**Course Description and Rationale.** This course is an exegetical and theological study of texts dealing with the Biblical topics of creation, flood, and tower. Debates have raged around these topics. The reason for this is many faceted, but mainly it is because the topics are interwoven with most major doctrines of scripture including that of redemption. Many people have a psychological attachment to their interpretation and any discussion of a view that differs from their own is taken personally and is immediately suspect of being heretical. In this course the principles learned in hermeneutics class will be applied so that the student understands the problem and is enabled to work toward a resolution. The professor will discuss his lifelong journey on this topic.

**Assumptions about Scripture, History, and Science.** The basic assumptions being made in this course are as follows:

1. Scripture is true, but our interpretations of it may be faulty. The data, whether scientific, historical, or Biblical, has not always been accurately interpreted. There have been divergent views of Genesis throughout the history of interpretation.
2. If interpreted correctly, an interpretation of a particular scripture is in harmony with history, other scriptures, and nature.
3. A passage of scripture will either constrain or expand our interpretation of another passage.
4. The universe in the Judaeo-Christian tradition is not eternal, but was created by the one God for His pleasure as an act of His freewill.
5. The created order possesses relative autonomy that allows life to exist, advance, adapt, and restore itself.
6. God works in process and miracle.
7. All truth, whether natural or revelatory, is God’s truth and there is an essential unity to all knowledge.
8. The world and universe are comprehensible.
9. The universe is finite in extent and duration.
10. There is a unity of heaven and earth.
11. There are paradoxes in nature and in scripture.
12. We are saved by grace and not by understanding. We are not Gnostics. Faith is always in search of understanding and understanding in search of faith.
13. There is a harmony between what Genesis says and the empirical/objective truth of the physical reality around us. In other words the debate is potentially resolvable.
14. Biblical history operates according to the canons of the ancient semitic mind of its author.
15. Genesis 1-11 is a compressed theological-history.
16. Lists of assumptions keep growing!

**Objectives:**

1. The primary objective of this course is to have the student challenge his interpretations of scripture with scripture.
2. The course seeks to advance a person’s ability to use the principles of interpretation laid down in the hermeneutics class.
3. The student will be confronted with the possible interpretations of a given text.
4. The student will know why people believe what they believe even if it is a new idea.
5. The student will be encouraged to maintain a positive attitude toward those with whom he disagrees.

**Agenda:**

Week 1-2: Introduction to the Course
Weeks 3-13 Examining the Texts.
Weeks 14-15 Forming Conclusions

**Textbook and Course Materials:**

Course Requirements: There are five areas in which assignments will be made for the course. Each area will be worth 20% of the student's grade. The student will be graded on clarity of presentation, objectivity, logic, and depth of understanding.

Area One: Self Reflection
The student will prepare for the fourth week of class a report (typed) in which he identifies for himself, the professor, and his fellow students what he currently believes about the interpretation of the events found in Genesis 1-11.

Area Two: Reacting to Others:
1. The student will examine the five significant examples of the online materials from the old earth creationists (OEC) found at the Reasons to Believe website and five from the young earth creationists (YEC) found at the Answers in Genesis website and critique them.
2. Reading the Textbooks: The student will read the textbook on the sections dealing with interpreting Genesis 1-11.

Area Three: The student will write a paper dealing with a particular topic related to the course. It will be turned in on CD or by EMAIL in electronic format.

Area Four: Final Test

Area Five: 15 page term paper on a topic approved by the professor.

EXTRA CREDIT (1-10 Points): The student will report on an approved conference on creation or watch the Nye-Ham debate.