

ST. PETER'S SEMINARY / KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
at *The University of Western Ontario*
Fall 2016

BIBLSTUD 5501
The Bible in the Life of the Church
Wednesdays 9:30-12:30 pm

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Office hours: 1pm – 2:30pm, Wednesdays

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of the Psalms and Wisdom texts as models for the intersection between exegesis and actualization of the bible in ministry. (*3 hours per week; antirequisite: BIBLSTUD 5404 Applied Biblical Theology*)

B. GOALS

This course will assist students to grow in the following knowledge, skills and attitudes:

Knowledge

- An understanding of the genre, general historical background, key literary forms, and theological emphases in the Psalms and Wisdom Literature
- An understanding of how New Testament writers draw from the Psalms and Wisdom Literature to express their experience of Jesus Christ.

Skills

- The ability to discuss the nature, contents, and specific character of the Psalms and Wisdom Literature
- The ability to draw points of intersection between the exegetical findings of biblical criticism and broader ecclesial tradition (both historical and contemporary).
- The development of a consistent approach to Scripture that is attentive to both exegesis and to contemporary application to the sacramental and pastoral life of the Church.

Attitudes

- An active participation in class discussions, a willingness to ask questions and to contribute one's own learning and insights.
- A deepened awareness of the fundamental continuity and compatibility of the Old and New Testaments;

- An acknowledgement of the foundational importance of historical-critical study for Catholic Biblical interpretation, with an awareness of the ways in which it can be used to foster, rather than hinder, faith.
- A deepened sense of the importance of the liturgy as the natural home of the Bible, and as the major place in which it is meant to be interpreted.

C. ASSESSMENT

- 1. Participation and Attendance (10%):** The following comprise your participation and attendance grade:
 - a. Attendance:** Weekly attendance is mandatory. Seminarians must provide a valid excuse for all absences (e.g., significant illness).
 - b. Participation:** Preparation for, and active and informed participation in class discussion is a major aspect of this component of your grade. Since students interact with material in different ways, various kinds of participation will be noted towards your grade. For example, listening attentively, asking questions (even by email), and making comments are all good ways to demonstrate that you are thinking critically about the material. Participation marks are lost when it is clear that a student has not done the readings, and, though perhaps physically present, is not engaged with the material or class discussion. Participation marks are also lost when a student engages in disruptive or distracting behaviours. Please note: Texting and all other forms of social networking are not appropriate during class time as they are distracting to the student, the instructor, and fellow classmates. Students who engage in these forms of socializing during class will be marked as absent.
- 2. Sing a New Psalm, 20%: Due October 9, 2019.** Select a specific form (genre) of psalms (e.g. Lament, Thanksgiving, Praise; personal or communal) and compose a new psalm of your own. The goal of this assignment is to become familiar with the literary conventions of the psalms “from the inside out”, while also pressing today’s language, imagery, and current issues into prayer. Psalms should be anywhere from 10 – 15 verses long. Assessment will take into account structure, creativity, and depth of expression. Please do not provide annotations or explanatory notes.
- 3. Psalm Exegesis and Preaching, 35%: Due Oct 30, 2019, 6-7 pages.** Select a psalm that is found in the *Lectionary for Sundays and Solemnities*. See <http://catholic-resources.org/Lectionary/1992Canada.htm> or check the hard copy in the library reference section. Please indicate which Sunday or Solemnity and which psalm you are exploring.

Start by providing an exegesis of the psalm as it is found as a whole in the Bible. Using biblical commentaries and other library materials, determine:

- a. The type (genre) of psalm (e.g. Lament, Thanksgiving, Praise, Royal)
- b. Location in the collection of psalms
- c. Structure
- d. Major themes, vocabulary, and imagery
- e. Historical use in Israel (if known)

Once the exegetical exploration is complete, turn to consider how this psalm unfolds in the chosen Sunday or Solemnity. What portions of the psalm are included? Is anything omitted? Which line has been selected for the refrain? How does this psalm connect to the Gospel reading for the day? How would you meaningfully preach from this psalm? The goal of this assignment is to explore the continuity and compatibility of the Old Testament with the New, and to treat the psalm in its liturgical context as equally “preachable scripture” as the other liturgical readings.

4. Wisdom Literature: Exegesis meets Real Life, 35%. 6-7 pages. Due Wednesday Dec. 11, 2019, 5pm.

In Wisdom literature, biblical writers often reflect upon the challenges inherent in living a life of faith in light of the questions raised by theodicy. Choose representative passages from any two of the Wisdom texts we have studied and compare and contrast how they approach the task of living within the covenant. How do these texts articulate what it means to be wise? Considering our present moment, is there a contemporary issue that could benefit from this ancient wisdom? Examples of contemporary issues are myriad, so we will discuss possibilities in class together.

D. READINGS OR TEXTBOOKS

Students are required to have the following resources, which are available at the UWO Bookstore. Amazon.ca and bookdepository.com are also reliable

1. A reliable study bible. Some good editions are:
 - a. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha.*, Fourth Edition. Oxford University Press, 2010.
 - b. *The HarperCollins Study Bible (NRSV)*, HarperOne, 2006
 - c. *The Catholic Study Bible (NABRE)*, Oxford University Press, 2016.
2. Brueggemann, Walter. *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1984.
3. Ceresko, Anthony R. *Introduction to Old Testament Wisdom: A Spirituality for Liberation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999.

4. Throughout the semester the instructor will distribute or assign additional resources via OWL/SAKAI. Please ensure your UWO email address is active and able to receive messages (i.e. not full!), since OWL/SAKAI sends notices to UWO addresses only.

Email Policy

I am always happy to respond to students via email (in fact it is probably the easiest way to contact me). A few things to keep in mind when emailing:

- Please use your “@uwo.ca” email address. Email providers like Gmail, Hotmail, and even @dol.ca addresses sometimes go to the spam filter and I may not see them.
- During the regular work week (Mon-Fri), I try to respond to emails within 24 hrs, however, there may be times when I am delayed. Thank you for your understanding.

E. SCHEDULE, TOPICS & READINGS

A schedule of topics and readings will be distributed on the first day of class.

F. UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Students are responsible for knowing the University’s academic policies and regulations and any particularities of their own course of study. Ignorance of these policies is not an excuse for any violation thereof. The following policies are particularly important to note:

Accommodations for Tests/Examinations:

Students are responsible for seeking accommodation with appropriate documentation, prior to writing

tests/examinations, if they are of the view that their performance may be affected by extenuating circumstances.

How to Request Academic Accommodation – King’s Students:

(<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/courses-enrolment/exams-and-tests/medical-accommodation/>)

UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

(http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf)

Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

<https://www.eng.uwo.ca/files/undergraduate/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

All students requiring academic accommodations for tests and examinations must use the services offered through King’s University College.

Scholastic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

<http://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/terms/plagiarism.html>

Copyright re: Course Material: Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty Members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a Faculty Member. Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member is interested in posting a student's answers or papers on the course web site he/she should ask for the student's written permission. (Commercial use of Course material - <http://umd.edu/legal/commercial.html>)

Scholarly Citation: According to the policy adopted by the faculty of St. Peter's Seminary, all citations, references and bibliographies in written assignments are to follow the formatting prescribed in the Chicago Manual of Style. Footnotes are to be used, rather than author-date references in the body of the text. Please review and consult the summary provided by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary at <https://www.kenrick.edu/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Academic-Papers-and-Citations.pdf> for further information.

Submission of Assignments: It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments are completed on time. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission.

Students who are unable to hand in assignments or take examinations for legitimate reasons must consult with the instructor. If the reason is medical, students may be required to provide a note from a doctor. Ordinarily, all assignments and exams will be made up at a later date. In certain circumstances, the final grading scheme may be re-weighted if the missed assignment is of a low weight.

Selection and Registration of Courses: Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all prerequisite course(s) have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any anti-requisite course(s) that they have taken.

Classroom Conduct: Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for everyone and with professionalism in all classroom activities. Laptops and other electronic

devices may be used for classroom academic activities only. The use of such devices must always be in accord with the common good of the whole learning community as specified by the instructor. The instructor may choose at any time to limit their use for instructional purposes or because of the disruptive use of such devices.

You are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations.

Support Services:

Information about Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development (formerly Services for Students with Disabilities) at King's is available at <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

For emotional/mental health assistance see: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

The website for Academic Services at King's University College is <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-support/>

Students who are in emotional/mental health distress should refer to Mental Health@Western: <https://uwo.ca/health/services/students/index.html> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

University Students Council provides many valuable support services for students (including the health insurance plan) <http://westernusc.ca/services/>.

These services are not meant to replace those offered at the Seminary but may be beneficial to our students after consultation with the appropriate instructors, administrators, and formators.

G. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCE INFORMATION

According to the policy adopted by the faculty of St. Peter's Seminary, all citations, references and bibliographies in written assignments are to follow the formatting prescribed in the Chicago Manual of Style. Footnotes are to be used, rather than author-date references in the body of the text. Please review and consult the summary provided by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary at

<https://www.kenrick.edu/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Academic-Papers-and-Citations.pdf> for further information.

Students may also consult the *SBL Handbook of Style* (on OWL) for assistance formatting many biblical resources.

Scripture in the Church

Dei Verbum: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation. 1965.

The Pontifical Biblical Commission. *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993. Printed by Pauline Books and Media, 1993.

Benedict XVI, Pope. *Verbum Domini: The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2010. Printed by Frederick, ML: The Word Among Us Press.

Carl, Scott, ed. *Verbum Domini and the Complementarity of Exegesis and Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015.

Okoye, James Chukwuma. *Scripture in the Church: The Synod on the Word of God and the Post-Synodal Exhortation Verbum Domini*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011.

Resources for Psalms

Atherton, Richard. *Praying the Psalms in the Liturgy of the Hours: New Light on Ancient Songs*. Ligouri, MO: Ligouri Publications, 2004.

Brown, William P. *The Oxford Handbook of the Psalms*. Oxford: OUP, 2014.

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1984.

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Psalms and the Life of Faith*. Patrick D. Miller, ed. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1995.

Nowell, Irene. *Pleading, Cursing, Praising: Conversing with God through the Psalms*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013.

Wenham, Gordon J. *Psalms as Torah: Reading Biblical Song Ethically*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012

Westermann, Claus. *Lamentations: Issues and Interpretation*. Minneapolis: Fortress Pr; T & T Clark, 1994. Note: this is about the Book of Lamentations, but it provides a helpful discussion of the genre of Lament in Israel's biblical literature.

Resources for Wisdom Literature

Crenshaw, James L. *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction, Revised and Enlarged*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988.

Fredericks, Daniel C. *Coping with Transience: Ecclesiastes on Brevity in Life*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.

Murphy, Roland E. *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*, 3rd edition. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002.

Perdue, Leo G. et al. *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993.

Rohr, Richard. *Job and the Mystery of Suffering: Spiritual Reflections*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996.

Scheindlin, Raymond P. *The Book of Job: Translation, Introduction and Notes*. New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1998.