

**OT214: Syllabus**  
Winter, 2003  
January 6-March 17  
Mondays, 8:15 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Peter T. Vogt  
Bethel Seminary  
Office: C16; Phone: 651-635-8501  
Email: [p-vogt@bethel.edu](mailto:p-vogt@bethel.edu)  
P.O. Box: 7005  
Website: [www.bethel.edu/~pvogt](http://www.bethel.edu/~pvogt)

## **Exposition of Deuteronomy**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

A concentrated study of the book of Deuteronomy, with special attention placed on the literary form and theology of the book. Emphasis will be placed on the nature of covenant relationship and the role of *Torah*.

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

This course will help each student to:

1. Become familiar with the contents of the book of Deuteronomy.
2. Gain an appreciation for the ways in which the original audience of the book would have understood the message of the book.
3. Comprehend the relevance of the message of Deuteronomy for the present day.
4. Grasp the significance of *Torah* in Deuteronomy, and the ways in which the importance of *Torah* is highlighted throughout the book.
5. Appreciate the radical nature of Deuteronomy's vision for life lived in adherence to *Torah* in order to demonstrate absolute loyalty to Yahweh.
6. Understand the ways in which the book has been interpreted by critical scholars, and the limitations and weaknesses of that approach.
7. Be inspired by the message of Deuteronomy, and to be strengthened in one's commitment to the Lord.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

MCCONVILLE, J. GORDON. *Deuteronomy*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary. Downer's Grove: Intervarsity, 2002. ISBN: 0-8308-2505-3

MILLAR, J. GARY. *Now Choose Life: Theology and Ethics in Deuteronomy*. New Studies in Biblical Theology. Downer's Grove: Intervarsity, 1998. ISBN: 0-8308-2606-8

### **ADDITIONAL READING (PROVIDED TO STUDENTS):**

WEINFELD, MOSHE. *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972; reprint Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992, 178-243.

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. **Class Participation (5%)**: All students are expected to prepare for and participate in the discussions of the material in class. Part of your grade will consist of an evaluation of the

amount and quality of your participation in the discussions that take place. There is no grade for completing the reading *per se*, but it is expected that you will engage in careful and concentrated reading as part of your preparation for the class discussion.

2. **Issue Paper (45%):** Students will research and write a paper focused on an important issue in Deuteronomic studies. Guidelines for the paper are provided in this syllabus. You will then present a summary of your work to the class. Your grade for this project will be based on the quality of your research as well as your summary presentation in class.
3. **Exegetical Paper (45%):** Students will complete an exegetical paper on a text from Deuteronomy in accordance with the guidelines provided in this syllabus. The paper may not be one that has been submitted for any other course (e.g. OT 101/111).
4. **Reflection Paper (5%):** It is my conviction that an encounter with God through his word results in a change within us. Therefore, I would like you to write a reflection paper of no more than 500 words in which you describe the ways in which you have grown as a result of encountering God through his word in this course. Please note that I am not asking to describe what you have *learned* in terms of content and/or methodology. Rather, I am interested in knowing how the Lord has revealed himself to you and how you have changed as a result. You should also address how your preparation for ministry (however you feel called) has been strengthened as a result of an in-depth engagement with God's word. Although this paper is to be submitted at the end of the course, I encourage you to be thinking about and looking for God's activity throughout the quarter.

### GRADING

Students will be graded on a pass/fail basis. In order to pass, however, a student must receive a score of 80% for his or her work. Anyone who requires or desires a letter grade (A-F) will be granted such, and your work will be graded according to the following scale:

- |                |                |                    |
|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| • 95 – 100 = A | • 85 – 86 = B- | • 75 – 76 = D+     |
| • 93 – 94 = A- | • 83 – 84 = C+ | • 72 – 74 = D      |
| • 91 – 92 = B+ | • 79 – 82 = C  | • 70 – 71 = D-     |
| • 87 – 90 = B  | • 77 – 78 = C- | • 69 and below = F |

Additional information about the standards and criteria for the various grade levels is found in the current catalog.

### PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

Any work that involves plagiarism or cheating will be assigned a grade of "0" (F). Repeated or an especially egregious violation may result in the denial of credit for the course, in accordance with the policy outlined in the current catalog. Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism is not an acceptable excuse. If you are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, it is up to you to take the initiative to find out.

### LATE WORK AND INCOMPLETES

All assignments are to be handed in by the beginning of class on the date indicated on the course schedule. Unless *prior* arrangements are made with the professor, late work will be penalized 10% for each day it is overdue, beginning with the first day. (That is, an assignment turned in after the start of class but on the same day is still penalized 10%. The next 10% is taken off 24 hours after the start of

class.) *No assignments will be accepted more than five days late.* Students should take the initiative as much in advance as possible to alert the professor to extenuating circumstances. I am more than willing to take emergencies and crises of various sorts into account. Note, however, that though they often precipitate a crisis or emergency of one kind or another, procrastination, over-scheduling, and over-committing (even in the context of a worthwhile endeavor like ministry) do not constitute a crisis or emergency. Circumstances that a congregation would accept for a pastor's missing a Sunday sermon would constitute an emergency and crisis for which latitude will be granted.

Please note that the issue paper summaries are an important component of the class discussion, and therefore may not be delayed or extended. A student who fails to present a summary or who is unprepared may expect a significant grade reduction for the project.

In accordance with the policy in the current catalog (p. 86), a grade of incomplete is granted only by written contract. Please see the catalog for full details.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

Regular and on-time class attendance is a necessary part of the learning experience. Meeting the objectives for this course depends heavily on class participation from all students. Absences beyond one class period (or equivalent) will result in a grade reduction, and students who miss more than two classes may not expect to pass the course. Absences will be excused at the professor's discretion, according to the standards described above regarding late assignments. Please make every effort to attend every class session, and to be on-time.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY**

Please contact me as soon as possible if disability-related accommodations are needed. Accommodations for students with documented disabilities are set up through the Office of Disability Services. Contact Kathy McGillivray, Director of Disability Services, at (651) 635-8759.

#### **PO Boxes**

Please ensure that your seminary PO box number appears on every assignment you turn in.

#### **AN INVITATION**

Please let me know if I can help you in any way. Feel free to stop by my office (located in the basement of the library annex, *not* in faculty hall), or make an appointment.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	COURSE TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS
1/6	Course Introduction Introduction to Deuteronomy	
1/13	History of Interpretation Critical Views	Deuteronomy Weinfeld McConville, pp. 17-51
1/20	<b>NO CLASS – MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY</b>	
1/27	Structure (Student Presentations 1 and 2) Date (Student Presentation 3)	
2/3	Deuteronomy 1-3 (Student Presentation 4)	
2/10	Deuteronomy 4-6 (Student Presentation 5)	Complete Millar
2/17	Deuteronomy 7-11 (Student Presentation 6)	
2/24	Deuteronomy 12-16:17 (Student Presentations 7 and 8)	
3/3	Deuteronomy 16:18-26:19 (Student Presentations 9, 10, 11)	
3/10	Deuteronomy 27-31:29 (Student Presentations 12 and 13)	
3/17	Deuteronomy 31:30-34:12 (Student Presentation 14)	<b>Due: Exegesis Paper Reflection Paper</b>

**Note:** Students are expected to read as much of the material from McConville, *Deuteronomy*, as is necessary to ensure adequate preparation for class discussion. I expect that each of you will read about 400 pages of that book over the course of the quarter.

## ISSUE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

Students will choose one of the following issues to research. The paper will be due the day on which you present your research to the class.

- Issue 1: The Structure of Deuteronomy (January 27)
- Issue 2: Ancient Near Eastern Treaties and the Structure of Deuteronomy (January 27)
- Issue 3: The Date of Authorship of Deuteronomy (January 27)
- Issue 4: Moshe Weinfeld (February 3)
- Issue 5: The Decalogue in Deuteronomy in Comparison to Exodus (February 10)
- Issue 6: Nationalism and the Righteousness of Israel in Deuteronomy (February 17)
- Issue 7: Profane Slaughter in Deuteronomy (February 24)
- Issue 8: Feasts and Festivals in Deuteronomy (February 24)
- Issue 9: Kingship in Deuteronomy (March 3)
- Issue 10: Sacrifice in Deuteronomy (March 3)
- Issue 11: Norbert Lohfink (March 3)
- Issue 12: The Curses of Deuteronomy 28 and the Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon (March 10)
- Issue 13: Covenant ( ) in Deuteronomy (March 17) *\*\*Hebrew student only*
- Issue 14: The Presentation of Moses in Deuteronomy (March 17)

Your paper should be written in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Your paper should be well-written and the result of careful research. Your paper should demonstrate familiarity with the issue, and present alternative views to your own and the arguments in favor of that view. You will also take a stand on the issue (if appropriate) and defend your view with evidence, and in interaction with the views of others (i.e. you will need to show why your view is best supported by the evidence and present a case for why the alternative view(s) inadequately account for the data).
3. Your paper should be grammatically correct, well-organized, concise, and readable. I expect that you will write several drafts, revise, and retype. If your paper is too weak in these areas, I may return it for correction before I assign a grade.
4. You should use at least 10 high-quality sources, *in addition* to the Bible and any materials used in this class. You should consult scholarly journal articles as well as books, and these should represent at least 5 sources. Your sources should be actually cited in your paper, not just included in a bibliography at the end. (That is, I want to see that you have interacted carefully with the argument presented in the source.)
5. Papers are to be double-spaced, and properly documented according to the current (6<sup>th</sup>) edition of Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (see the catalog, p. 85). Please note that failure to properly document the ideas and expressions of others constitutes plagiarism, and will be penalized appropriately, as detailed in the current Seminary catalog. All notes should be numbered consecutively and placed as footnotes at the bottom of the page (preferred option) or at the end of the paper on a separate page (accepted alternative). Do not use notes that are right in the text except when noting biblical references. These can be placed in parentheses in the text like this: (Deut 16:2).

6. Please use sexually inclusive language when referring to human beings in your paper: “persons” not “men”; “humanity” not “mankind”; etc., unless you mean specifically men instead of women. To avoid using “he” all the time, pluralize pronouns or alternate genders. Since it is assumed that Moses was the author of Deuteronomy it is, of course, acceptable to refer to the author of the text as “he.”
7. Please indicate the number of words in your paper. Your paper should be about 2650 words. Substantial deviation from the assigned number of words (either higher or lower) will adversely affect your grade.
8. Your name, PO box, and the title of your paper should appear on a title page stapled to the paper. Please do not use report covers.

**In-Class Presentation:**

You will present a summary of your research to the class. As this will form the basis for at least some of the discussion, it is important that you adhere to the following guidelines:

1. You should prepare your summary such that you can present the important aspects of your research in not less than 20 and no more than 30 minutes. This means you must think carefully about what is most relevant and how best to present the most salient features of your work.
2. Your presentation should be a carefully crafted summary of your research. Do *not* simply read your paper to the class.
3. Prepare a one page handout that will assist students in following your presentation. Include an annotated bibliography of no fewer than 8 key works.
4. Be creative in planning your presentation. You may use power point or additional handouts to assist you in communicating your ideas to the class. Be sure, though, that your presentation does not distract from your content.
5. Remember that your material will serve as the basis for discussion in the class. I expect that your presentation will reflect an appropriate amount of preparation (including *practicing* your presentation).
6. Ensure your presentation is appropriate for the audience. That is, this is a graduate level seminar course, and your presentation should address the audience to which it will be presented. A junior-high level Bible study presentation is not acceptable. Be aware, as well, that not all students have facility with Hebrew. If you are a Hebrew student, I expect that your knowledge of the language will be used at various points in your preparation. But you must transliterate the Hebrew in order to ensure your research is accessible to all students.
7. Your grade for this project will be based in part on the quality of your presentation.

## EXEGETICAL PAPER

Research and write an exegetical paper on a text from Deuteronomy. Choose your text carefully; your choice should be manageable to cover in some detail in a project of this size (see below). Please feel free to consult with me prior to embarking on your research. These are the *minimum* requirements:

1. Engage in a thorough analysis of the text in an effort to identify the author's intended meaning. In doing so, you should demonstrate a mastery of the appropriate principles for interpreting biblical texts of this genre. Your defense of the author's meaning should be articulate, and defended with evidence from the text. You should also demonstrate familiarity with the views of others who do not share your views, and be able to counter criticism they would level. Your analysis should further include awareness of the cultural context in which the text was written, and in a final section should address the relevance of the text for a modern audience.
2. Hebrew students should present their own translation of the text they are interpreting, and your papers should demonstrate your proper use of Hebrew.
3. Your paper should be grammatically correct, well-organized, concise, and readable. I expect that you will write several drafts, revise, and retype. If your paper is too weak in these areas, I may return it for correction before I assign a grade.
4. You should use at least 10 high-quality sources, *in addition* to the Bible and any materials used in this class. You should consult scholarly journal articles as well as books, and these should represent at least 5 sources. Your sources should be actually cited in your paper, not just included in a bibliography at the end. (That is, I want to see that you have interacted carefully with the argument presented in the source.)
5. Papers are to be double-spaced, and properly documented according to the current (6<sup>th</sup>) edition of Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (see the catalog, p. 85). Please note that failure to properly document the ideas and expressions of others constitutes plagiarism, and will be penalized appropriately, as detailed in the current Seminary catalog. All notes should be numbered consecutively and placed as footnotes at the bottom of the page (preferred option) or at the end of the paper on a separate page (accepted alternative). Do not use notes that are right in the text except when noting biblical references. These can be placed in parentheses in the text like this: (Deuteronomy 16:2).
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