Susanne Scholz, Ph.D., Professor of Old Testament
Division I: The Biblical Witness
Perkins School of Theology
Southern Methodist University
Spring 2019

Course Description from Perkins Course Catalog
Study of the historical, political, cultural, and religious-theological discourses about gender and sexuality in the context of the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. Grounded in an interdisciplinary approach, the course develops self-critical perspectives about the influence of biblical meanings on hermeneutically dynamic, politically and religiously charged conversations over socio-cultural practices related to LGBTQ communities. Three term hours. Prerequisites: OT 6301 or OT 6302.

Class Meetings
Th 6:30-8:30 pm in 207 Prothro Hall

Office phone 214.768.2460
Email sscholz@smu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

To learn more about your instructor, please visit http://www.smu.edu/theology/people/scholz.html

Please note that this course is eligible for credit toward the Graduate Certificate in Women’s and Gender Studies. If you are interested in having this course count toward this certificate, please speak with Dr. Evelyn Parker, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Perkins School of Theology (eparker@smu.edu; PH 214.768.2349). Also visit the Graduate Certificate website at: http://www.smu.edu/Dedman/Academics/Programs/WomGenStudies/AreasofStudy/GraduateCertificate

Goals and Learning Objectives
- Students come to understand the hermeneutical, theological, and cultural-political implications of reading the Bible as a queer text and its effects upon church, religion, and society at large.
- Students gain in-depth knowledge of an increasingly important research area in the academic field of biblical studies.
- Students develop biblical knowledge and understanding about exegetical methods “for proper and effective use of Scripture” (from Perkins’ Course Catalog) in light of the academic discourse of queer studies as well as in light of past and present debates on constructions of gender and sexuality.
- Students become “effective biblical interpreters” (from Perkins’ Course Catalog) in religious organizations in which LGBTQ issues are often referenced with biblical texts.
• Students come to understand references to Bible content, the range of exegetical methods, and the various genres of knowledge distribution produced in the field of biblical studies as significant contributions to socio-cultural practices and the debates on LGBTQ inclusion or exclusion.
• Students become experts in the critical understanding and appreciation of so-called diversity issues, especially as they relate to gender and sexuality, but also race, ethnicity, and class.
• Students become equipped to make positive contributions to the Protestant denomination to which our School and most of our students belong.
• Students learn to critically reflect on the hermeneutical and theological assumptions pertaining to the relationship of queer identities and biblical interpretation.
• Students learn to relate their notions about Christian ministry to the social contexts of today’s world and to engage the social, political, cultural, and theological implications of reading the Bible as part of contemporary debates on marriage-equality and the general mainstreaming of LGBTQ issues in Western societies, including churches.

Assignments
1. Regular and active class attendance and participation (10%).

2. Compose three short blog entries for this course’s SMU blog site. Visit the page here: https://blog.smu.edu/ot8317/. Each of your entries consists of about 400-500 words. We will work on editing each entry in class so that you will get precise editorial feedback on how to revise each entry before posting them online. You have to decide on the topics of your entries, but all of them ought to come from our course readings. The goal is to write entries that are informative, descriptive, and analytical. Each entry is supposed to “instruct” the online public about the content of “queer Bible hermeneutics.” The due dates for each entry are:
   1. February 7
   2. March 7
   3. April 11

   Each implemented posting is 15% of your overall course grade. The total value of this assignment is 45%.

3. One reflection paper (3 full pages: double spaced, Times New Roman 12, one inch margins all around) on one of our class meetings, our readings, and our class work together this semester (no overlap with any other assignment). The due date for this assignment is April 25. The value of this assignment is 15%.

4. One essay review on a chapter in the Queer Bible Commentary (not read for our class meetings). Length: between 1,200-1,500 words. Your essay choice must be approved by the professor and the review is due on May 11 during the official examination week. The value of this assignment is 15%.

5. Create a BuzzFeed page as a class. Then each class member is asked to create three (3) postings on our class BuzzFeed page by February 28 (page and first posting), March 21 (second posting), and April 4 (third posting), and share them with all of us. We will commit class time to each student to present your posts and talk about them in class. For more information on how to create such a page, visit: https://www.buzzfeed.com/community/about. A sign-up page for your class presentations will be circulated ASAP. The value of this assignment is 15%.

Required Books
6. Any Bible translation, preferably the NRSV. If you own only one other translation, consider buying the NRSV in any edition published by Oxford University Press or a similar academic publisher.
7. Several articles and book chapters in pdf-format that are uploaded onto our Canvas course in “Files.” Please make sure you know how to access your Canvas account. Articles and book chapters available on Canvas are marked with this comment: “[on Canvas]”.
8. *Chicago Manual of Style*; available online for free here: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html (You are asked to use “Notes and Bibliography” for the research paper assigned in this course!)

**Recommended Books**


**Extra-credit Opportunity**
Submit ten (10) book titles that you recommend as “Recommended Books” to be added to this syllabus in the future. Your bibliography must be in the exact format of the Chicago Manual of Style, as modeled on this syllabus—see above. Sloppy submissions are unacceptable.

**Academic Integrity**
The University places high importance on academic honesty. A website explains the details: http://smu.edu/catalogs/graduate/regulations.asp. The statement begins with this paragraph:

Intellectual integrity and academic honesty are concepts fundamental to the processes of learning and evaluating academic performance; without them, the process of inquiry is dismantled at its base and further positive educational progress is almost certainly prevented. The maintenance of the highest level of academic integrity is the responsibility of all members of an educational institution. The inculcation of personal standards of honesty and integrity is a goal of education in all disciplines of the University.

In addition, Perkins School of Theology has its own “Academic Regulations” which include a statement on “Academic Responsibility.” For the entire statement, please visit http://smu.edu/theology/registrar/academic_regs.pdf.

**SMU Disability Accommodations**
Southern Methodist University provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you need academic accommodations for a disability, you must first contact Ms. Rebecca Marin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214-768-4557) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations.
They should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4.)

**Minority Concerns and the Perkins Curriculum**
In 1975 the Perkins Senate passed resolutions which bear on the relation of the Perkins curriculum to this school's common concern for the status of ethnic minority groups and of women both in education for ministry and in the ministry itself. The following statement summarizes these resolutions with respect to all courses except those in the area of Ministry.

1. Instructors and students alike are urged to use inclusive language, images and metaphors that will give full and positive value to both the past contributions and the future prospects of ethnic minorities and women in the church and in society at large.
2. Instructors and students alike are urged to give sensitive consideration to the role of images from a predominantly white and male culture in shaping both the language and concepts of Christian theology and the models and methods of Christian ministry that are widely current today.
3. Instructors are urged to make every effort to provide—in the syllabi, assignments and formats of their courses—opportunities for women students and students from ethnic minority groups (1) to study the functions of ministry with particular reference to their own status or tradition in the life of the church, (2) to practice the functions of ministry (when practice is an element in a course) in settings which reflect or, if possible, arise from their own status or tradition in the life of the church, (3) to receive evaluation of their practice of the functions of ministry from persons who are not only knowledgeable about and skilled in those functions, but also share their special status or tradition in the life of the church, and (4) to observe the practice of persons who, as women or as members of ethnic minority groups, provide models of effective ministry which are immediately relevant to the special status or tradition of women or members of ethnic minority groups in the church.

**Perkins regulations regarding Incompletes**
The grade of Incomplete is granted only in rare cases when a student is prevented by extraordinary circumstances of illness or other severe hardship, from completing some major portion of the required course work before the deadline for submission of grades for the term. Requests for a grade of Incomplete must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs no later than [insert date for submission of all written work from the academic calendar]. For more information, see the Perkins Catalog, p. [46].

**Writing Center**
Good writing and clear communication are important for graduate school and for ministry. If you would like help with your writing, contact the writing center at 214-768-4253, visit them on the web at http://www.smu.edu/alec/wc.html, or drop by their office (Suite 202) in The Paul B. Loyd Center which is "attached to the northwest corner of Ford Stadium" which is across the street from Highland Park United Methodist Church.

**Religious Observance**
Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

**Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities**
Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)
Grade Computation System

93-100 = A = 4.0 (no "A+")
90-92 = A- = 3.7
87-89 = B+ = 3.3
83-86 = B = 3.0
80-82 = B- = 2.7
77-79 = C+ = 2.3
73-76 = C = 2.0
70-72 = C- = 1.7
67-69 = D+ = 1.3
63-66 = D = 1.0
60-62 = D- = 0.7
50-59 = F = 0.0

For valuable online resources on the Hebrew Bible and biblical studies:
http://sacred-texts.com/index.htm
http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/
http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/en/
http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/bibleandcommentary.aspx
http://www.devolutions.net/bible/00bible.htm
http://www.lectio.unibe.ch/e/infos.htm
http://www.unboundBible.com
http://www.mhs.no/article_204.shtml and http://www.mhs.no/article_533.shtml
http://www.theologyinafrica.com/articles/catagories/bible.php
http://unbound.biola.edu/
http://www.bibel-in-gerechter-sprache.de/die-bibel/bigs-online/
https://archive.org/stream/RabbaGenesis/midrashrabbahgen027557mbp_djvu.txt
https://www.sefaria.org/Texts
https://www.biblical-hebrew-study.com/bh-resources/hebrew-concordance/
https://biblehub.com/hebrew/ (online Hebrew-English concordance)
http://www.tyndalearchive.com/TABS/Gesenius/ (online biblical Hebrew-English dictionary)

For general online resources on religion and theology:
https://whatever.cirque.unipi.it/index.php/journal

For valuable online resources for "Queer Theory" and related terminologies:
http://internationalsspectrum.umich.edu/life/definitions

Please note: If you find other links that you think might fit into our course, please let me know so that we can plan on sharing them with the class.
TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

1. WHY QUEER STUDIES? ON THE HISTORY AND POLITICS OF A FIELD

Th/January 24
a. Introduction to the Course and Introduction of Class Members
b. Terminology, History, and Issues of Queer Bible Hermeneutics

Readings
1. Lightsey, Our Lives Matter, Introduction and Chapter 1
2. Chen, Radical Love, Introduction and Chapter 1

Recommended:

Film
1. “The New Black” directed by Yoruba Richen (http://video.pbs.org/video/2365253465/) (See also http://www.newblackfilm.com/the-film; available on netflix.com)

Th/January 31
Queer Theories: Introduction

Readings
1. Scholz, Introducing the Women’s Hebrew Bible, chapters 1 and 6
2. Lindsey, Our Lives Matter, chapters 2 and 3

Recommended:

Film
**Th/February 7**

**Queer Theologies**

**Readings**

1. Lightsey, *Our Lives Matter*, chapter 4 and Conclusion
2. Chen, *Radical Love*, chapters 2 and 3, Conclusion

➢ Short blog entry #1 is due today!

https://vimeo.com/23613610  (35 minutes to 55 minutes)

**Recommended:**


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**2. FROM “WOMAN” TO “LGBTQ”:
   INVESTIGATIONS ON THE TURN FROM FEMINIST TO QUEER BIBLICAL STUDIES**

**Th/February 14**

**Gender and Sexuality in Religious Studies and Theological Studies**

**Readings**

1. Guest et al., *Queer Bible Commentary*, Introduction

**Recommended:**


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**Th/February 21**  NO CLASS TODAY (Your professor is attending a conference.)

However, my absence means that you are asked to use our class time to work on your BuzzFeed assignment, which will be due next week.

**Readings**

1. Lightsey, *Our Lives Matter*, chapters 5-7
Th/February 28

From Women’s to Feminist Bible Studies?

Readings
1. Scholz, Introducing the Women’s Hebrew Bible, chapters 2, 3, and 7
2. Guest, Beyond Feminist Biblical Studies, Introduction and Chapter 1

Recommended:

Th/March 7

From Feminist and Womanist Biblical Studies to Queer Biblical Studies?

Readings
1. Guest, Beyond Feminist Biblical Studies, chapters 2, 3, and 4, Conclusion

Recommended:

March 11-15, 2019  NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

Th/March 21

3. SPECIFIC BIBLICAL ISSUES AND TEXTS
Queer-Postcolonial Perspectives on Rahab in Joshua 2

Readings
3. Scholz, Introducing the Women’s Hebrew Bible, chapter 5
4. Your second BuzzFeed post is due today!

Th/March 28
Intersectional Perspectives on Judges 19

Readings
1. Guest, Queer Bible Commentary, relevant section in chapter on Judges

Th/April 4
A Man Lying with a Man? Leviticus 18:22; 20:13

Readings
1. Guest, Queer Bible Commentary, relevant section in chapter on Leviticus
3. Scholz, Introducing the Women’s Hebrew Bible, chapter 6 (esp. 139-141; also compare pp. 85-106)

Th/April 11
King Eglon of Moab Raped by Ehud, a judge? Judges 3

Readings
1. Guest, Queer Bible Commentary, section on Judges 3

Th/April 18
NO CLASS—EASTER RECESS

Th/April 25
“Marriage” in Ancient Israel
Readings


⇒ Your reflection paper is due today!

Th/May 2
Toward a Future of Queer Bible Hermeneutics

Readings


NOTE: Your review essay on a chapter of your choice in the Queer Bible Commentary is due on May 11 during the Final Examination Week. Please plan accordingly!

READING AND EXAM SCHEDULE

- May 6-9: Reading and Writing Period
- May 10-15: Final Examination Week

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