



Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

Course Identification

Course Number : Course Code (e.g., WYH2181H L0101)
 Course Name: Justice in the Biblical Story
 Class Location: Wycliffe College
 Class Day & Time: Tuesdays, 11am - 1pm

Instructor Information

Instructor: Sylvia C. Keesmaat, DPhil Teaching Assistant:
 E-mail: s.keesmaat@utoronto.ca E-mail:
 Office Hours: By appointment

Course Prerequisites or Requisites

Give the course code and title of any pre-requisite or requisite courses.

Course Description

This course will trace the multi-faceted theme of justice as it unfolds throughout the biblical story. Beginning with an exploration of the impact our own place and assumptions have on our reading, we will then probe the complicated ways in which idolatry, economic justice, racial justice, justice for the land, food justice, justice for the stranger and the migrant, gender justice, colonization, and peace and violence permeate the story. This will provide a biblical basis for reflecting on justice and reconciliation in our world today.

Course Methodology

The course will consist of lectures, seminars, and discussions of course readings. Depending on class size, students will also be making presentations based on the course readings.

Course Outcomes

This should list the course outcomes, the course elements (assignments and other course requirements) that will demonstrate the degree to which the students have achieved these outcomes, and how course outcomes correspond to the BD Program outcomes given in the college's Statement of Intended Outcomes for each of its BD programs. These should be set out in a clear manner, in a table (Nota bene: not all program outcomes will be achieved in every course):

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
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By the end of this course, BD students will be able to	This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and explain the development of the biblical themes of idolatry, economic justice, land and food, welcome of the stranger, racial justice, colonization, gender, and peace and violence and describe those themes in an oral presentation; 	Participation in discussion, seminar presentation, reflection paper	MTS: 1.1; 2.1, 2.3 MDiv: 1.1; 1.2; 2.1; 2.2; 3.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locate and compare these themes in the context of a biblical understanding of justice and reconciliation and describe them in a short paper; 	Class discussion, short papers	MTS: 1.1; 1.2; 2.1; 2.3; 3.2 MDiv: 1.1; 1.2; 2.1; 2.2; 3.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • situate these biblical traditions concerning justice within the history and culture of the Ancient Near East and the Roman Empire; 	Participation in discussion; seminar presentation, short papers, research paper	MTS: 1.1; 1.2; 2.1; 2.2; 2.3 MDiv: 1.1; 1.2; 2.2; 3.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • constructively and critically evaluate and articulate how biblical understandings of justice illuminate and challenge contemporary justice and reconciliation issues and practices and defend their position in an academically rigorous research paper 	Class participation, seminar presentation, research paper	MTS: 1.1; 1.5; 1.6; 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3 MDiv: 1.1; 2.1; 2.2; 3.1; 3.2
By the end of this course, AD students will be able to	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and explain the development of the biblical themes of idolatry, economic justice, land and food, welcome of the stranger, racial justice, colonization, gender, and peace and violence and describe those themes in an oral presentation; 	Participation in discussion, seminar presentations reflection paper	PhD: 1.4; 5; 6

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> distinguish and connect these themes in the context of a biblical understanding of justice and reconciliation and describe them in a short paper; 	Class participation, short papers	PhD: 1; 4; 5; 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess and interpret these biblical traditions concerning justice within the history and culture of the Ancient Near East and the Roman Empire; 	Class participation, seminar presentations, short papers, research paper	PhD: 1; 4; 5; 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> constructively and critically formulate and integrate biblical understandings of justice in relation to contemporary justice and reconciliation issues and practices and defend their position in an academically rigorous research paper 	Class participation, seminary presentations, research paper	PhD: 1; 2a; 2b; 2c; 3; 4; 5; 6

5000- and 6000-level Courses For courses at this level, this section of the syllabus should be formatted in the same manner as Basic Degree outcomes. The statement of learning outcomes for the conjoint PhD program are found in Appendix A (second column) in the Graduate Conjoint Degree Handbook. (The MA outcomes statement will appear once the conjoint MA program has been fully approved.)

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

- An Asian Working Group, “The Asian Feminist Perspective: The Exodus Story (Exodus 1.8-22; 2.1-10)” in *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. ed. R.S. Sugirtharajah. London: SPCK, 1991, 267-279.
- Ateek, Naim Stifan, “A Palestinian Perspective: The Bible and Liberation” in *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. ed. R.S. Sugirtharajah. London: SPCK, 1991. pp. 180-186.
- Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian J. Walsh, *Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), selections.
- Brueggemann, Walter, “Breaking the Cycle of Violence: A Case Study” *The Living Pulpit* January-March (2004), 10-12.
- *Brueggemann, Walter, “The Costly Loss of Lament” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 36 (1986), 57-71.
- Brueggemann, Walter. “The Liturgy of Abundance: The Myth of Scarcity” in *Deep Memory, Exuberant Hope*. Fortress, 2000, pp. 69-75.
- Brueggemann, Walter, “Unity and Dynamic in the Isaiah Tradition” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 29 (1984) 89-107.

- Davis, Ellen F. “The Pain of Seeing Clearly: Prophetic Views of the Created Order” and “Destroyers of the Earth: Prophetic Critiques of Imperial Economics” in *Biblical Prophecy: Perspective for Christian Theology, Discipleship and Ministry*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2014, pp. 83-141.
- Dube, Musa W. “Fifty Years of Bleeding: A Storytelling Feminist Reading of Mark 5.24-63” in *Other Ways of Reading: African Women and the Bible* ed. Musa W. Dube. (Atlanta: SBL/Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2001), pp. 50-60.
- Dube, Musa W. “Toward a Post-Colonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible” in *Semeia: Reading the Bible as Women: Perspectives from Africa, Asia and Latin America*. 78 (1997), 11-27..
- Ekblad, Bob, “Jesus’s Surprising Offer of Living Cocaine: Contextual Encounters at the Well with Latino Inmates in U.S. Jails” in *Through the Eyes of Another: Intercultural Readings of the Bible*. edited by Hans de Wit, Louis Jonker, Marleen Kool, Daniel Schipani (Elkhart, Ind: Institute of Mennonite Studies/ Amsterdam: Vrij Universiteit, 2004), pp 131-141.
- Friesen, Steven J. “Poverty in Pauline Studies: Beyond the So-called ‘New Consensus’” *JSNT* 26.3 (2004) 323-361.
- Fretheim, Terence E. *The Suffering of God*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- Keesmaat, Sylvia. “A Gift in the Face of Empire.” Unpublished paper presented at the Society of Biblical Literature Meeting, Boston, 2010.
- Keesmaat, Sylvia C. “Welcoming in the Gentiles: A Biblical Model for Decision Making” from *Living Together in the Church: Including our Differences*, Greig Dunn and Chris Ambidge, editors. Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 2004, pp. 30-49.
- Keesmaat, Sylvia and Brian Walsh. “Outside of a Small Circle of Friends: Jesus and the Justice of God” in *Jesus, Paul and the People of God: A Theological Dialogue with N.T. Wright*, edited by Nicholas Perrin and Richard B. Hays (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 66-89.
- LeMarquand, Grant. “The Canaanite Conquest of Jesus (Matt 15.21-28)” *Essays in Honour of Frederik Wisse ARC, The Journal of the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill*, (2005), 237-247.
- Myers, Ched and Matthew Colwell, *Our God is Undocumented: Biblical Faith and Immigrant Justice*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2012.
- Myers, Ched and Elaine Enns, *Ambassadors of Reconciliation. Vol 1: New Testament Reflections on Restorative Justice and Peacemaking*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2009.
- Polaski, Sandra Hack. “Paul and Real Women.” *Word & World* 30:4 (2010), 391-398.
- Rossing, Barbara R, “River of Life in God’s New Jerusalem: An Eschatological Vision for Earth’s Future” in Deiter T. Hessel and Rosemary R. Ruether (eds.), *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-being of the Earth and Humans*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000. pp. 205-224.
- Tamez, Elsa, “Greed and Structural Sin: Reflections on Romans and the Global Economy” in *Liberating Biblical Study*, edited by Laurel Dykstra and Ched Myers. The Center and Library for the Bible and Social Justice Series Vol 1. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2011, pp. 173-184.
- Ukpong, Justin S. “The Parable of the Shrewd Manager (Luke 16.1-13): An Essay in Inculturation Biblical Hermeneutic” in *Semeia: “Reading With”: African Overtures* 73 (1996) pp. 189-210.

- Walsh, Brian. “Jubilee or Idolatry: A Radical Antithesis” in *Making a New Beginning: Biblical Reflections on Jubilee*. Toronto: Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative, 1998. pp. 77-85.
- Warrior, Robert Allen. “A Native American Perspective: Canaanites, Cowboys and Indians” in *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. ed. R.S. Sugirtharajah. London: SPCK, 1991, 287-295.
- Woodley, Randy, “Just Land: What Are the Key Justice Issues for Native Peoples in the U.S.?” in *The Justice Project*, 107-113.

Course Website(s)

- none

Class Schedule

Week 1 (Date) Introduction; the Biblical Story

Week 2 (Date) Hermeneutical Issues: The Problem of How and From Where we Read this Text.

Readings: Ateek, Warrior, Brueggemann, “Unity and Disunity”

Week 3 (Date) A Good Creation: Justice for the Land. Readings: Selected Biblical Texts, Woodley, Davis, pp. 83-109.

Week 4 (Date) Justice for the Land: Resisting the Empire. Readings: Selected Biblical Texts; Davis, 111-141; Keesmaat “A Gift in the Face of Empire”

Week 5 (Date) A God of Judgement? Violence and Restorative Justice. Readings: Selected Biblical Texts, Fretheim, ch 7-10, Brueggemann, “Breaking the Cycle of Violence.”

Week 6 (Date) Bless Your Enemy? Violence, the State and Restorative Justice. Readings: Selected Biblical Texts, Ekblad, “Jesus’s Surprising Offer,” Myers and Enns, pp.1-43; 82-121.

Week 7 (Date) Reading Week. No Class.

Week 8 (Date) Chosen People vs. The Canaanites: Justice, Indigenous Peoples, and Race. Readings: Selected Biblical Texts, LeMarquand, Woodley, Dube “Towards a Feminist, Post-Colonial Reading,” Myers and Colwell, ch 1,3.

Week 9 (Date) Aliens, Moabites, Jesus: Immigrant and Refugee Justice. Readings: Myers and Colwell, chs 5, 7, 9.

Week 10 (Date) Midwives, Princesses and Widows: Justice and Gender. Readings: Selected Biblical Texts, Asian Working Group, Dube “Fifty Years,” Polaski, Keesmaat “Welcoming in the Gentiles.”

Week 11 (Date) You Shall Have an Open Hand: Economics and Economic Justice. Readings: Brueggemann, “The Liturgy of Abundance,” Walsh, “Jubilee or Idolatry,” Tamez.

Week 12 (Date) Sabbath Economics. Readings: Selected biblical texts, Ukpong, Friesen, Keesmaat and Walsh, “Outside of a Small Circle.”

Week 13 (Date) The Kingdom and the Justice of God: The Book of Revelation, the City and Shalom. Readings: Selected biblical texts: Rossing, Brueggemann, “The Costly Loss of Lament,” Bouma-Prediger and Walsh.

Evaluation

Requirements

- Class Participation: 10%
- Seminar Presentation on Readings: 10%
- Reflection papers, two, worth 10% each
- Major Research Paper, due last week of class: 60%

Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

Policy on Assignment Extensions

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF

must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar's office.

One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.

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. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students 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* (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/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students 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>).

Writing Style. The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which is available at Crux Books. Please note that inclusive language is the norm for all TST academic writing.

Course Evaluations. At the end of the course students are expected to complete a course evaluation. The evaluation is done online and instructions will be contained in an e-mail message that will be sent out by the Wycliffe College registrar.

Bibliography (selected)

Bruce C. Birch, *Let Justice Roll Down: The Old Testament, Ethics and Christian Life*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991 (selections).

Brown, Peter. *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*. Hanover, NH: University of New England Press, 2002.

Carroll, M. Daniel R., *Christians at the Border: Immigration, The Church and The Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.

- Davis, Ellen. *Scripture, Culture and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- De La Torre, Miguel. *Reading the Bible from the Margins*. New York: Orbis Books, 2002.
- Dube, Musa W. *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*. St Louis, MI: Chalice, 2000.
- Ekblad, Bob. *Reading The Bible With The Damned*. Westminster John Knox Press. 2005.
- Garnsey, Peter D.A. *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World: Responses to Risk and Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Georgi, Dieter. *Remembering the Poor: The History of Paul's Collection for Jerusalem*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1992.
- Gottwald, Norman K. *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250—1050 B.C.E.*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979.
- Hendricks, Obery M. *The Universe Bends Towards Justice: Radical Reflection on the Bible, The Church and the Body Politic*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2011.
- Hoppe, Leslie, J., *There Shall Be no Poor Among You: Poverty in the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004).
- Horsley, Richard A., ed. *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.
- Howard-Brook, Wes and Sharon H. Ringe, eds. *The New-Testament: Introducing the Way of Discipleship*. Maryknoll: Orbis: 2002. (selections).
- Howard-Brook, Wes, "Come out, My People!" *God's Call out of Empire in the Bible and Beyond*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2010.
- Kinsler, Ross and Kinsler, Gloria, eds. *God's Economy: Biblical Studies from Latin America*, Maryknoll: Orbis, 2005.
- Longenecker, Bruce W. *Remember the Poor: Paul, Poverty and the Greco-Roman World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).
- Longenecker, Bruce W. "Poverty and Paul's Gospel" *Ex Auditu* 27 (2011) 26-44.
- Longenecker, Bruce W. and Kelly Liebengood, eds., *Engaging Economics: New Testament Scenarios and Early Christian Reception*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2009.
- Myers, Ched and Elaine Enns. *Ambassadors of Reconciliation. Volume 1: New Testament Reflections on Restorative Justice and Peacemaking*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2009.
- Oakes, Peter. *Reading Romans in Pompeii*
- Pixley, Jorge and Clodovis Boff, *The Bible, the Church and the Poor*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1989.
- Longenecker, Bruce W., *Remember the Poor: Paul, Poverty and the Greco-Roman World*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Scheidel, W., I. Morris and R. Saller, eds. *The Cambridge Economic History of the Graeco-Roman World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Stanley, Christopher J. ed. *The Colonized Apostle: Paul Through Postcolonial Eyes*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.

R.S. Sugirtharajah, ed. *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.

Swartley, Willard M. *Covenant of Peace: The Missing Peace in New Testament Theology and Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.

Trible, Phyllis. *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*. Fortress Press. 1984.

West, Gerald O. *The Academy of the Poor: Towards a Dialogical Reading of the Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

Woodley, Randy S.. *Shalom and the Community of Creation: An Indigenous Vision*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012.

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