

PENTATEUCHAL STUDIES
2015-2016 First Term Wed 2:30pm-5:15pm ELB 308

Course Code: THEO2211/THEO5317
Title in English: Pentateuchal Studies
Title in Chinese: 五經研究

Course Description:

This course covers the major scholarship pertaining to the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It not only examines the themes and historical purposes for these books, but also orientates the students to the complexities of the contents and purposes for these books as evidenced by the prominent scholarship throughout the 19th to the 21st century. It tracks the recent development of the debates pertaining to the source theories of J, E, D and P; and also recent alternative theories and methodologies to the study of the Pentateuch.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Describe and compare the various theories on the formation of the Pentateuch
- Deepen their awareness of how ancient social, cultural, and political contexts may have contributed to the literary production of the Pentateuch
- Demonstrate a familiarity of the current approaches to the reading of the Pentateuch
- Develop a contextual awareness in their own reading of the Pentateuchal texts

Learning Activities:

The course consists mainly of lectures, interwoven with class discussion, web-based learning, independent reading, a mid-term exam, and research activities. The time allocation (per week) of the learning activities is as follows:

Lecture		Class Discussion		Web-based Learning		Reading and Research		Mid-Term Exam (per course)		Written Assignments	
In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class
2 hrs		0.5 hr			0.5 hr		3 hrs	1 hr	3 hrs		2.5 hrs
M		M		M/O		M/O		M		M	

M: Mandatory activity in the course O: Optional activity

Assessment Scheme:

Task nature	Purpose	Learning Outcomes
Mid-Term Test (20%) <i>Oct 26 (W)</i>	To facilitate the students' review of the course content and to evaluate the students' knowledge of the major theories, concepts and terms pertaining to Pentateuchal studies.	A mid-term exam preparation guide containing a list of key terms will be distributed to the students on October 12, 2016 (W). The mid-term test will take one hour. On the answer booklet, students are to give a short description to each of the ten terms selected from the list. There will also be two essay questions, out of which ONE is to be answered.
Reading Report (20%) <i>Due on</i>	To facilitate the students to critically synthesize and analyze the reading materials and to engage the	1. Write a book review of no less than 2000 words of one of the two books listed and engage the course reading materials in the review. 2. Summarize the author's approach, interpretive

<p>Nov 9 (W)</p>	<p>content dialogically with one of the following books:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Briggs, Richard S., and Joel N. Lohr. <i>A Theological Introduction to the Pentateuch: Interpreting the Torah as Christian Scripture</i>. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2012. 2. Watts, James W. <i>Reading Law: The Rhetorical Shaping of the Pentateuch</i>. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999. 	<p>framework, thesis, and main arguments.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the approach and his/her main arguments.
<p>Class Participation (10%)</p> <p>Mandatory Blackboard Discussion Forum Posts due on Nov 15 (Tue) Nov 22 (Tue)</p>	<p>To encourage learning collaboration and exchanges of ideas among the students, both in class and through Blackboard's discussion forum. Students are encouraged to participate in the online discussion forum by posting their questions, critiques, and opinions on the reading materials 24 hours prior to the class convenes. Posts for the reading materials for Nov 16 and Nov 23 are mandatory. Details will be discussed in class.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consolidate the students' understanding of the reading materials. 2. Develop critical attitude toward the reading materials. 3. Deepen students' awareness of how an interpreter's social locations, including their own, and presuppositions affect the process of reading.
<p>Term Paper (50%)</p> <p><i>Abstract due on</i> Nov 9 (W)</p> <p><i>Paper due on</i> Dec 7 (W)</p>	<p>To evaluate the students' ability to critically engage current scholarship in the criticism of the Pentateuch studies and to analyze and critique different theories' strengths and weaknesses and to apply a diachronic or synchronic model in an exegesis of a Pentateuchal text.</p>	<p>Write a term paper of 4000-5000 (undergraduate level) or 5000-6000 words (graduate level) on one of the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A critique of the Documentary Hypothesis or an alternative approach to the formation of the Pentateuch 2. A comparison of two alternative approaches to the formation of the Pentateuch 3. A diachronic analysis of a passage or a literary theme of the Pentateuch 4. An (re)assessment of a textual issue of the Pentateuch 5. An analysis of the literary structure or genre of a particular book of the Pentateuch 6. A critical exegesis of a passage from the Pentateuch with a contextual or theological perspective

Recommended Learning Resources:

Textbooks (required):

Ska, Jean-Louis. *Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch*. Translated by Sr. Pascale Dominique.

Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006. [史茄著。《閱讀五書導論》香港公教真理學會。2011。]

Van Seters, John. *The Pentateuch: A Social-Science Commentary*. 2d ed. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015.

Ancient Texts:

Beckman, Gary. *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*. Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Ancient World Series 7. 2d ed. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1999.

Foster, Benjamin R, ed. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. Translated by Foster Benjamin R. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.

Hallo, William W., ed. *The Context of Scripture*. 3 vols. Leiden and New York: Brill, 1997. [COS]

Books:

Briggs, Richard S., and Joel N. Lohr. *A Theological Introduction to the Pentateuch: Interpreting the Torah as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2012.

Fretheim, Terence E. *The Pentateuch*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Watts, James W. *Reading Law: The Rhetorical Shaping of the Pentateuch*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999.

Collections of Essays:

Grabbe, Lester L, ed. *Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish Historiography and Scripture in the Hellenistic Period*. JSOTSup 317. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.

Scholz, Susanne. *Biblical Studies Alternatively: An Introductory Reader*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003.

Watts, James W., ed. *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch*. Atlanta: Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001.

Essays and Articles:

Ateek, Naim S. "A Palestinian Perspective: Biblical Perspectives on the Land." Pages 227-234 in *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. Edited by R. S. Surgirtharajah. 3d ed. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2006.

Brenner, Athalya. "The Decalogue—Am I an Addressee?" Pages 197-204 in *Exodus and Deuteronomy*. Edited by Athalya Brenner and Gale A. Yee. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

Exum, "Toward a Genuine Dialogue between the Bible and Art." Pages 473-503 in *Congress Volume Helsinki 2010*. Edited by Martti Nissinen. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012.

Gottwald, Norman K. "The Exodus as Event and Process: A Test Case in the Biblical Grounding of Liberation Theology." Pages 250-260 in *The Future of Liberation Theology: Essays in Honor of Gustavo Gutierrez*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1989.

Knight, Douglas A. "Village Law and the Book of the Covenant." Pages 163-179 in *"A Wise and Discerning Mind": Essays in Honor of Burke O. Long*. Providence, R.I.: Brown Judaic Studies, 2000. [Web access through scholar.google.com.]

Levinson, Bernard M., and Jeffrey Stackert. "Between the Covenant Code and Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty." *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 3 (2012): 123-140.

Millard, Alan. "Deuteronomy and Ancient Hebrew History Writing in Light of Ancient Chronicles and Treaties." Pages 3-15 in *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy in Honor of Daniel I. Block*. Edited by Jason S. DeRouchie, Jason Gile, and Kenneth J. Turner. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2013.

Römer, Thomas. "How Many Books (*teuchs*): Pentateuch, Hexateuch, Deuteronomistic History, or

Enneateuch?" Pages 25-42 in *Pentateuch, Hexateuch, or Enneateuch?: Identifying Literary Works in Genesis through Kings*. Edited by Thomas B. Dozeman, Thomas Römer, and Konrad Schmid. Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

Warrior, Robert Allen. "A Native American Perspective: Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians." Pages 235-241 in *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. 3d ed. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2006.

Weems, Renita J. "The Hebrew Women Are Not Like the Egyptian Women: The Ideology of Race, Gender and Sexual Reproduction in Exodus 1." *Semeia* 59 (1992): 25-34.

Wong, Sonia Kwok. "The Notion of כפר in the Book of Leviticus and Chinese Popular Religion." Pages 77-96 in *Leviticus and Numbers*. Edited by Athalya Brenner and Archie Chi Chung Lee. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013.

Supplementary Books:

Alexander, T. Desmond. *From Paradise to the Promised Land*. 3d ed. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2012. [亞歷山大。《摩西五書導論—從伊甸園到應許之地》劉平、周永譯。(第二版)上海人民出版社·2008。]

Hamilton, Victor P. *Handbook on the Pentateuch*. 2nd edition. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005. [維特·漢彌頓。《摩西五經導論》譯者：胡加恩。台北：中華福音神學院, 2003。]

Whybray, R. Norman. *Introduction to the Pentateuch*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.

Whybray, R. Norman. *The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study*. JSOTSup 53. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987.

Course Schedule:

Class	Date	Topic	Reading Requirements
Week 1	Sept. 7 (W)	1. Syllabus 2. Introduction to the Pentateuch: Current Theories and Core Issues	
Week 2	Sept. 14 (W)	The Pentateuch and the Ancient Southwest Asian Texts	Ska 2006: 53-96 (chs.4-5) Van Seters 2015: 2-14 (chs.1-2) COS 1.130:451-53, 1.111:390-402, 1.133: 463, 1.38:77-82 Foster 2001: 84-95 Text: Gen 1-3, 6-9
Week 3	Sept. 21 (W)	The Formation of the Pentateuch 1. Documentary Hypothesis 2. Alternative approaches 3. Priestly and Non-Priestly 4. Exilic Yahwist as the author/redactor/historian	Ska 2006: 96-164 (chs.6-7) <u>Optional:</u> Van Seters 2015: 15-75 (chs.3-4)
Week 4	Sept. 28 (W)	Pentateuch, Tetrateuch, Hexateuch, or Enneateuch?	Ska 2006: 1-19 (chs.1-2.A) Römer 2011: 25-42
Week 5	Oct. 5 (W)	Current Theories: 1. Persian Authorization of the Torah 2. The Persian/Hellenistic Origins of the "Biblical Historiography"	Ska 2006: 184-229 (chs.9-10) <u>Optional:</u> Watts 2001: 5-62 Grabbe (ed) 2001: 78-90, 129-181, 200-224
Week 6	Oct. 12 (W)	Genesis:	Ska 2006: 19-26 (ch.2.B)

		1. Creation and Priestly Genealogy 2. The Patriarchal Stories	Van Seters 2015: 99-138
Week 7	Oct. 19 (W)	Exodus: 1. The Exodus Story 2. The Law Codes: The Covenant Code, Deuteronomistic Code, Holiness Code	Ska 2006: 26-32, 40-52 (chs.2.C, 3) Van Seters 2015: 165-185 (ch.8) Knight 2000: 12-26. Text: Exod 20:1-17, 22-23:33; Deut 5:6-21; 12-26
Week 8	Oct. 26 (W)	Leviticus: Priestly Cosmology <i>Mid-Term Exam (1 hour)</i>	Ska 2006: 32-35 (ch.2.D) Van Seters 2015: 139-164 (ch.7) Text: Lev 11-15, 17-26
Week 9	Nov. 2 (W)	Numbers: In the Wilderness	Ska 2006: 35-38 (ch.2.E) Fretheim 1996: 137-151
Week 10	Nov. 9 (W)	Deuteronomy: 1. Deuteronomy and Ancient Vassal Treaties 2. Deuteronomy as Constitution	Ska 2006: 38-40 (ch.2.F) Van Seters 2015: 77-98 (ch.5) Millard 2013: 3-15 Levinson and Stackert: 123-140 Beckman 1999: 93-94 Text: Deut 13, 16-18, 28
Week 11	Nov. 16 (W)	Newer Exegetical Lens: 1. Socioeconomic Class 2. Gender and Sexuality	Gottwald: 250-269 Warrior: 235-241 Ateek 2006: 227-234 Scholz: 94-101; 153-164 Brenner: 197-204 Text: Gen 1-3, 19, 21; Exod 20; Lev 18, 20; Deut 5
Week 12	Nov. 23 (W)	Newer Exegetical Lens: 3. Race and Ethnicity 4. Cross-Textual Criticism	Weems: 25-34 Wong 2013: 77-96 Ahiamadu 2013: 199-212 Text: Exod 1; Lev 4-6, 14-16, 23:26-32; Num 27:1-11
Week 13	Nov. 30 (W)	Concluding Remarks 1. What was/is the Pentateuch? Law, History, or Scripture? 2. Ethics of Interpretation	Ska 2006: 230-234 (Conclusion)

Contact Details for Teacher:

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Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. In the case of group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has

contributed directly or indirectly to the plagiarized contents.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submission. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.