting of an exegetical summary of some passage in Isaiah followed by an expository sermon or lesson. An oral report of about 25 to 30 minutes emphasizing the exposition of the text and its valid application will be presented (normally on the day the Bible passage is scheduled for class discussion). The paper should exhibit a proper balance between doctrine (being true to the historical/cultural background and the literary context of Isaiah and previous OT writings) and practical exhortation (being validated in light of the rest of the Old Testament and of the New Testament). The student must consult with the instructor before proceeding with a sermon passage.

The paper should include at least the following aspects: (1) The student must summarize the passage and trace the argument (i.e., the flow of thought) in light of the whole Book of Isaiah and its historical/cultural context. Be certain to utilize the three textbooks as well as at least two or three other commentaries throughout the paper. (2) There ought to be an exegetical or expository outline (summarizing in complete sentences the exact thought of the Bible text) with a brief commentary on each verse which expresses your research into the text. (3) The sermonic portion of the paper should bring out the biblical teaching and timeless principles which find valid application for today. It is very important to consider later Old Testament evidence as well as New Testament quotations or allusions in discerning timeless principles. The student should show how the doctrine (or theology) of the text may impact our modern society. However, do not force an application if there is not a valid one.

Notes: Be sure to observe the following rules: (a) To follow the suggested guidelines for interpreting Old Testament prophecy and any specific application to Isaiah; (b) To discuss (in the last part of the paper) how the doctrine (or theology) of the text impacts our modern society; (c) To document your research by Turabian style (including footnotes) with a bibliography at the end.

3See Ross, Creation and Blessing (especially pp. 42-44) for the concept and examples of an exegetical outline.

4Also see Ross, ibid., especially pp. 46-48 for the concept of an expository outline and timeless principles. Furthermore consult Walter Kaiser’s Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981) especially chapter 7 for tips on seeking to glean timeless principles from the text.

5Be sure to give credit to sources you use in coming up with an exegetical and/or expository outlines. It is best to rework what others have done (or start out on your own & consult others to polish up your efforts) rather than copying someone verbatim. However it is still necessary to document the source(s) you utilized or revised.
A detailed outline of the paper should be distributed to each class member (and to the
professor) at the time of the presentation. Furthermore a complete copy of the entire paper must
also be given to the professor at the same time (namely before the oral report). Note: A sample
draft (resumé) of the term paper is due on Feb. 12 (about 3 to 5 pages) including bibliography, a
preliminary exegetical outline and a sample brief commentary (including some footnotes).

C. Two Critical Analyses; key issues in Book of Isaiah-- consisting of brief analysis of
two critical issues in Isaiah including annotated bibliography (see below for due dates). The
length should be approximately (3 to 5 pages each).

Basic guidelines: 1) Try to gain approval of the two topics from the instructor by the end
of class on first day (Jan 22).  2) Summarize the various views and evaluate the pros and cons of
two key issues (one concerning chaps 1-39--see #1 and 2 below) and another concerning chaps
40-66--see #3 and 4 below) with the help of textbooks and other relevant sources. The student
must also state his/her own conclusions. The bibliography of sources other than the textbooks
should give a brief annotation (a paragraph each citing the contribution or viewpoints of this
material). There must normally be at least 50 to 100 pages readings from commentaries (annotated)
and in addition at least 2 journal articles annotated for each paper [total at least 25 pages]. (Up to
25 pages may be overlapping between your textbooks and the other commentaries.)

Topics to choose from (for Master's students)
1. The fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 7:14-17 (list the various views and the pros and cons
   for each and your own conclusion). Due Feb 5. Be sure to annotate each article and each portion
   read in each commentary.

2. Fulfillment of oracle against Babylon [esp. identity of "Lucifer" --KJV translation of Hebrew
   helel] in Isaiah 14:12. Due Feb. 12. [Note: One article cited in syllabus may be used for annotation
   (but no extra credit if used for paper).]

3. Views concerning the unity of Isaiah. Be sure to state the problem and give the support for
   lack of unity and then any support for unity of the Book. Due March 26. See introductions to
   Isaiah commentaries or to Isaiah in OT introduction textbooks. [Only one journal article is
   required for this topic but at least 100 pages of readings in commentaries or other books.]

4. Views of identity of the Servant (or servants) in the Servant Songs of Isaiah 40-55. In your
   conclusion, be sure to address your view(s) as to the identity of the Servant in all 4 Servant songs,
   etc. Due April 9.

D. Exams: Two exams will be given during the semester as recorded on the class
schedule below. Emphasis is normally placed on knowledge of the literary structure (outline) as
presented in class and other items discussed in the lectures--including any handouts. However the
precise nature of these major tests will be explained later.

E. Grading guidelines for Master’s students: Exams approximately 20 to 22.5% each;
term paper--25% (plus 2% for oral report); Analysis of critical issues (7.5% each = 15%); daily
grade 13% (including 10% for weekly reading as documented on reading slips and 3% for class
participation and attendance). Possible "pop" quizzes over daily reading (perhaps 5%).
### IV. Class Schedule (2015)

| Jan 22 | Course syllabus (brief review). Introduction to Isaiah (an overview of the nature, structure, historical background, date & authorship). Brief hermeneutical guidelines for Hebrew prophecy and Isaiah. Study of Isaiah chap. 1. **Assignment:** read all of Isaiah preferably at one sitting (or at least chaps. 1-39 at one time and then 40-66) in a modern translation such as the NIV, NASB, HCSB, ESV or NKJV. Read Wolf, 11-69, 73-76; Smith vol 1: 22-49a, 55-91, 93-117. |
| Jan 29 | Study of Isaiah chaps. 2-6. **Assignment:** Read specific assigned text of Isaiah. Then read Wolf, 77-88, Smith 119-199. |
| Feb. 5 | Study of Isaiah chaps. 7-11. **Assignment:** Read assigned text of Isaiah +Wolf, 89-106a; 257-61, 291-293, 296-297a; Smith, 200-279a. For extra credit: read Beyer, *Encountering Isaiah* 73-78. |
| 19 | Study of Isaiah chaps. 15-23. **Assignment:** read the specific text of Isaiah. Read Wolf, 116-135; Smith, 327-404. |
| Feb 26 | Study of Isaiah chaps. 24-31. **Assignment:** read the specific text of Isaiah. Read Wolf, 137-159, 290-91; Smith, 405-536. |
| March 5 | Study of Isaiah chaps. 32-37. Brief review for exam. **Assignment:** read the specific text of Isaiah. Read Wolf, 160-177; Smith, 537-634. |
| March 12 | **NO CLASS. Spring Break #1** |
| March 19 | **MID-TERM EXAM** |
| April 2 | Study of Isaiah chaps. 43-48. **Assignment:** read the specific text of Isaiah. Read Wolf, 194-204; Smith, 190-334a. |
April.  9  Study of Isaiah 49:1--52:12.  Assignment: read the specific text of Isaiah.  Read Wolf, 205-14; Smith, 335-428.


April  23  NO CLASS  Spring break #2;  BMAA meeting

April  30  Study of Isaiah chaps. 56-61.  Assignment: read the specific text of Isaiah.  Read Wolf, 223b-240, 277-82, 294-299; Smith, 515-643


May  14  FINAL EXAM

VI. Selected Bibliography

Introduction or Special studies


Commentaries


