

Course Syllabus
WYB3/6331H– Canonical Interpretation in Critical Perspective
Wycliffe College
Toronto School of Theology
Winter 2020

Instructor Information

Instructor: Christopher Seitz, PhD, Senior Research Professor
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Course Identification

Course Number: WYB3331/6331H
Course Format: In class and Zoom sessions
Course Name: Canonical Interpretation in Critical Perspective
Course Location: Wycliffe College
Class Times: Irregular
Prerequisites: OT and NT Introductory courses

Course Description

The course provides an introduction to a variety of readings under the rubric of canonical interpretation. Each session will address a different section of the canon, so as to display how a canonical reading is affected by the texts and book in question. There will be a one hour lecture followed by a seminar type discussion of assigned readings. AD students will prepare the Hebrew text in addition.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts: See syllabus below.

Course Website(s)

- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> . Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask [insert college contact] for further help.]

- Personal Website <http://individual.utoronto.ca/name>

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

BD Level

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (Not all categories will be required for all courses.)

- Assess the various species of reading biblical texts under the rubric of “canonical interpretation” so they can distinguish differences in emphasis;
- Evaluate how such an approach uses the prior history of critical methods in order to make its contribution, so as to demonstrate knowledge of prior interpretation;
- Appraise how such an approach follows the lead of the “literal” or “plain sense” and so differs depending on which part of the canon is being evaluated. Students need to show they have grasped the different applications of canonical exegesis;
- Judge what the theological and hermeneutical contribution of such an approach is, including how the two testaments of scripture (Old Testament/Hebrew Bible and New Testament) speak with a discrete and a coordinated voice both. Students will demonstrate they comprehend the balance in written assignments

These outcomes are to be demonstrated in the written assignments as listed below.

Graduate Level

Each graduate program has detailed statements of “degree level expectations” (goals and outcomes) found in the respective program Handbooks. The harmonized course goals and outcomes (below) describe the level of knowledge and skill that will be characteristic of a typical graduate of the program. Instructors are required to develop a statement of learning outcomes for each course. These outcomes will provide benchmarks for course evaluation/grading and program assessment. Doctoral students are typically required to demonstrate higher levels of ability or expertise.

GRADUATE “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS”	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
EXPECTATIONS: <i>In this course students are expected to demonstrate the following:</i>		
1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge is defined as a set of increasing levels of understanding within a student’s area of specialization, methodologies, primary & secondary sources, historical developments and inter-disciplinarity.	Students will evaluate how such an approach uses the prior history of critical methods in order to make its contribution, so as to demonstrate knowledge of prior interpretation.	Papers

GRADUATE “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS”	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
<p>2. Research and Scholarship is defined as the ability to identify a new or unresolved question, to locate that question within a corpus of scholarly research & assess critically the relevant literature, to adopt a methodology(-ies), and to then formulate a thesis and reasoned argument(s) on the basis of the evidence.</p>	<p>Students will appraise how such an approach follows the lead of the “literal” or “plain sense” and so differs depending on which part of the canon is being evaluated. Students need to show they have grasped the different applications of canonical exegesis.</p>	<p>Seminars, papers</p>
<p>3. Level of Application of Knowledge is defined as the ability to engage in self-directed or assisted research, and the ability to produce innovative or original analysis within the context of graduate seminars and courses. In some cases this includes the application of a research language.</p>	<p>Students will assess the various species of reading biblical texts under the rubric of “canonical interpretation” so they can distinguish differences in emphasis</p>	<p>Seminars, papers</p>
<p>4. Professional Capacity or Autonomy is defined as the ability to translate the knowledge gained in other research or professional settings, e.g., to undertake further studies in their area of concentration; or to enter or return to other professional vocations for which an advanced understanding of Theological Studies is necessary or beneficial.</p>	<p>Students will judge what the theological and hermeneutical contribution of such an approach is, including how the two testaments of scripture (Old Testament/Hebrew Bible and New Testament) speak with a discrete and a coordinated voice both. Students will demonstrate they comprehend the balance in written assignments</p>	<p>Papers</p>
<p>5. Level of Communication Skills is defined as clear and effective communication in both oral and written forms; the construction of logical arguments; the making</p>		

GRADUATE “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS”	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
of informed judgments on complex issues; and facility with standard conventions of style for scholarly writing. Cohort formation is a component of all graduate programs.		
6. Awareness of the Limits of Knowledge is defined as the recognition that Theological Studies is a complex discipline, comprising: a broad array of subject areas; methods and sources; various ecclesiastical traditions and social contexts; and, insights from other disciplines.		

Evaluation

Requirements

For BD students:

Three evaluative papers (two papers 1500 words, constituting 25% each; one longer paper 2500-3000 words, 50%). Possible topics:

1. What is a canonical approach?
2. 1 to 3 Papers based on any of the twelve sessions above: how does a canonical reading address proper interpretation and offer a distinctive reading?
3. How does a canonical approach make use of historical-critical findings?
4. How does a canonical approach differ from source, form or redaction critical readings?
5. Describe and evaluate Childs’ understanding of Biblical Theology based on the two Testaments of Christian Scripture.
6. How is the New Testament’s use of the Old Testament normative for Christian Theology, and how not?
7. How is the Letter Collection a factor in the interpretation of single Pauline Letters?
8. How is the “Three Isaiah” model for interpretation appropriate and in need of supplementation?
9. To what extent is historical criticism useful for interpretation in Genesis and how does a canonical reading adjust it toward different ends?

For AD Students

1. Seminar participation (20%)
2. All biblical examples will be evaluated on the basis of the Hebrew text
3. Two papers: one 3000 word from the list above (30%). One 5000-word essay on a topic to be chosen in consultation with the instructor (50%). This is the length of a typical journal submission and will conform to that genre (review of state of the question; estimate strengths and weaknesses; construct a fresh thesis)

Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Grading System - Graduate Degree Students

5000, 6000 and 7000 level courses use the following alpha grading scale;

A+	(90-100)	Profound & creative
A	(85-89)	Outstanding
A-	(80-84)	Excellent
B+	(77-79)	Very Good
B	(73-76)	Good
B-	(70-72)	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level
FZ	(0-69)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of

registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Late work (Graduate). The prima facie deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered.

The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or college deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student's college Graduate Director, not the instructor of the course. Nevertheless, the instructor's signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college Graduate Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST on its website. See Section 7.11 of the Conjoint Graduate Degree Handbook.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Schedule

I. Introduction

Lecture: What is Canonical Interpretation?

Stephen Chapman, "The Canon Debate: What It Is and Why It Matters," *JTI* 4/2 (2010): 273-294

B.S. Childs, "Critique of Recent Intertextual Canonical Interpretation," *ZAW* 115/2 (2003)

C. Seitz, "Canonical Interpretation of the Elder Testament," *Elder Testament*, 21-34

II. Genesis 1—3

Lecture: Source Criticism and Canonical Interpretation

BS Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*

S. Schwartz, "Narrative *Toledoth* Formula in Genesis: The Case of Heaven and Earth, Noah, and Isaac," *JHS* 16 (2016) &-36

III. Psalms 1—3

Lecture: The Canonical Shape of the Psalter

Seitz, "Psalm 2 in the Entry Hall of the Psalter: Extended Sense in the History of Interpretation," in E. Radner, ed., *Church, Society, and the Christian Common Good* (Eugene, Or.: Cascade, 2017) 95-106

Gerald Wilson, "The Structure of the Psalter," in Firth and Johnstone, *Interpreting the Psalms*, 229-46

_____, "Psalms and Psalter: Paradigm for Biblical Theology," in Scott Hafemann, ed., *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002) 100-110

Gordon Wenham, "Towards a Canonical Reading of the Psalms," in *Canon and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew et al. (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006) 331-51

Erasmus, Psalm 3

IV. Isaiah 7—11

Lecture: Isaiah after Three Isaiahs

C. Seitz, "Fixity and Potential in Isaiah," in C. Helmer, ed., *The Multivalence of Biblical Texts and Theological Meanings* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2006) 37-45

BS Childs, *Isaiah* (OTL)

V. Colossians

Lecture: Paul and His Letter Collection

John Barclay, *Colossians*

C. Seitz, *Colossians*

VI. Ecclesiastes 12

Lecture: Wisdom Literature and The Books of Solomon

G. Wilson, "The Words of the Wise: The Intent and Significance of Qoheleth 12:9-14" *JBL* 103 (1984) 175-92.

G.T. Sheppard, "The Epilogue to Qoheleth as Theological Commentary," *CBQ* 39 (1979) 182-89

Sneed: "Is there a Wisdom Literature?"

VII. Exodus 3

Lecture: Source Criticism in Exodus: The Divine Name Criterion

B S Childs, *Exodus*

Walter Moberly, *The Old Testament of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992)

C. Seitz, "The Call of Moses and the 'Revelation' of the Divine Name: Source-Critical Logic and Its Legacy," in *Theological Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 145-61

VIII. Isaiah 40

Lecture: How is "the Prophet Isaiah" Present in "Second Isaiah" (*Word Without End*)

C. Seitz, "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109 (1990) 229-247

C. Seitz, *Isaiah 40-66*

B.S. Childs, *Isaiah*

IX. Hosea 14 and Joel 1 in the Twelve

Lecture: Twelve Prophets and One Collection

R. Van Leeuwen, "Scribal Wisdom and Theodicy in the Book of the Twelve," in Leo Perdue, ed., *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993) 31-49

C. Seitz, *Joel*

X. Psalm 8 and Hebrews

Lecture: The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament

BS Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis*

C Seitz, *Elder Testament*

C Seitz, *Character of Christian Scripture*

John Calvin, Psalm 8

XI. Isaiah 49

Lecture: The Servant Songs in Isaiah

C. Seitz "You are my Servant, You are the Israel in whom I will be glorified' The Servant Songs and the Effect of Literary Context in Isaiah," *Calvin Theological Review* 39 (2004) 117-34

BS Childs, *Isaiah*

Peter Wilcox, David Paton-Williams, "The Servant Songs in Second Isaiah," *JSOT* 42 (1988) 79-102

XII. Canon of Old and New Testaments

Lecture: The Form of the Canon and Biblical Theology

Childs, BTONT section on OT/NT

Seitz, *Elder Testament*

Bibliography: Canonical Reading in Critical Perspective

Stephen Chapman, "The Old Testament Canon and its Authority for the Christian Church," *Ex Auditu* 19 (2003) 125-48

_____, "The Canon Debate: What It Is and Why It Matters," *JTI* 4/2 (2010): 273-294

B.S. Childs, "Response to Reviewers of *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*," *JSOT* 16 (1980)

_____, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992)

_____, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001)

_____, "Critique of Recent Intertextual Canonical Interpretation," *ZAW* 115/2 (2003)

Daniel Driver, *Brevard Childs: Biblical Theologian: For the Church's One Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010)

R. Haydon, "A Survey and Analysis of Recent 'Canonical' Methods (2000-2015)"

Lee McDonald, ed., *The Canon Debate: On the Origins and the Formation of the Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002)

Walter Moberly, *The Old Testament of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992)

Iain Provan, "Canons to the Left of Him: Brevard Childs, His Critics, and the Future of Old Testament Theology," *SJT* 50 (1997) 1-38

Christopher Seitz, "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109 (1990) 229-247

_____, "The Call of Moses and the 'Revelation' of the Divine Name: Source-Critical Logic and Its Legacy," in *Theological Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 145-61

- _____, *Isaiah 40–66: The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001)
- _____, “‘You are my Servant, You are the Israel in whom I will be glorified’ The Servant Songs and the Effect of Literary Context in Isaiah,” *Calvin Theological Review* 39 (2004) 117-34
- _____, “Fixity and Potential in Isaiah,” in C. Helmer, ed., *The Multivalence of Biblical Texts and Theological Meanings* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2006) 37-4
- _____, *Prophecy and Hermeneutics: Toward a New Introduction to the Prophets* (Studies in Theological Interpretation; Baker Academic, 2007)
- _____, “Prophetic Associations,” in *Thus Says the Lord: Essays on the Former and Latter Prophets in Honor of Robert R. Wilson* (ed. John J. Ahn and Stephen Cook; London: T&T Clark, 2009)
- _____, *The Character of Christian Scripture: The Significance of a Two-Testament Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011)
- _____, *Colossians: The Brazos Theological Commentary Series* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2014)
- _____, *Joel* (ITC; London: Bloomsbury, 2016)
- _____, *Elder Testament: Canon, Theology, Trinity* (Baylor University Press, 2018)
- G.T. Sheppard, “The Epilogue to Qoheleth as Theological Commentary,” *CBQ* 39 (1979) 182-89
- R. Van Leeuwen, “Scribal Wisdom and Theodicy in the Book of the Twelve,” in Leo Perdue, ed., *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993) 31-49
- F. Watson, “Gospel and Scripture: Rethinking Canonical Unity,” *TynBul* 52/2 (2001) 161-82
- J. Webster, “Canon,” in the *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (ed. “The Peter Wilcox, David Paton-Williams, “The Servant Songs in Second Isaiah,” *JSOT* 42 (1988) 79-102
- Gordon Wenham, “Towards a Canonical Reading of the Psalms,” in *Canon and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew et al. (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 331-51
- Gerald Wilson, “The Words of the Wise: The Intent and Significance of Qoheleth 12:9-14” *JBL* 103 (1984) 175-92
- _____, “The Structure of the Psalter,” in Firth and Johnstone, *Interpreting the Psalms*, 229-46
- _____, “Psalms and Psalter: Paradigm for Biblical Theology,” in Scott Hafemann, ed., *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002) 100-110

