UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: Spring 2013
Instructor: Dr. Joshua Ezra Burns
Course #: THEO 2010
Section: 101/901
Course Title: Hebrew Scriptures: Old Testament Selected Books
Variable Topic: Comedy in the Bible

Description:

The object of this course will be to examine the use and function of comedy in the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament, albeit with occasional reference to the New Testament and Deuterocanonical texts. Among the many and diverse literary forms utilized by the authors of the biblical tradition, the comedic is often overlooked for its perceived incongruity with the text's prevailing sense of earnestness. Our goal will be to challenge this perception by discussing instances of parody, sarcasm, and the absurd within the biblical narrative. Assessing their authors' historical and literary objectives, we shall try to assess their purposes in crafting their otherwise serious books with the occasional eye toward levity.

The course will follow a seminar format. Course grades will be determined on the basis of attendance, class participation, a research paper approximately 8-10 pages in length, and two examinations at the middle and at the end of the term. Reading knowledge of English is highly recommended.