Day One: You have six hours. You may use the resources provided in the exam room and indicated on the Preliminary Study Guide. You must get 75% of the questions correct to pass.

A. General Masoretic Text
   1. Relative clauses may be categorized as restrictive or non-restrictive. Briefly explain the difference between these categories.
   2. Note one clear example of a restrictive relative clause in MT.
   3. Note one clear example of a non-restrictive relative clause in MT.

B. Ruth 1:8
   1. What is the qere’?
   2. What is the ketiv?
   3. What Greek variant does BHQ list forאֶשְׁעַ?
   4. How does BHQ explain this Greek variant?
   5. What, if anything, does BHS say about this variant?
   6. How many times does the exact form כלתיה occur in the MT?
   7. In which two biblical books does the term כלת appear most frequently?
   8. Besides השע, note three other verbs that may take חסד as an object and for each verb provide one citation that illustrates the construction.
   9. How many times does the term חסד appear in MT?

C. LXX Jonah 1:1-2
   1. κραυγή in LXX Jonah 1:2 has no equivalent in MT. About how many different Hebrew words in MT does κραυγή correspond to in LXX?
   2. What Hebrew term most likely appeared in the vorlage to LXX Jonah 1:2?
   3. How many different Greek words correspond to this Hebrew term in LXX?
   4. How many times does κραυγή appear in the LXX?
   5. What does Muraoka’s LXX lexicon indicate about κραυγή that is missing from Lust’s lexicon?
   6. How might you argue that LXX preserves the original reading of Jonah 1:2?
   7. How might you argue that MT preserves the original reading of Jonah 1:2?

D. General New Testament
   1. How would you explain the syntax of the relative clause to someone who is familiar with relative clauses in Hebrew, but is just beginning to learn Greek?
E. Matthew 1:18

1. What variant does NA28 list for γενεσίς?
2. Which reading has more manuscripts supporting it?
3. If the text of NA28 is original, how might the prior context of Mat 1:2-17 have contributed to the development of the variant reading?
4. Which reading is attested in the oldest witness?
5. How might the text of Mat 1:1 influence a decision about which variant to read?
6. How often does the expression εν γαστρὶ appear in the synoptic Gospels?
7. How many of these occurrences refer to Mary?
8. Who else does the expression refer to in the synoptics?

Day Two: You have eight hours. You may use any Bibles, English translation or original languages, and a copy of the Reading List. Answer four of these six questions

1. A teaching colleague has asked you to teach a session in her graduate class on the history of Christology, exploring the diversity of Jewish messianic expectation at the time of Jesus and in the New Testament period. Describe how you would approach this task, which non-canonical Jewish texts would be relevant to your session (and why), and what issues you would hope to be explored in the class discussion.

2. A local art gallery is hosting a major exhibition on Visualizing the Death of Christ, which will bring together a large number of medieval and Renaissance paintings of the crucifixion. You have been asked to deliver a lecture at the gallery, open to the public, on medieval biblical exegesis as a background to appreciating the paintings in the exhibition. Outline the main elements of medieval exegesis you would want to emphasize, their strengths and weaknesses, and how your lecture might enhance the audience’s experience of the exhibition.

3. An adult bible study group is interested in some of the latest approaches to the New Testament. Three of the newer approaches for which they would like more information are narrative criticism, rhetorical criticism, and feminist hermeneutics. You have accepted their invitation to explain each of these methods, how they differ from one another, and what you think are the strengths and weaknesses of each. How would you respond?

4. On a transatlantic flight, you enter into a lengthy conversation with a Christian traveler who has recently been disturbed by a National Geographic article explaining how the Catholic Church “removed” certain early writings from the New Testament canon (he is somewhat hazy about the details, but recalls that two of them were the Gospel of Peter and the “Gospel of Jesus’ wife”). What account would you give him of the formation of the New Testament canon, the criteria used for inclusion and exclusion, and the character, genre and dating of the apocryphal gospels?
5. You have been invited as a new hire in biblical studies at a local college to address a large group of theologically literate and religiously engaged persons on the topic of “The End Times.” You will speak for 45 minutes, after which the group will break down for discussion in small groups for half an hour. Which resources would you draw on in developing your presentation and which biblical passages would you focus on? How would you structure your talk and what points would you especially wish to get across to the group about the topic? You’ve also been asked to provide questions to help stimulate discussion in the small groups—what questions would you suggest?

6. You have been commissioned to write an undergraduate textbook on a New Testament book of your choice, in a series which seeks to introduce different methodological approaches. Present a proposal on how you would go about your task and why, explaining which scholarly works you would choose to introduce to your undergraduate readership, and what concrete difference the various methodologies make to interpreting your chosen book.

Day Three: You have four hours. You may use any Bibles, English translation or original languages, and a copy of the Reading List. Answer two of these four questions

For the Old Testament “Language and Text” and “History of Israel and Ancient Near East, Archaeology”

1. In your Introduction to the Old Testament undergraduate class, you realize that students have little understanding about issues of historicity of the texts they are reading. Some tend to accept every biblical story as historically accurate, while others assume that everything is ‘myth’ and none if it is historical. You want the students to appreciate the more complicated reality of discerning the historicity of biblical presentation of Israel’s history in Joshua—2 Kings. How would you design a lesson plan to accomplish this learning goal? What text would you consult for yourself and what extra-biblical texts or archeological information might serve your needs? Describe the lesson plan you might use, including what you would assign to students before class and how you would conduct the class.

2. You are on an airplane on the way to the SBL conference. The passenger next to you engages you in conversation and discovers that you are a biblical scholar. This conservative Protestant inquires about the Dead Sea Scrolls because she has heard that the Isaiah scroll confirms that the biblical books have been handed on with perfect fidelity since their composition. In the hour or so before the plane lands, how would you address her interest in the nature and significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls text-critical research on the Old Testament?

3. You have been asked to write an entry for a new Archaeological Commentary on the Old Testament, whose guiding principle is that “Archeological studies of daily life and
culture in ancient Israel shed light all aspects of the Bible from text criticism to feminist approaches.” You have been given your choice of any passage of the Old Testament to comment on. Assemble the relevant knowledge of how the ancient Israelites lived and interpret a biblical text of your choice for this volume.

4. You are teaching a course on “The Prophets” to graduate students at the MA level. In a class discussion on Isaiah 7:14, they expressed considerable curiosity about how ancient scribes worked and how modern scholars make text-critical decisions. Consequently, you have decided to set one day aside to focus on scribal practice and textual criticism. Describe the lesson plan you would develop to address this student interest. Indicate what readings or assignments might you assign the students to prepare for that lesson, what you would do during class, and how you might assess whether the lesson achieved its learning objectives.
**Grading Rubric**

In your answers to questions on Days 2 and 3 of the comprehensive exam, you should seek to demonstrate that you have achieved the goals of the program well enough to proceed to the dissertation stage. Faculty will evaluate the examination to determine whether you have met, exceeded, or fallen below the following goals. After each goal is a descriptive rubric. A numerical marking scale is used, and the “passing” grade for comps is equivalent to B+ or 3.3. The middle column indicates the qualities of an exam are of a 3.3 level, the left column the qualities of a 4.0 exam, and the right column the qualities of an exam that falls below a 3.0.

As a result of completing coursework and adequately preparing for the comprehensive exam, **the student should be able to:**

1. **select appropriate texts from the reading list to answer given questions.**

   | The exam includes ample references to particular works on the reading list that are relevant to the context, and these references are specific and explicitly connected to the larger issues discussed. | The exam as a whole includes references to particular works on the reading list. The referenced works have particular relevance to the contexts in which they are cited. | The exam as a whole lacks references to specific works from the list and/or referenced works seem unconnected to the question at hand. |

2. **understand the main arguments of the scholarly works on the list.**

   | The references to scholarly works indicate an understanding of the main argument(s) of the works cited. The exam relates the works to each other by, for example, identifying points of contact and disagreement among them. | The references to scholarly works indicate an understanding of the main argument(s) of the works cited. | Scholarly works are cited, but the context does not clarify whether the writer has understood the argument or significance of the work, or demonstrates a significant misunderstanding of the work. |

3. **integrate the books into an understanding of the discipline that extends beyond the comps reading list**

   | The exam reflects a deep and wide familiarity with the discipline and articulates the wider context in which the works appeared, and how they have been received in the developing discussions within the field. | The exam reflects knowledge of the discipline beyond the limits of the reading list by, for example, situating the books in a larger context and/or indicating how the works have been received since their publication. | The exam reflects a relatively narrow grasp of the field that does not extend beyond the reading list. The exam reflects little awareness of why the works are significant or how they have been received. |

4. **know the content and significance for biblical study of the extra-biblical ancient texts.**

   | The exam seamlessly places Scripture in its ancient context by addressing extra-biblical ancient texts while showing awareness of the scholarship. | When appropriate, the exam makes reference to ancient texts outside the biblical canon in ways that reflect an awareness of the content of these sources. | The exam makes no reference to extra-biblical material or introduces this material in inappropriate ways and places that reflect misunderstanding of |
(5) show biblical literacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerning these texts and their use in the biblical field.</th>
<th>And their connection to biblical studies.</th>
<th>These sources or their relationship to biblical texts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The discussions of biblical passages are well integrated into the writing and reflect a solid grasp of how current scholarship understands these passages, and where uncertainties and debates remain.</td>
<td>The exam as a whole makes specific reference to biblical passages that illustrate points discussed.</td>
<td>The exam makes no reference to specific biblical texts or reflects significant misunderstanding of texts and/or scholarship.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) demonstrate knowledge of the history of the discipline.

| The exam offers insight into the problems of theological interpretation of Scripture involved in critical interpretation and the changing cultural and social context over the centuries, such as, e.g., biblical issues pertinent to Jewish-Christian relations and post-Holocaust theology. | The exam reflects some awareness of the history of the biblical interpretation from ancient to modern times, such as, e.g., the differences between ‘pre-critical’ and critical interpretation and Jewish and Christian interpretation of the OT. | The exam reflects little historical depth or awareness that biblical texts have been interpreted in ways widely different from current scholarship (e.g., typologically and allegorically). |

(7) select and clarify a problem and thereby contribute creatively to scholarly discussion.

| The exam develops ideas that move beyond the reading list and propose novel suggestions within the discipline, offer incisive critiques of existing scholarship, or otherwise shows willingness to take risks and propose new approaches to old problems. | The exam shows originality and creativity by applying the material learned to novel problems and situations, articulating informed critiques of works on the reading list, providing synthetic understanding of multiple works, and/or by indicating insightful evaluations of aspects of the field. | The exam demonstrates a basic knowledge of the field, but little or no ability to synthesize works, critique scholarship, or apply the content to new problems. It is merely summative and does not reflect evaluation, constructive criticism, or potential to contribute to the field. |

(8) design pedagogically appropriate strategies for teaching Scripture.

| The writing shows a deep familiarity with various pedagogical philosophies and approaches, uses pedagogical terms correctly, and articulates teaching ideas that are thoughtfully calculated to generate student learning. Some discussion of assessment of potential lesson plans may be included. | The exam includes evidence that the writer has sufficient command of the biblical and scholarly material and adequate knowledge of pedagogical scholarship and teaching skill to identify specific plans for imparting understanding of the field to novices. | The exam fails to connect knowledge of the field with ability to communicate it to others. It reflects misguided pedagogical ideas and general ignorance of pedagogical literature or experience. |

(9) write clearly and persuasively.
The writing is eloquent and elegant both at the level of style and organization. The exam writing flows clearly and logically with minimal mechanical errors. The writing is poor in terms of style and/or organization.

You do not have to demonstrate all these skills in every question, but each skill should be evident in your answers as a whole. Note you may need to intentionally select questions that allow you opportunities to demonstrate these skills, since not every question will provide opportunities to demonstrate all of them. Concerning goal #8, you might decide to answer a question that specifically asks about pedagogy, or you might use pedagogical discussion as a means of answering a question that does not specifically ask about pedagogy.

To pass the comprehensive examination you must meet the expectations indicated above. That means demonstrating the above competencies at a level sufficient to indicate that you have a doctoral-level mastery of the field and are prepared to write a dissertation that contributes to the field.
Ph.D. Comprehensive Reading List
For Old Testament Specialists

Category One
Ecclesial Documents, Classic Works, and History of Interpretation


Category Two
Language and Text


**Category Three**


**Category Four**

**History of Israel and Ancient Near East, Archaeology**

Bible, both Testaments (including books contained in the Catholic and Orthodox canons; e.g. New Oxford Annotated Bible: An Ecumenical Study Bible)

*The Context of Scripture*. Ed. William W. Hallo. 3 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2003. The following texts identified by volume and text number (not page number). **Read the following texts:**

1.28, 38, 39, 41, 47, 77, 86 (the Baal Cycle), 102, 103, 108, 109, 111 (Epic of Creation), 114, 117, 118, 130 (Atra-Hasis), 133, 137, 138, 151, 153, 154, 166.

2.6, 23, 27, 28, 30, 31, 39, 54, 85, 89, 90, 113A-I, 119A-E, 124, 131.

3.41-44, 46, 87A, 392A-G.

Read the following texts: (Vassal Treaty of Esarhaddon) 51, (Ahiqar) 195. These texts are not found in Contexts of Scripture.


Grabbe, Lester L. Ancient Israel: What Do We Know and How Do We Know It? London: T & T Clark, 2007.


Category Five
Theology of the Old Testament and Religion of Ancient Israel


Ph.D. Comprehensive Reading List
For New Testament Specialists

Category One
Selections from Literature Pertinent to the New Testament Period

*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. Edited by James H. Charlesworth (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983, 1985). **Read the following texts:** Letter of Aristeas; 2 & 3 Baruch; 1, 2 & 3 Enoch; Fourth Ezra; Joseph and Asenath; Jubilees; 3 & 4 Maccabees; Sibylline Oracles; Odes of Solomon; Psalms of Solomon; Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs.

*The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*. 2 vols. Edited by García Martínez, F. and E. J. C. Tigchelaar (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000); Also available in *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*. By Geza Vermes (New York: The Penguin Press, 1997): **Read the following texts:** The Temple Scroll (11Q19–20); The Community Scroll (1QS) + Fragments (4Q255-264; 5Q11); The Damascus Scroll (CD) + Fragments (4Q265-273; 5Q12; 6Q15); Rule of the Community (1Q28a); Ritual Purity Laws and Initiation Laws (4Q274–279.284); Purification Ritual (Q512); Baptismal Liturgy (4Q414); The War Scroll (1QM)+ Fragments (4Q285; 4Q491-496; 4Q471; 4Q529; 11Q14); The New Jerusalem (2Q24; 4Q554-555; 5Q15; 11Q18); Vision of the Messiah (4Q246).

*Josephus in Nine Volumes*. The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927, 1928). Also available in *The Jewish War* (New York: Penguin Classic): **Read the following texts:** The Jewish War; and Against Apion.

*The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Text and English Translation*. Edited and revised by Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999). There are also other translations.


*The Mishnah: A New Translation*. By Jacob Neusner. (New haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988). You may also use another appropriate translation. **Read the following texts:** Second Division: The Sabbath (1.1–24.5); The Fusion of the Sabbath Limits (1.1–10.15); Feast of Passover (1.1–10.9); The Shekel Dues (1.1–7.8); The Feast of Tabernacles (1.1–5.8); Fourth Division: The Sanhedrin (1.1–11.6).

Category Two
The History of Biblical Interpretation


**Category Three**

**Methodology in New Testament Exegesis**


**Category Four**

**The Text and Canon of the New Testament**


**Category Five**

**Introduction to and Theology of the New Testament**


