

122.715 Old Testament: Pentateuch
Course Assessment and Delivery Outline

Campus: Henderson
Tutor: Phillip Church.

Semester 2, 2015
NQF Level: 7 Credits: 15

CONTENT OVERVIEW

This course will engage the student in detailed exegesis of the English [or the Hebrew] text of selected parts of the Pentateuch, as well as studies in the theology of the Pentateuch with particular focus on the book of Deuteronomy. This course is intended to impress upon the student the theological richness of the Pentateuch, its literary artistry and sophistication, and the profound and powerful manner in which it speaks to the human condition (today).

1. Pentateuch overview; its theological ideas, themes and narrative flow.
2. Critical approaches to the Pentateuch and the current state of research.
3. Introduction and overview of Genesis and exegesis of selected passages.
4. Introduction and overview of Exodus and the exegesis of selected passages
5. Introduction and overview of Leviticus and Numbers.
6. Introduction and overview of Deuteronomy and examination of key themes.
7. Exegesis of selected passages of Deuteronomy and its theological influence on the Old Testament.

ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE

English Option:

Assessment	Word count	% Final Grade	Due Date
Topic Report	800 words	15%	Saturday 8 August
Exegetical Essay	3,000 words	45%	Saturday 19 Sept
Topical Essay	3,000 words	40%	Saturday 6 Nov

Hebrew Option

Assessment	Word count	% Final Grade	Due Date
Exegetical Essay	3,000 words	45%	Saturday 19 Sept
Critical Translation	N/A	15%	Saturday 31 Oct
Topical Essay	3,000 words	40%	Saturday 6 Nov

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week/Date	Topic	Assessment Task
1	Introduction to the Pentateuch. Theme of the Pentateuch	
2	Critical Approaches to the Pentateuch. The Current State of Pentateuch Research	
3	Introduction and Overview Gen 1-11. Exegesis Gen 1:1 – 2:3	Topic Report due (English option)
4	Exegesis Gen 2:4 – 3:24. Exegesis Gen 4-26	
5	Introduction and Overview Gen 12-50. Exegesis Gen 15	
	Intensives Week	
6	Introduction and Overview Exodus. Exegesis Exod 3:1 – 4:17	
7	Exegesis Exod 19:1 – 20:17	
8	Overview Leviticus and Numbers	Exegetical Essay due
9	Overview Deuteronomy	
	Mid-Term Break	
10	Themes in Deuteronomy	
11	Exegesis Deut 5:1 – 6:25	
12	Exegesis Deut 12:1-29. Exegesis Deut 18:9-21.	Critical translation due (Hebrew option)
	Study Week	Topical Essay due

ASSESSMENT TASKS

English Option

Note that the standard English Bible text for essays is either the NRSV or the NIV 2011 edition.

1. Topic Report

<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	1, 5
<i>Due Dates</i>	11.59pm Saturday 8 August
<i>Percentage Weighting</i>	15%
<i>Length</i>	Maximum 800 words

Choose one topic from the list below. Read at least three of the articles on Moodle relevant to the topic and prepare a report about the issue. The report should identify the key issues that the articles address, critically assess the significance of the topic and point to the implications of the topic for interpretation, theology or Christian practice. You will submit a written copy of the report that uses normal academic writing conventions for assessment.

Choose **one** of the following:

- The image of God in humanity
- Human dominion over creation
- The Fall and original sin
- Humanity as male and female

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

- The key issues relevant to the topic are clearly identified
- The significance of the topic and its implications for interpretation, theology or Christian practice is pinpointed

- The report shows good ability to critically evaluate scholarly argument
- Written Communication and Presentation: Clarity, format, spelling, grammar, annotation and bibliography

2. Exegetical Essay

<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	2, 3, 4, 5
<i>Due Dates</i>	11.59pm Saturday 19 September
<i>Percentage Weighing</i>	45%
<i>Length</i>	3000

Write an exegetical essay with a brief application to contemporary life on **one** of the following:

- Genesis 4:1-16.
- Exodus 6:1-13
- Deuteronomy 4:1-20
- Deuteronomy 30:1-20

Please see the assessment section of the course materials for further details on what is expected in an exegetical essay.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

- Appropriate exegetical methods used
- Widespread utilisation of appropriate tools and resources
- Clarity and depth of critical analysis
- High level of exegetical competence demonstrated in handling the text
- Communication and Presentation: Clarity, format, spelling, grammar; Annotation and bibliography.

3. Topical Essay

<i>Learning outcomes</i>	1, 2, 4, 5
<i>Due Date</i>	11.59pm, Saturday 6 November
<i>Percentage weighting</i>	40%
<i>Length</i>	3000 words

Write a topical essay on **one** of the following:

- Evaluate the critical approaches to the Pentateuch and identify with clear reasoning what you consider the best basis for interpreting it today.
- Superficially scientific explanations for the origins of our world and humanity and those offered in the first two chapters of Genesis conflict. Analyse the key issues and identify the best way for Christians to read and apply Genesis 1-2 in contemporary life.
- Critically analyse the promises God gave to Abraham and their significance in the Pentateuch. In what ways might the promises apply to contemporary life?
- Critically assess the significance of the 10 commandments within their context and discuss their relevance for contemporary Christian and human life.
- Analyse critically Deuteronomy's picture of Israel as the people of God and evaluate if and how it might be applied to contemporary Christians.
- Analyse critically the concept of "Holy War" in Deuteronomy and discuss its applicability to contemporary Christian life.
- This is a two part question. First, analyse critically the issues that need to be addressed when planning to preach from the Pentateuch. Second, choose one genre (e.g. law)

and demonstrate with specific examples how the ancient text might speak to contemporary life.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

- Extensive coverage of relevant content
- Advanced Integration of ideas and development of argument
- Evidence of in-depth and perceptive critical reflection
- Widespread Reading and Research
- Communication and presentation: clarity, format, spelling and grammar; annotation and bibliography.

Hebrew Option

Note that the Hebrew text for all translation and exegesis is *Biblical Hebraica Stuttgartensia* Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969/77.

1. Exegetical Essay

<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<i>Due Dates</i>	11.59pm Saturday 19 September
<i>Percentage Weighing</i>	45%
<i>Length</i>	3000

This essay has two parts:

- a) Write your own formal translation of the one of the passages listed below. Footnote significant translational issues, such as, word choices, grammatical constructions or textual variants. The translation will not count toward the word limit for the essay.
- b) Write an exegetical essay. See the assessment section for further details on what is expected in an exegetical essay.

Choose one of the following:

- a) Genesis 4:1-7.
- b) Exodus 6:2-8
- c) Deuteronomy 4:1-8
- d) Deuteronomy 30:1-7

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

- Appropriate exegetical methods used
- Widespread utilisation of appropriate tools and resources
- Accuracy of translation and demonstration of the critical application of language insights to the exegetical task with discussion.
- Clarity and depth of critical analysis
- High level exegetical competence demonstrated in handling the text
- Communication and presentation: clarity, format, spelling, grammar; annotation and bibliography.

2. Hebrew Tutorials and Critical Translation.

Learning outcome: 6

Due Dates	Tutorial dates to be advised. Translation is due 11:59PM Saturday 31 October
Percentage weighting	15%

- a. You will attend and participate in 10 weekly tutorials where the group will read from the Hebrew text and discuss textual and grammatical insights. These sessions will be based around set passages in Genesis and Deuteronomy and will take place at a time that is suitable to all students taking the Hebrew option.
- b. You will prepare and submit a critical translation of a text from the Hebrew Bible. This translation must include footnotes supporting your translation choices and discussing matters raised in the critical apparatus of BHS. The translation and participation in the tutorials will make up 15% of your overall grade

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

- Accurate Translation: That the translation is true to the Hebrew text.
- Critical Notes: That the translation is well supported with critically insightful notes.
- Critical Textual Analysis: Key textual issues, such as syntactical constructions and manuscript variants, are critically evaluated and, as appropriate, incorporated into the translation.
- Communication and Presentation: Clarity, format, spelling, grammar; annotation and bibliography.

3. Topical Essay

<i>Learning outcomes</i>	1, 2, 4, 5
<i>Due Date</i>	11.59pm, Saturday 6 November
<i>Percentage weighting</i>	40%
<i>Length</i>	3000 words

Write a topical essay on **one of the following:**

- a) Evaluate the critical approaches to the Pentateuch and identify with clear reasoning what you consider the best basis for interpreting it today.
- b) Superficially scientific explanations for the origins of our world and humanity and those offered in the first two chapters of Genesis conflict. Analyse critically the key issues and identify the best way for Christians to read and apply Genesis 1-2 in contemporary life.
- c) Critically analyse the promises God gave to Abraham and their significance in the Pentateuch. In what ways might the promises apply to contemporary life?
- d) Critically assess the significance of the 10 commandments within their context and discuss their relevance for contemporary Christian and human life.
- e) Analyse critically Deuteronomy's picture of Israel as the people of God and evaluate if and how it might be applied to contemporary Christians.
- f) Analyse critically the concept of "Holy War" in Deuteronomy and discuss its applicability to contemporary Christian life.
- g) This is a two part question. First, analyse critically the issues that need to be addressed when planning to preach from the Pentateuch. Second, choose one genre (e.g. law) and demonstrate with specific examples how the ancient text might speak to contemporary life.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

- Extensive coverage of relevant content
- Advanced integration of ideas and development of argument

- Evidence of in-depth and perceptive critical reflection
- Widespread reading and research
- Communication and presentation: clarity, format, spelling and grammar; annotation and bibliography.

LEARNING HOURS

Tutorials and preparation	50 Hours
Topical report/translation	15 Hours
Exegetical essay	45 Hours
Topical Essay	40 Hours
Total	150 Hours

TEXTBOOKS

There is no set text for this course. The following are particularly helpful and it would be good for students to have access to some or all of them:

Not “required” but very helpful are:

Alexander, T. Desmond. *From Paradise to the Promised Land. An Introduction to the Main Themes of the Pentateuch*. Second edition. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002.

Vogt, Peter T. *Interpreting the Pentateuch: An Exegetical Handbook*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2009.

[Vogt has some helpful guidelines for interpreting and preaching the Pentateuch including a brief bibliography. However, be warned that the book also reflects his American conservative, White Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture.]

Wenham, G. *Exploring the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. London: SPCK, 2003.

[Wenham is the required text for the Distance Learning Pentateuch course. Students who intend to buy a text book should start with this one. It is very helpful.]

NOTES

Secondary literature on the Pentateuch is voluminous and it is difficult to keep up. For this reason I have put numerous articles and essays on Moodle. Students will benefit greatly from using this material

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pentateuch

Barton, John and John Muddiman, eds. *The Pentateuch*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. [Available at the Laidlaw Library as an **E-book**]

Birch, Bruce C. et. al. *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, 35-174. Nashville: Abingdon, 1999.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible*. London: SCM, 1992.

_____. "The Pentateuch." In *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*, ed. John Barton. Cambridge: CUP, 1998.

Christensen, Duane. L. "The Pentateuchal Principle within the Canonical Process." *JETS* 39 (1996): 537-548.

Clines. David J. *The theme of the Pentateuch*. Second edition. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1997. [An important work of literary analysis.]

_____. "Images of Yahweh: God in the Pentateuch." In *Studies in Old Testament Theology*, eds. Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., Robert K. Johnston and Robert P. Meye, 79-98. Dallas: Word, 1992.

Eskenazi, Tamara Cohn. "Torah as Narrative and Narrative as Torah". In *Old Testament Interpretation; Past, Present, and Future*, eds. J. L. Mays, D. L. Petersen, and K. H. Richards, 13-30. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995.

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

Hamilton, Victor. *Handbook on the Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982

House, Paul R. *Old Testament Theology*, pp. 58-196. IVP: Downers Grove, Ill., 1998. [Each section is followed by a "Canonical Synthesis" which helpfully attempts to relate the specific concerns of Old Testament section to the wider canon of the whole Bible.]

Knight, Douglas, A. "The Pentateuch". In *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters*, eds. D. A. Knight and G. M. Tucker. Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1985.

Lohfink, Norbert. *Theology of the Pentateuch. Themes of the Priestly Narrative and Deuteronomy*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994.

McBride, S. Dean. "Perspective and Context in the Study of Pentateuchal Legislation". In *Old Testament Interpretation; Past, Present, and Future*, eds. J. L. Mays, D. L. Petersen, and K. H. Richards, 47-59. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995.

Mann, Thomas W. *The Book of the Torah. The Narrative Integrity of the Pentateuch*. Atlanta: J. Knox, 1988.

Petersen, David L. "The Formation of the Pentateuch." In *Old Testament Interpretation; Past, Present, and Future*, eds. J. L. Mays, D. L. Petersen, and K. H. Richards, 31-45. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995.

Sailhamer, John H. *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

[See his Introduction, 1-79; in particular his suggestions about structure and purpose, 33-59.]

_____. *Torah as Story*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000.

Whybray, R. Norman. *Introduction to the Pentateuch*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

Wolf, Herbert. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Pentateuch*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1991.

[See his section on the Theology of the Pentateuch, 23-40. For a different approach see the sections in the Old Testament Theologies of W. Eichrodt and G. von Rad dealing with the Pentateuch.]

Further Resources specifically on Genesis:

Alter, R. *Genesis*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1996.

[This is translation of Genesis with footnotes that comment on grammar and word choice or occasionally makes explanatory remarks about the text. It is a model that those taking the Hebrew option will find helpful.]

Alders, G.C. *Genesis*. 2 Vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981

Brown, William P. *The Ethos of the Cosmos*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Creation, Un-Creation, Re-Creation: A Discursive Commentary on Genesis 1-11*. London, T&T Clark, 2011.

Brueggemann, Walter. *Genesis*. Atlanta: J. Knox, 1982.

Cassuto, Umberto. *Genesis*, 2 Vols. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961-64.

Coats, G.W. *Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.

Hamilton, Victor. *The Book of Genesis : Chapters 1-17*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

_____. *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18-50*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

[A fairly full commentary with a sound exegetical technique. Adopts a verse by verse approach. Conservative-evangelical; concerned primarily with the final form of the text. See also Mathews and Wenham.]

Kidner, Derek. *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*. London: Tyndale, 1980.

[A Tyndale Commentary, designed for the average reader. This is not a technical exegesis suitable for this level of study, but, as always, Kidner writes well and has valuable insights. A little eccentric on issues of human origins.]

Mathews, Kenneth A. *Genesis 1-11:26*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996.

_____. *Genesis 11:27-50:26*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005

[A conservative, detailed and scholarly interpretation of these chapters. Fearlessly tackles some of the most difficult issues in the debate over the theology and contemporary application of many of the passages in this section of Scripture. One does not always have to agree with the conclusions to appreciate the attempt. Use with Wenham and Hamilton.]

Ross, J. *Creation and Blessing*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.

Sailhamer, John H. "Genesis". In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol.1. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.

Sarna, Nahum. *Genesis: J P S Torah Commentary*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989.

Speiser, A. *Genesis: Introduction, Translation and Notes*. New York: Doubleday, 1964.

von Rad, Gerhard. *Genesis*. Revised edition. London: SCM Press, 1961.

[Gerhard von Rad is stimulating in his ability to extract challenging theological insights from the text. His interpretation is ultimately too dependent on his earlier tradition-critical work to be entirely satisfying.]

Waltke, Bruce K. with Cathi J. Fredricks. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.

[Quite a full exegesis.]

Walton, John H. *Genesis: From Biblical Text to Contemporary Life*. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.

[Half of the book is devoted to the exegesis of Genesis 1-11. The introduction is relatively brief, but the exegesis is quite detailed and generally well done. The commentary series of which this book is a part moves beyond exegesis to application. Walton is keenly aware of and able to interact very profitably with many of the major issues in today's world in the light of the Book of Genesis and its theology.]

_____ *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2011

_____ *The Lost World of Genesis 1: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate*.

Downers Grove: IVP, 2009

[These two books by Walton are particularly useful for the understanding of Genesis 1]

Wenham, G. *Genesis 1-15*. Waco: Word, 1987.

_____ *Genesis 16-50*. Dallas: Word, 1994.

[By the same author as the required text for this course these are quality commentaries. Wenham is a skillful and nuanced commentator.]

Westermann, Claus. *Genesis 1-11*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984.

_____ *Genesis 12-36*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985

_____ *Genesis 37-50*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986.

[A massive commentary on Genesis. Extensive bibliography. Essential reading for advanced students. Detailed verse by verse exegesis. Skilful use of Form Criticism. Limited ultimately by a quite rigorous Phenomenological Method applied to Genesis 1-11]

The New Interpreter's Bible: General articles and Introduction, Commentary & reflections for each book of the Bible, including the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books. Vol.1. Nashville: Abingdon, 2004.

Further Resources specifically on Exodus:

Bruckner, J. K. *Exodus*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008

Childs, B. S. *The Book of Exodus*. London: SCM, 1974.

Coggins, R. J. *The Book of Exodus*. Peterborough: Epworth, 2000.

Cole, A. R. *Exodus*. London: IVP, 1973.

Durham, J. I. *Exodus*. Waco: Word, 1987.

Enns, P. *Exodus*. Grand Rapids; Zondervan, 2000.

Fretheim, T.E. *Exodus*. Louisville; John Knox, 1990.

Hamilton, V. P. *Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary*. Grand Rapids; Baker Academic, 2011.

Meyers, C. L. *Exodus*. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Noth, M. *Exodus*. Trans. J. Bowden; London: SCM, 1962.

[A classic commentary by an important German scholar. Technical and critical in approach]

Sarna, N. M. *Exodus: JPS Torah Commentary*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991.

Stuart, D. K. *Exodus*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006

Further Resources specifically on Deuteronomy:

Christiansen, D. L. *Deuteronomy 1:1-21:9*. Nashville; Thomas Nelson, 2001.

Christiansen, D. L. *Deuteronomy 21:10-34:12*. Nashville; Thomas Nelson, 2002.

[Christiansen has an idiosyncratic approach based on the idea that Deuteronomy is song. It is also quite technical. His unusual approach limits the usefulness of this 2 volume commentary.]

Craigie, P. C. *The Book of Deuteronomy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976.

[Despite its age it is still one of the better commentaries on Deuteronomy.]

McConville, J.G. *Deuteronomy*. Leicester: Apollos, 2002.

[An excellent commentary that is not overly detailed or technical but covers the issues well and is clearly written.]

Miller, P. *Deuteronomy*. Louisville; Westminster John Knox, 1990.

Nelson, R. D. *Deuteronomy*. Louisville; Westminster John Knox, 2002.

[A fine commentary that competes with McConville in its clarity and insight.]

Payne, D.F. *Deuteronomy*. Louisville, Westminster, 1985.

Tigay, J. H. *Deuteronomy: JPS Torah Commentary*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996.

Von Rad, G. *Deuteronomy*. London: SCM, 1966.

Wright, C. J. H. *Deuteronomy*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996.