I. Course Description

This course introduces the seminarian to the literature, history, and theology of the first five books of the Bible. After addressing the question of the sources and authorship, seminarians read through the Pentateuch in its entirety, with an emphasis on the major covenants of salvation history in Genesis and Exodus, the meaning of ancient Israelite sacrifice, priesthood, and the liturgical calendar in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, and the legal material in Deuteronomy. Historical questions surrounding the patriarchs, Moses, and the exodus from Egypt are addressed with help from biblical archaeology.

Envisioned Outcomes: Seminarians will demonstrate familiarity with the contents of the Pentateuch, especially its various literary forms. They will also be able to explain the rationale and symbolism of ancient Israelite sacrifice and the significance of various feasts in the Israelite liturgical calendar. Seminarians will be able to articulate well-reasoned answers to questions of authorship and historicity that arise in the study of the Pentateuch.

II. Course Rationale

The Old Testament is foundational for the faith and spiritual vitality of Roman Catholics and for those who profess Christ outside the Roman Catholic Communion. At the core of the Old Testament are its first five books, the Pentateuch. For the community of Christian faith, the Pentateuch is a record of God’s dealings with human beings, and their response to divine grace and initiative. It outlines a unique ethical monotheism to which humans are adjured to affirm and adopt. It records the call of Abraham and the privileging of his family as a means of eschatological blessing for all the families of the earth. Moreover, the Pentateuch provides the background for messianic hope and an assurance of its fulfillment. Read within the context of all of Sacred Scripture, the Pentateuch is a receptacle of doctrinal truth that answers the deep questions of life. Because the Pentateuch was written in a historical-cultural-literary-social milieu that is alien to most moderns, its study is all the more urgent if its content is to be rightly understood. This course seeks to mentor students so that they may be good, faithful scholars and stewards.
of Sacred Scripture for the equipping of God’s people for ministry and for the greater good of the academy.

III. Course Goals/Intended Outcomes—Students will be able to:
• Outline issues in delineating a literary history of the Pentateuch;
• Identify the various literary genres contained in the Pentateuch, and explain interpretive issues for each;
• Recount the historical narrative of the Pentateuch;
• Give an understanding of the Pentateuch as a whole, as it was authored, and in its present place in the Old Testament, and in light of its ultimate role in the Bible in its entirety;
• Articulate a Christian ethic duly derived from the Pentateuch, in light of Jesus’ teaching;
• Outline the Pentateuch’s influence on Israelite religion and scripture writing;
• Exegete biblical passages with rudimentary competence;
• Effectively read the Pentateuch for spiritual growth.

IV. Instructional Methods
• Lecture, supported by multimedia
• Discussion/Didactic Questions
• Step-by-step guidance/tutorial in exegetical method
• Considered written feedback on essays and book review
• Post-unit review of tests
• Group Lab work
• Journaling

V. Required Texts
• An exegetical study Bible. Students should at least have The Catholic Study Bible. If students already own The Catholic Study Bible, they should add to it either the conservative (non-Fundamentalist) NIV Study Bible, or the more liberal New Oxford Annotated Bible:
• Commentary: Students must have regular access to at least one critical exegetical commentary for the books of Genesis and Exodus.
VI. Bibliography

A. General Introduction, Theology, Covenant, and Hermeneutics


B. Pentateuch and Torah

C. Israelite History and Historical Books


VII. Professional Vocabulary

- Apocalyptic Short for "apocalyptic eschatology," the understanding of the future based upon a revelation (Greek: apocalypsis) rather than upon speculation or calculation.
- Apocrypha or Deuterocanonical Books Greek "hidden," a term employed by St. Jerome (died 420 C. E.). The books in the Greek Septuagint but not in the Hebrew Bible. These books are accepted as canon among most Christian churches, though rejected as canon by the Protestant churches in favor of the shorter list of books found in the Hebrew Bible. Though the exact list differs from church to church, the main collection of "extra books" consists of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, 1 and 2 Maccabees, and additions to Esther and Daniel.
- Aramaic A Semitic language which came to be the official language of the western Persian empire and, consequently, a language spoken by the Jews during the Persian period (late sixth century B. C. E.) and continued in use for many centuries thereafter. Portions of Ezra and Daniel are in Aramaic, and a few of Jesus' sayings in the NT are given in Aramaic.
- Canon Greek: "rule" or "measure." In Christian usage canon refers to rules adopted by a council. Protestants use the word almost exclusively to refer to their canon of scripture, often specified in a confession of faith. This usage has become common in English even among non-protestant writers as a way of referring to the scriptures, but this usage obscures the differences between the texts each religious sect recognizes as canonical. Thus, Catholics, Orthodox, and Anglicans recognize Ben Sirach as scripture, but Moravians, Presbyterians and Baptists do not. Especially confusing is the expression "the canon" in reference to scripture in that it begs the question as to what works are meant. Because the word "canon" derives from Christian practice, it is never appropriate to refer to Jewish scriptures as "the Jewish canon." Recently, Catholic writers have used the term "deuterocanonical" in reference to the Apocrypha to underscore their belief that these books cannot be used alone to determine matters of faith or morals.
- Dead Sea Scrolls A collection of biblical and non-biblical scrolls found in caves around the archaeological site of Qumran on the northeast corner of the Dead Sea.
- Deuteronomistic Historian (Dtr) The books Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, and 1-2 Kings are our primary source for the history of Israel from the time of the tribes until the fall of the Kingdom of Judah. The collection shows a consistent viewpoint about Israel's history: When Israel was faithful to its covenant with God, it prospered. Otherwise, it failed. Since this is also the view of the Book of Deuteronomy and since the language and style of these historical books is similar to those of Deuteronomy, scholars speak of the "Deuteronomic History" or the "Deuteronomistic Historian" and abbreviate this usage as "Dtr."
- Documentary Hypothesis This hypothesis, sometimes erroneously called the Wellhausen Hypothesis, holds that the writings of the Pentateuch derive from four sources, the JE [J唐朝], a southern source that provides the main narrative outline of the Pentateuch, the Elohist (E), a northern source, later than JE, that supplements JE, D, the core material in the Book of Deuteronomy, and the Priestly Writer, who composed a long legal commentary on JE in Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers, as well as the whole of Leviticus. D dates to the time of the Exile (597/586-539 BCE). The contribution of Wellhausen was to order these sources chronologically as JEDP. Elohist (E) According to the Documentary Hypothesis, this is a northern (Israelite) source that supplements JE and stems from as early as the end of the 8th century BCE.
- Eschatology Literally, the "study/doctrine of last things." Any doctrine about the end, whether of a particular age or of all time. For "apocalyptic eschatology," see apocalyptic.
- Exegesis The exposition of a biblical passage that involves the application of specific critical methodologies.
- Form Criticism (Formgeschichte) The study of biblical texts in terms of the oral traditions that underlie them.
- Genre In literary theory genre means, roughly, a "kind" of literature. A biography is of a different genre from that of a romance or of a history. The reader expects different things from two different genres of literature.
- Hermeneutics Greek: "interpretation." The study of how one interprets texts (for our purposes, the biblical text).
- Masoretes Agroup of scholar-scribes who added punctuation marks and vowel marks to the text of the Hebrew Bible. This activity took place from the 7th to the 9th centuries CE.
- Masoretic Text (Abbreviation MT) The Hebrew text established in the 7th/9th centuries C. E. by Jewish scholars (Masoretes) who fixed the exact pronunciation and intonation of the words of the Hebrew Bible through an ingenious system of markings imposed upon the traditional, consonantal Hebrew text. The oldest complete Masoretic text is in St. Petersburg, Russia and dates to 1008 CE.
- Pentateuch Greek: "five scroll cases." The first five books of the Hebrew Bible.
- Priestly Author The latest source in the Pentateuch according to the Documentary Hypothesis, dating to a time during and perhaps also after the Exile.
- Redaction Criticism Study of the way in which the editor (redactor) of a work has arranged the written and oral materials at hand to achieve literary and rhetorical goals.

1 Taken from Wake Forest University’s http://users.wfu.edu/horton/r102/ho1.html.
• **Tanach** Acronym for the *Hebrew Bible* made from the Hebrew words *To*rah ("law"), *Ne*viim ("prophets"), and *Ke*tuvim ("writings").

• **Textual Criticism** The study of differing readings of the biblical text in ancient manuscripts. Not only do text critics study manuscripts of the texts in their original languages but study manuscripts of the ancient versions as well. The goal of textual criticism is the establishment of the "best text" of a passage, not the "original text," which is likely unattainable.

• **Unclean** Opposite: **clean**. Something that is unclean belongs to a prohibited class of objects or people. This prohibition may be absolute, as in the case of pork or relative as in the case of sexual relations. A relative uncleanness involves ordinary activities that temporarily prohibit one from certain activities or places whereas an absolute uncleanness is always prohibited. Note that the scriptures often put time limits on the uncleanness (always relative in nature) that a person would likely contract in normal life.

• **Version** Translation of a text into another language. The *Septuagint*, for instance, is a version of the Hebrew Bible.

• **Yahwist (J)** According to the *Documentary Hypothesis*, this southern (Judean) source is the oldest in the *Pentateuch* and provides the groundwork for the narrative of the Pentateuch.
### VIII. Lecture, Presentation, and Reading Schedule, with Assignment Deadlines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading Schedule</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro to Pentateuch</td>
<td>1/12</td>
<td>Authors and Editors</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Narrative and History</td>
<td>Due 11 Feb</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Reading narrative</td>
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<td>Genesis</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/19</td>
<td>MLK No classes</td>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>Gen 1-3</td>
<td>SB: Genesis articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>Gen 1-3</td>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>Translation theory</td>
<td>Alexander: 1-186</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gen 4-11</td>
<td>IVP: Genesis; Creation; Eden; Flood</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Isaac and Jacob</td>
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<td>Word Study</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Quiz #1 (Genesis)</td>
<td>Begin journaling</td>
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<td>Exod 1-2</td>
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<td>Exodus</td>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>Mardi Gras No classes</td>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday No classes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>The Plagues and the Exodus</td>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Hebrew Poetry</td>
<td>Exodus</td>
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<td>3/2</td>
<td>Mt. Sinai</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Golden Calf</td>
<td>SB: Exod articles</td>
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<td>Deut 12 and Temple Theology</td>
<td>IVP: Exodus, Tabernacle, Moses, Passover, Ten Commandments;</td>
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<td>3/16</td>
<td>Covenants</td>
<td>3/18</td>
<td>Quiz #2 (Exodus)</td>
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<td>Leviticus</td>
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<td>Journal Proj Due</td>
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<td>Leviticus and Numbers</td>
<td>3/23</td>
<td>Israelite Liturgy</td>
<td>3/25</td>
<td>Quiz #3 (Leviticus)</td>
<td>Due 25 Mar</td>
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<td>Numbers</td>
<td>Leviticus</td>
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<td>Canaan</td>
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<td>Alexander: 237-266</td>
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<td>IVP: Holy(iness) Offering/sacrifices</td>
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<td>Easter 3/28 to 4/6</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>(Easter cont., no classes)</td>
<td>4/8</td>
<td>Quiz #4 (Numbers)</td>
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<td>The Land</td>
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<td>SB: Num articles</td>
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<td>Alexander: 237-285</td>
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<td>IVP: Canaan, spies, Joshua</td>
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<td>4/13</td>
<td>Deuteronomy</td>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>Quiz #5 (Deuteronomy)</td>
<td>Due 15 Apr</td>
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<td>Deuteronomy</td>
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<td>SB: Deut articles</td>
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<td>Alexander: 286-314</td>
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<td>IVP: Covenant</td>
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<td>Exegetical Paper Due</td>
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<td>Course Review</td>
<td>4/29</td>
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<td>5/4-5/6</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
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### IX. Course Requirements

A. Attend class and participate appropriately  
B. Complete reading assignments on schedule and take five quizzes on biblical reading.  
C. Complete assignments (one exegetical assignment, one exegesis paper, and 30 days of journaling) and submit them on schedule  
D. Read and digest internet or pdf articles, as provided by the instructor.  
E. Study course notes and assigned reading in preparation for one exam.
X. Important Dates
D. Wed 18 Mar. Journals due; submit by email (jimleonard.nds@gmail.com).
E. Wed 18 Mar. Quiz #2.
H. Wed 15 Apr. Quiz #5.
I. Wed 22 Apr. Exegetical Paper due
J. Week of May 4-6. Final Exam. TBA.

XI. Evaluation Criteria
- 5 Quizzes: 5% each; 25% total
- Reading/Response Journal entries: 20%
- Exegetical Project: 10%
- Exegesis Paper: 25%
- Final exam: 20%
- Late assignments are subject to 20% late penalty

XII. Assignment Details
A. Quizzes are intended to assess whether students have read the five books of the Pentateuch. Each quiz will cover one of the five books, as indicated, and will consist of 10 multiple choice questions. No studying of the text is expected beyond the basic assigned reading. Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class and will take no more than 15 minutes. Students who miss quizzes for any reason may submit a 500-600 word summary of the assigned reading.

B. Summary/Analysis/Response journals (20%). Due Wed 18 Mar. Students will journal on 30 NT passages of their choosing, with about half from Genesis, and at least three from each of the other four Pentateuchal books. Students should follow the passage divisions as found in their Study Bibles, rather than the traditional chapter divisions. The assignment is designed to encourage students to read the Bible devotionally.

The format will include four sections for each passage: 1) summary of contents; 2) student’s own exegetical comments; 3) application to student’s own spiritual life; and 4) a written prayer response. The first two sections should be written in third person academic language (e.g., “The psalmist professes the Lord as his shepherd,” and “The Psalmist celebrates the Lord’s goodness and mercy as pursuing him throughout his life” rather than “It says that God created us in his image on the sixth day” and “God commands us to rest on the Sabbath”). The last two sections should be written in first person, reflecting a personal vulnerability to the Spirit’s leading (e.g., “The prophet’s injunction to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God convicted me as I reflected on a confrontation I had with the parent of a disruptive young person in my church’s youth ministry last night. Instead of ..., I should have...”).
Students should plan an average of 30-60 minutes for each entry. Content of journals will be kept confidential by the professor.

C. Exegetical Project: Primary Text Collection (10%). Due Wed 4 Feb. Students will be assigned a biblical passage or some aspect of a passage, which can be illuminated by historical-cultural background considerations. Students will scour resources to locate primary sources relevant to the passage. After accessing the background texts, students will gathering them and reproduce them into a word document, with short annotations. A sample will be provided. Significant time in the library is expected.

D. Exegesis Paper (25%). Due Wed 22 Apr. Student will choose a critical topic from a list of options, and write 2500-4000 word paper, giving due consideration to the exegetical process, with a view toward establishing authorial intention. The paper should especially focus on uncertain or disputed issues.

Secondary and primary sources should be used and cited judiciously. Students should format the paper in according to academic standards (cf. University of Chicago’s Style Manual [Turabian] and SBL Handbook of Style), with footnotes and select bibliography. The paper should exude good writing and logic.

XIII. Attendance Policy: Notre Dame Seminary observes the following policy regarding class attendance:

Regular class attendance is expected and required of all seminarians who intend to receive credit for course work in the graduate school. Inevitably, extraordinary circumstances will arise that make class attendance impossible on occasion; therefore, a formula for determining regular attendance has been established as policy for the convenience of both seminarians and professors. A seminarian is permitted to be absent from class no more than twice the number of times the class meets per week. Thus, if a seminarian is absent for seven classes from a course that meets three times a week, the seminarian is in violation of school policy in this regard. The normal penalty for such a violation is the grade FA (failure due to absence).

The number of absences includes those due to illness, late registration, or any other cause. Absence from class immediately before or after holidays and free weekends is considered a double cut. Only the Academic Dean may waive penalties for absence.

XIV. Academic Integrity

Seminarians of Notre Dame Seminary are required to commit themselves to responsible scholarship in every aspect of priestly formation, including academics. It is expected that every seminarian works and studies to the best of his ability for every course.

Seminarians also accept responsibilities and obligations as students, which include commitments to honesty, disciplined study, and integrity in their academic work. They will be expected to respect academic scholarship by giving proper credit to other people’s work, while at the same time preparing well for assigned materials and examinations in such a way that their academic integrity will never be questioned.
Those needing assistance with writing papers, or who would like tutoring, should contact the Academic Resource Center (ARC) for assistance. All students are encouraged to seek the direct assistance of their instructor whenever any questions arise regarding assignments, grading, course expectations, etc.
XV. Disability Accommodation Policy

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Notre Dame Seminary provides disability accommodations for students with identified and/or diagnosed disabilities. Students with disabilities need not inform their instructors about the nature of their disabilities, but they are responsible for contacting and providing appropriate documentation to the Academic Resources Center. Requests for accommodations must be made each semester for which the student wishes to receive service; the Academic Resources Center will then distribute a letter of accommodation to the faculty. It is the student’s responsibility to meet with each faculty member to discuss how his/her accommodation(s) may be met within each course. Notre Dame Seminary will attempt to meet reasonable accommodations requested. A reasonable accommodation is a modification to a non-essential aspect of a course, program, or facility which does not pose an undue burden and which enables a qualified student with a disability to have adequate opportunity to participate and to demonstrate his or her ability. Such accommodations are determined on an individual basis depending upon the nature and extent of the disability. For more information, contact the Academic Dean’s Office.

XV. Extension Policy

Instructors are never obligated to grant a student’s request for a due-date extension on a paper/project if they judge the request to be without sufficient merit or not in keeping with the fair requirements articulated in the course syllabus.

XVI. Audit Policy

For academic course audits at Notre Dame Seminary, the amount of work required of seminarians will be decided on a case by case basis by the instructor, the Academic Dean and the seminarian’s Formation Advisor.

XVII. Probation and Grading Policy

Passing grades for seminarians are A, B and C. A seminarian is put on academic probation for the following:

A seminarian who obtains a D+ or lower in any course is automatically placed on probationary status and must repeat the course in order to get credit for the course. Seminarians will be allowed to repeat a course only once and the course must be repeated at NDS. Seminarian status is then subject to review by the Dean.

A seminarian whose semester grade point average (GPA) in coursework is below a 2.30 at any time is placed on academic probation. Two or more consecutive semesters may subject the seminarian to be dismissed from academic formation at Notre Dame Seminary. To be removed from probationary status, the seminarian must complete a semester with a GPA of 2.30 or higher.

After each semester, the seminarian’s Bishop will receive a copy of his transcript and a review of the seminarians’ status.
If a seminarian fails to meet the passing grade point average requirement then he forfeits his eligibility for financial aid under Title IV Federal Regulations.

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<th>Letter Grade Number</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>93 – 90</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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XVIII. Syllabus Contract

This syllabus *obliges* the student to adhere to all policy requirements and to fulfill all academic expectations herein stated; it also *entitles* the student to a reasonable opportunity to learn the material specified in the course description in order to accomplish for himself the educational goals of the course. In order to optimize the learning process the course instructor reserves the right to make reasonable adjustments to the syllabus requirements during the semester, in response to unforeseen developments or circumstances. All adjustments made must be communicated clearly to students.