Course Code: THEO2211
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, as well as 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Class Discussion</th>
<th>Web-based Learning</th>
<th>Reading and Research</th>
<th>Mid-Term Exam (per course)</th>
<th>Written Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In class</td>
<td>Out of Class</td>
<td>In class</td>
<td>Out of Class</td>
<td>In class</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td>0.5 hr</td>
<td>0.5 hr</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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</table>

M: Mandatory activity in the course    O: Optional activity

Assessment Scheme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task nature</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam (20%)</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>A mid-term exam preparation guide containing a list of ten key terms will be distributed to the students on October 16 (T). The mid-term test will take one hour. On the answer booklet, students are to give a short description to each of the five terms selected from the list. There will also be two essay questions, out of which ONE is to be answered.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task nature</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Learning Outcomes</td>
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<td><strong>Reading Report</strong></td>
<td>To facilitate the students to critically synthesize and analyze the reading materials and to engage the content dialogically with one of the following books: 1. Briggs, Richard S., and Joel N. Lohr. <em>A Theological Introduction to the Pentateuch: Interpreting the Torah as Christian Scripture</em>. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2012. 2. Watts, James W. <em>Reading Law: The Rhetorical Shaping of the Pentateuch</em>. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999.</td>
<td>1. Write a book review of 1200–1600 (BD4 Year 1 &amp; BDS Year 1/2) or 1500–2000 (other BD, MTh, and DTh) words of one of the two books listed and engage the course reading materials in the review. 2. Summarize the author’s approach, interpretive framework, thesis, and main arguments. 3. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the approach and his/her main arguments.</td>
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<td><strong>Due on Nov 13 (T)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Class Participation</strong></td>
<td>To encourage learning collaboration and exchanges of ideas among the students, both in class and through Blackboard’s discussion forum. Students are required to participate in the online discussion forum by posting their questions, critiques, and opinions on the reading materials assigned for Weeks 12 and 13 at 10:00pm the day prior to the class convenes on Nov 26 and Dec 3.</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td><strong>(10%)</strong></td>
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<td>Mandatory Blackboard</td>
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<td>Discussion Forum Posts</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>due on Nov 26 (M) Dec 3 (M)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Term Paper</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Write a term paper of 3000–4000 (BD4 Year 1 &amp; BDS Year 1/2) or 4000–5000 (other BD, MTh, &amp; DTh) words on one of the following topics: 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 passage or book of the Pentateuch 6. A critical exegesis of a passage from the Pentateuch from a contextual, literary or theological approach</td>
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<td><strong>(50%)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Proposal and Tentative</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Bibliography</strong></td>
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<td><strong>due on Nov 27 (T)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Paper due on Dec 11 (T)</strong></td>
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Recommended Learning Resources:

Textbooks (required):

Ancient Texts:

Books:

Collections of Essays:

Essays and Articles:


Supplementary Books:


Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Requirements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Sept. 11 (T)</td>
<td>The Pentateuch and the Ancient Southwest Asian Texts</td>
<td>Ska 2006: 96-164 (chs.6-7)&lt;br&gt;Optional: Van Seters 2015: 15-75 (chs.3-4)</td>
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<td>Sept. 25 (T)</td>
<td>Public holiday, no class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>References</td>
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| 5      | Oct. 9 (T) | Current Theories:  
1. Persian Authorization of the Torah  
Optional: Watts 2001: 5-62  
Grabbe (ed) 2001: 78-90, 129-181, 200-224 |
| 6      | Oct. 16 (T)| Genesis:  
1. Creation and Priestly Genealogy  
2. The Patriarchal Stories | Ska 2006: 19-26 (ch.2.B)  
Van Seters 2015: 99-138 |
| 7      | Oct. 23 (T)| Exodus:  
1. The Exodus Story  
Van Seters 2015: 165-185 (ch.8)  
Text: Exod 20:1-17, 22-23:33; Deut 5:6-21; 12-26 |
| 8      | Oct. 30 (T)| Leviticus: Priestly Cosmology  
**Mid-Term Exam** (1 hour) | Ska 2006: 32-35 (ch.2.D)  
Van Seters 2015: 139-164 (ch.7)  
Text: Lev 11-15, 17-26 |
| 9      | Nov. 6 (T) | Numbers: In the Wilderness | Ska 2006: 35-38 (ch.2.E)  
Fretheim 1996: 137-151 |
| 10     | Nov. 13 (T)| 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 |
| 11     | Nov. 20 (T)| **Class cancelled; made up on Dec. 4.** | |
| 12     | Nov. 27 (T)| 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 |
| 13     | Dec. 4 (T)| Newer Exegetical Lens:  
1. Race and Ethnicity  
2. Cross-Textual Criticism  
**Concluding Remarks**  
1. What was/is the Pentateuch?  
Law, History, or Scripture  
2. Ethics of Interpretation | Weems: 25-34  
Wong 2013: 77-96  
Ahiamdu 2013: 199-212  
Ska 2006: 230-234 (Conclusion)  
Text: Exod 1; Lev 4-6, 14-16, 23:26-32; Num 27:1-11 |

**Contact Details for Teacher:**

- **Lecturer:** Sonia Wong (王珏)  
- **Office:** G/F, Theology Building  
- **Tel:** 39435150  
- **Email:** sonia.wong@cuhk.edu.hk  
- **Office Hour:** By Appointment
**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.

### Grade Rubric for Written Assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A (+/-)</th>
<th>B (+/-)</th>
<th>C (+/-)</th>
<th>D (+)</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Astral, insightful, reflective content &lt;br&gt; - Exceeds expectations &lt;br&gt; - Original &amp; creative thesis potentially making a contribution to scholarship &lt;br&gt; - Content consistent &lt;br&gt; - Persuasive &amp; logical arguments &lt;br&gt; - Provide substantial evidence and support from scholarly works &lt;br&gt; - Excellent integration &amp; synthesis of different views &lt;br&gt; - Implications well observed &lt;br&gt; - Excellent organization &lt;br&gt; - Rich &amp; relevant references with correct citation format</td>
<td>- Adequate, thoughtful, descriptive, relevant content &lt;br&gt; - Meets expectations &lt;br&gt; - Thesis built on the theses &amp; findings of current scholarship &lt;br&gt; - Content consistent &lt;br&gt; - Adequate &amp; clear line of arguments &lt;br&gt; - Provide evidence and support from scholarly works &lt;br&gt; - Good integration &amp; synthesis of different views &lt;br&gt; - Implications noted &lt;br&gt; - Relevant references with correct citation format</td>
<td>- Lack of understanding of the subject matter &lt;br&gt; - Below expectations &lt;br&gt; - Dissertation built on the theses &amp; findings of current scholarship &lt;br&gt; - Content consistent &lt;br&gt; - Adequate &amp; clear line of arguments &lt;br&gt; - Provide evidence and support from scholarly works &lt;br&gt; - Good integration &amp; synthesis of different views &lt;br&gt; - Implications noted &lt;br&gt; - Relevant references with correct citation format</td>
<td>- Misconception in subject matter &lt;br&gt; - Below expectations &lt;br&gt; - Unclear thesis &lt;br&gt; - Some arguments Unconvincing &amp; unclear &lt;br&gt; - Lack of evidence and support from scholarly works &lt;br&gt; - Lack of integration &amp; synthesis of different views &lt;br&gt; - Implications noted &lt;br&gt; - Lack of relevant references with some issues in citation format</td>
<td>- Content irrelevant to subject matter &lt;br&gt; - Fail to meet expectations</td>
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