



BIB 501: WOMEN IN THE BIBLICAL TRADITION

Syllabus

Spring, 2009

Leonard Hall 302

Saturday, 7:30-10:00 AM

Welcome!

Students at Shaw University Divinity School are engaging, inquisitive, creative teacher/learners, who are committed to learning because of their call and vocation, to serve and love God and the Church. This **graduate course** for **graduate students** invites you to expand and develop your understanding of Women in the Western Religious Christian tradition, as we learn together to appreciate the legacy of these historic women and how they inform us in the contemporary world.

Professor

Dr. Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan

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Office hours

Wednesday 8:00-2:00

Friday 8:00-2:00

Other days and times by appointment

Course Description

Students will consider how women are portrayed in the Old and New Testaments. Attention will also be given to feminist hermeneutics and various views on the role of women in ancient societies. This course will be taught as a seminar, with student involvement and presentations constituting a major portion of the course. Limit 10 students. 3 hours.

MRE Program Mission	MDiv Program Mission
<p>The mission of the Master of Religious Education degree is to equip persons for competent leadership in Christian Education to serve congregational ministries and other religious institutions. This purpose is consistent with the mission of Shaw University Divinity School; the Master of Religious Education program focuses on leadership in the “practice of ministry,” particularly in the African American Church</p>	<p>The mission of the Master of Divinity degree is to prepare persons for ordained ministry, for chaplaincy, general pastoral and religious leadership responsibilities in congregations and other settings, and to prepare some students for admission to advanced programs oriented to theological research and teaching. The purpose is consistent with the mission of Shaw University Divinity School; the Master of Divinity program focuses on leadership in the “practice of ministry,” particularly in the African American church</p>

Program Goals

MRE Program Goals	MDiv Program Goals
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to equip students with the capacity for critical and constructive theological reflection regarding the content and processes of educational ministry; 2. to help students understand the educational, social, and behavioral sciences that undergird educational practice, as well as the cultural contexts in which educational ministry occurs; 3. to assist students with personal growth and spiritual maturity; and 4. to provides skills in teaching and in design, administration, and assessment of educational programming. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to provide students with an intellectual atmosphere and a comprehensive, discriminating understanding of our religious heritage; 2. to enhance student training for Christian ministry, mindful of global, and diverse cross cultural, and non-American Christianities, and interaction with other faith traditions; 3. to support students' development in the personal and spiritual capacities necessary for pastoral and religious leadership, advancing growth in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness; 4. to expand programmatic activities, services, and academic programming to enhance student capacity for ministerial and public leadership.

Program Learning Outcomes

MRE Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)	MDiv Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity to articulate an understanding of the scriptural, historical, and theological traditions of particular Christian traditions and of the broader community of faith 2. Graduates will evaluate teaching and learning theories for the purpose of developing a distinctly Christian philosophy of educating God's people; 3. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity for critical reflection on how their unique personalities, backgrounds, and gifts and abilities relate to the ministry of Christian education; 4. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity to design and to carry out a lesson plan necessary for effective educational ministries 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity to articulate an understanding of the scriptural, historical, and theological traditions of particular Christian traditions and of the broader community of faith 2. Graduates will develop a consciousness about and a capacity to reflect critically on issues of diversity, globalization, and cross cultural concerns; 3. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity for critical reflection on how their unique personalities, backgrounds, and gifts and abilities relate to the role of the minister as leader, guide, and servant of the faith community; 4. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity to create programs and have a critical voice in ministerial and public leadership

Course Description

Students will consider how women are portrayed in the Old and New Testaments. Attention will also be given to feminist hermeneutics and various views on the role of women in ancient societies. This course will be taught as a seminar, with student involvement and presentations constituting a major portion of the course. Limit 10 students. 3 hours.



Student Learning Outcomes include the following:

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) At the completion of this course, students will be able to:	Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (Assessment Tools)	Linkage to MDiv Program Learning Outcomes <i>(PLO statement number(s) that correspond to or support the SLO)</i>	Linkage to MRE Program Learning Outcomes <i>(PLO statement number(s) that correspond to or support the SLO)</i>
1. Demonstrate a capacity to articulate an understanding of the socio-historical and cultural context, themes, values, theology, and ethics of the women in the Ancient Near East and Greco-Roman eras	Notebook	1,3	1
2. Exegete biblical texts to become familiar with the stories in the received text, in conversation with how we interpret those texts today	Notebook	1	1,3
3. Analyze the role of women, men, and patriarchy as a function of faith amidst the impact of oppression; e.g., racism, classism, elitism	Notebook	2,3	4
4. Asks interdisciplinary questions about the Bible and function of female characters and female imagery	Notebook	1,4	1,4
5. Construct their own Womanist biblical theological analysis	Notebook	1,2	1,3

Required Texts:

Brenner, Athalya. *I Am?* Augsburg Fortress, 2004.

Da Silva, Aldina et. al. *Women Also Journeyed with Him: Feminist Perspectives on the Bible*. Michael Glazier, 2000.

Diamant, Ann. *The Red Tent*. Picador, 2007.

- Hendricks, Obery. *Living Water*. Harper One. 2004.
- Newsom, Carol A. and Sharon H. Ringe, eds. *The Women's Bible Commentary - expanded* (Paperback). Westminster John Knox Press; Expanded edition, 1998.
- Streete, Gaile C. *The Strange Woman: Power and Sex in the Bible*. Westminster John Knox, 1998.
- Weems, Renita. *Battered Love: Marriage, Sex, and Violence in the Hebrew Prophets, and Violence*. Augsburg Fortress, 1995.
- The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha*. Oxford University Press, 1991.

Reserved Texts [Library and BlackBoard]

- Kirk-Duggan, Cheryl. "Black Mother Women and their Daughters: Signifying Female-Divine Relationships in the Hebrew Bible and African American Mother-Daughter Short Stories." In *Ruth and Esther: A Feminist companion to the Bible* (Second Series), ed. Athalya Brenner, 192-210.
- _____. "Let My People Go! Threads of Exodus in African American Narratives." In *Yet With a Steady Beat: Contemporary U.S. Afrocentric Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Randall C. Bailey, 123-144.
- _____. "Slingshots, Ships, and Personal Psychosis: Murder, Sexual Intrigue, and Power in the Lives of David and Othello." In *Pregnant Passion*, ed. Cheryl Kirk-Duggan, 37-70.
- Martin, Clarice. "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: Free Slaves and Subordinate Women." In *Stony the Road*, ed. Cain Hope Felder, 206-231.
- Pippin, Tina. "On the Blurring of Boundaries." In *Yet With a Steady Beat: Contemporary U.S. Afrocentric Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Randall C. Bailey, 169-176.
- Weems, Renita. "Reading her way through the Struggle, African American Women and the Bible." In *Stony the Road*, ed. Cain Hope Felder, 57-80.

Requirements/Assignments/Remarks:

Reading and understanding assignments are essential to a successful and growing educational experience. The process is quite simple: **if one does not do the assignments, one will not pass the course with a satisfactory grade**. A letter grade of **"I" will only occur in cases of extreme hardship**; and, this work must be completed within the next semester. Read all assignments, secondary materials, and handouts **before the class meets**. Knowledge **of these materials** is essential for you to understand the historical experience, follow lectures, participate in discussions, and do superb written work. All Blackboard assignments must be completed on time.

Class attendance and class participation are mandatory. Each student is responsible for all materials covered during class. Each student will co-facilitate one class. Facilitated and group participation are quintessential for understanding and total educational development. Mini-Lectures reinforce reading, but they will not repeat content verbatim. We will connect historical reflections with contemporary life in the service of ministry. Your registration in class is a covenant and **contract with yourself and the class** to do your best.

MRE students: Please focus on pedagogical strategies and faith formation, as theoretical and applied discourse in your reading and written assignments. **M.Div. students:** Please focus on historical theology and culture as theoretical and applied discourse in your reading and written assignments. The art and science of critical thinking and reflecting on the lives of others in their historical context, through faith seeking understanding and expression is germane to all students.

Course Assignments

Students will create a Final Notebook and **SUBMIT PROJECT ELECTRONICALLY (in either .doc or .rtf formatting)**:

The “notebook” will include the following *research* documents:

- (a) a two-page essay of your own *methodology* for doing womanist biblical exegesis;
- (b) a four page *lesson plan* for training women ministries (half day) that incorporates womanist biblical concepts, to empower women for leadership
- (c) one two page *annotated bibliography* on a particular topic that you are passionate about concerning womanist biblical exegesis and/or preaching; e.g., power, health, violence, education, liturgy, oppression, family, decision making, etc.;
- (d) an *artistic/aesthetic analysis* involves the student either analyzing an artistic work (literature, music, art, poetry, etc.) based upon the Bible, or creating an aesthetic project based upon his/her analysis of a theme, person, event, era, or movement related to the Bible/biblical interpretation
- (e) one two-page lesson plan for a *Sunday School lesson* using womanist biblical exegesis as the topic and lens through which to read your congregational reality;
- (f) two sermons that will include womanist biblical hermeneutics as central to your hermeneutic;
- (g) a brief strategic plan for using womanist biblical exegesis and theory to have an intergenerational conversation with the female and male leaders in your family or congregation.
- (h) a four page lesson plan for Bible study, featuring a female biblical character, using womanist biblical hermeneutics to explore themes and issues relevant to her story;
- (i) A concluding essay that provides an overview of your own ministry as it engages womanist biblical hermeneutics towards transforming the lives of youth, the congregation, and community.



Papers: Please complete each component of the notebook. The tasks will reflect your critical thinking and examination of assigned subject matter. Students are expected to apply their writing skills to prepare his/her coursework. Your grade will, in part, be determined by your treatment of the topic, your original, critical thinking, and your use of proper grammar and punctuation. All papers must have a Thesis, Methodology and Analysis as key to the Introduction. {A submitted paper without a thesis statement **will not be read!**}. DO NOT COPY OR PURCHASE AND USE any work verbatim from the internet; do not use someone else’s material as your own for any assignment. You can cite the work of others; but do not insert someone else’s work to complete any aspect of the Notebook Assignment.

All assignments must be typed or printed via a word processor. Papers **less than** or **exceeding** stipulated limits will **not be acceptable**. This page limit applies **only to the text proper**, not the table of contents or bibliography. Notebooks are to use library resources: books, journal articles, and on-line, electronic resources, preferably from documents found via NCLIVE (www.nclive.org); ATLA; or www.ccel.org. All sources must have proper documentation; that is footnotes and bibliography or works cited. Please use Turabian (Chicago Manual of Style), seventh edition as your style guide. Do NOT use Wikipedia as a reliable resource.

Students can consult with the professor about the final research notebook by the fifth class period. **The final paper project is on going throughout the semester.** Each person will make a brief presentation to the class of their project during the last two class meetings. Final notebooks **must be submitted on or before, but not later than, Apr. 28, 5:00 PM.**

If an emergency or debilitating illness occurs, arrangements for late notebook submission can be made with the professor with proper supporting documentation. The student is encouraged to plan ahead; when such emergencies are insurmountable, the student is responsible to notify the professor as soon as possible. The student **will lose a letter grade when student misses three or more classes.**

MRE students: Please focus on pedagogical strategies and faith formation, as theoretical and applied discourse in reading and written assignments. **M.Div. students:** Please focus on historical theological as theoretical and applied discourse in reading and written assignments. Intersections of scripture, gender, and theology -- faith seeking understanding and expression -- are germane to all students.

Plagiarism (using another's work as your own, whether you put it in your own words or keep it in the original words) and cheating are serious offenses and will be treated as such. A student who plagiarizes or cheats – whether giving or receiving information – will receive a grade of zero on that particular exam or paper, and may receive a grade of F for the course. Plagiarism is unethical and against University and SUDS policy. To plagiarize is to LIE and STEAL. Any plagiarism is a request for a failing grade. To that end, you will sign your class statement of honor. Any papers identified as plagiarized will result in a failing grade for that assignment. DO NOT get someone else to write your paper; DO NOT purchase a paper from a person or online and turn it in as your own; do not copy a paper verbatim off the internet. DO NOT submit the same work multiple times. Any such submissions will receive a failing grade.

Students will have a conference with the professor concerning the final paper project by the fifth class period. **The final notebook project is on-going during the semester.** Each person will submit their working table of contents with a working bibliography for the final project to the professor and class members on **Feb. 4.**

Emergency Policy Classes will meet when the SUDS is open. If I cannot meet the class because of harsh weather or emergency, a note will be posted on the classroom door. For update, call the SUDS office (919) 546-8569 or check the University's website www.shawu.edu; or listen to WRAL-TV.

Course Grades

Student grades are based on:

Attendance and class participation	40%
Notebook	60%



Grading Scale

The following point system will be used for all assignments

A ⇨ 4☼ B ⇨ 3☼ C ⇨ 2☼ D ⇨ 1☼ F ⇨ 0

A plus or minus grade (e.g., B+ or C-) is used to indicate proximity to the particular grade. At the end, all minuses and pluses will be rounded to the point that best reflects the student's progress in the course.

No grades are given in this course. Each student earns her/his grade

I A student receives an "I" *only* when extraordinary circumstances (extended illness, death in the family, etc.) prevent the student from completing all the assignments before the end of the semester.

All written assignments need to conform to the guidelines in the Divinity School's "Guidelines for Written Assignments," available in the Divinity School Office. The following criteria will be used in evaluating all written assignments.

A Indicates the student has *significantly* exceeded the minimum expectations for the assignment. The student has consulted the relevant scholars and has consistently entered into dialogue with these scholars, offering his/her critique of the relevant sources. All the required parts of the assignment are present, and the written presentation is consistently above average, with no errors in spelling or grammar.

B Indicates the student has *exceeded the minimum* expectations for the assignment. The student has consulted relevant scholars and has entered into dialogue with most of them, offering his/her critique of the sources. All the required parts of the assignment are present, and the written presentation is above average, with no errors in spelling or grammar.

C Indicates the student has *met the minimum* expectations for the assignment. The student has consulted relevant scholars and has represented their views well, at least occasionally offering a critique of the sources. The required parts of the assignment are present, and the written presentation is acceptable, with minimal errors in spelling or grammar.

D Indicates the student *has not met the minimum* expectations for the assignment in one or more of the following ways: significant critical scholarship is not consulted; significant segments of the assignment are missing or inadequate; or the written presentation is inadequate in grammar, spelling, or format.

F Indicates the work is not acceptable for graduate-level study.



Schedule

The class schedule and readings follow. After completing your reading assignment, ask yourself: What are the main ideas: pros & cons? How does what I read/hear/view shape relate to the Bible and the experience of women from a religious perspective? What do I agree or disagree with, and why? How do these ideas pertain to my project? What is distinctive about a Womanist approach to the particular textual or interpretative issue at stake? What have I learned about women's roles and the impact of scripture in the church context with this reading/exercise?

Opening the Doors

Class Date	Student Learning Outcomes	Course Content or Unit	Readings	Mode of Instructional Delivery	Related Assignment	Resources	Assessment Tool
Week	[List the SLO nos.]						(instrument used to determine the achievement of the stated SLO)
Jan. 17	1, 5	<i>Constructing the Matrix: Introducing Women in the Bible from a Womanist View</i>	Syllabus	Lecture discussion	Pre-test		Notebook

Class Date Week	Student Learning Outcomes <i>[List the SLO nos.]</i>	Course Content or Unit	Readings	Mode of Instructional Delivery	Related Assignment	Resources	Assessment Tool <i>(instrument used to determine the achievement of the stated SLO)</i>
Jan. 24	1,2,3,4,5	<i>Creating Beginnings: Women, Families, and Violence in Genesis</i>	Streete, ch. 1; Da Silva, 1-23; Newsome & Ringe, 1-29; Weems, BB] "Reading her way, 57-80. Black Board	Lecture discussion			Notebook
Jan 31	3,4	<i>Contemplating Women, God, their Men, their children in Genesis</i>	Da Silva, 25-74; Jacobs, BB "Love, Honor, and Violence;" Red Tent, Pt 1	Lecture discussion			Notebook

Laws, Monarchy, and Engagement

Class Date Week	Student Learning Outcomes <i>[List the SLO nos.]</i>	Course Content or Unit	Readings	Mode of Instructional Delivery	Related Assignment	Resources	Assessment Tool <i>(instrument used to determine the achievement of the stated SLO)</i>
Feb. 7	1,2,3,4	<i>Liberation or Business as Usual: Exodus & Deuteronomy</i>	Streete, ch. 2; Da Silva, 51-74; Red Tent, Pt 2	Lecture Discussion			Notebook
Feb. 14	1,2,3,4	<i>Circles of Violence: Joshua & Judges</i>	Brenner, ch. 5; Newsome & Ringe, 69-83; Red Tent, Pt. 3	Discussion			Notebook
Feb. 21	1,2,3,4	<i>Women of the Monarchy: Samuel and Kings</i>	Brenner, chaps. 7-9; Newsome & Ringe, 91-116; Kirk-Duggan, "Slingshots, Ships."	Lecture Discussion			Notebook
Feb. 28	1,2,3,4	<i>Women of the Court: Esther and Vashti; Song of Songs</i>	Brenner, ch. 4; Da Silva, 75-82; Newsome & Ringe, 131-137; 164-168.	Discussion			Notebook

Class Date Week	Student Learning Outcomes <i>[List the SLO nos.]</i>	Course Content or Unit	Readings	Mode of Instructional Delivery	Related Assignment	Resources	Assessment Tool <i>(instrument used to determine the achievement of the stated SLO)</i>
Mar. 7	1,2,3,4,5	<i>Game Playing on the Home front: Ruth and Naomi</i>	Newsome & Ringe, 84-90. Kirk-Duggan, 192-210; Brenner, c. 6	Discussion		Six questions you would like to ask Naomi and Ruth	Notebook
Mar. 14	1,3,5	<i>Research, Reflection, Process and Resources</i>	Your own research tools & bibliography for final project	Discussion Tutorial			Notebook
Mar. 21	1,2,3,4	<i>On the Home front, Pt 2: Prophetic Treatment of Women ~ Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea</i>	Newsome and Ringe, 169-186; 207-215; Streete, chap. 3 & 4; Weems, chap. 1-4; Brenner, 10-13	Discussion			Notebook

Powers of a Different Sort

Class Date Week	Student Learning Outcomes <i>[List the SLO nos.]</i>	Course Content or Unit	Readings	Mode of Instructional Delivery	Related Assignment	Resources	Assessment Tool <i>(instrument used to determine the achievement of the stated SLO)</i>
Mar. 28	1,2,3,4	<i>The First Jesus Women: Mary, Elizabeth, and Birth Narrative Traditions</i>	Da Silva, 83-116; Newsome and Ringe, 339-349; Street, c. 5-4; <i>Living Waters</i> , ch. 1-11	Lecture Discussion			Notebook
Apr 4	1,2,3,4	<i>Mary Magdalene and other Women of the Gospels</i>	Streete, ch. 5-7; Newsome & Ringe, 363-393; <i>Living Waters</i> , ch. 12-23	Discussion		(Mary Magdalene; Bent over woman; Mary and Martha; Woman with Issue of Blood; Women who tests Jesus, over crumbs under the table)	Notebook

Class Date Week	Student Learning Outcomes [List the SLO nos.]	Course Content or Unit	Readings	Mode of Instructional Delivery	Related Assignment	Resources	Assessment Tool <i>(instrument used to determine the achievement of the stated SLO)</i>
April 11		EASTER					
Apr. 18	1,2,3,4	Early Church Women: Paul, Rome, Corinth, and Acts	Da Silva, 117-152; Newsome and Ringe, 394-419; Martin, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes)"; Living Waters, ch. 24-35	Lecture Discussion			Notebook
Apr. 25	1,2,3,4	Biblical Interpretation and Women Today	Streete, 153-178; Newsome and Ringe, 423-27; 444-52; 462-65; 482-88; Pippin, "Blurring of Boundaries"	Discussion	Create your working womanist 10 Commandments for sister friend relations		Notebook
Apr. 28		NOTEBOOK DUE					
May 2	1,2,3,4,5	Mining these Texts		Discussion			Notebook

A Working Bibliography

Bach, Alice. *Women in the Hebrew Bible*. Routledge, 1999.

Bal, Mieke. *Lethal Love: Feminist Literary Readings of Biblical Love Stories*. Indiana University Press, 1987.

Beal, Timothy K. *The Book of Hiding: Gender, Ethnicity, Annihilation, and Esther*. Routledge, 1997.

Brenner, Athalya and Carole Fontaine, eds. *Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible: Approaches, Methods and Strategies*. Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers; New Ed edition, 2001

Brenner, Athalya, ed. *Ruth and Esther. A Feminist Companion to the Bible*. Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.

Day, Peggy L., ed. *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*. Fortress Press, 1989.

Delumeau, Jean. *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition*. Continuum, 1995.

- Deen, Edith. *All of the Women of the Bible*. Harper San Francisco, 1988.
- Essex, Barbara J. *Bad Girls of the Bible: Exploring Women of Questionable Virtue*. United Church Press, 1999.
- _____. *More Bad Girls of the Bible: The Sequel*. Pilgrim Press, 2009.
- Gafney, Wilda. *Daughters of Miriam: Women Prophets in Ancient Israel*. Fortress, 2008.
- Higgs, Liz Curtis. *Bad Girls of the Bible and What We Can Learn from Them*. WaterBrook Press, 1997.
- _____. *Really Bad Girls of the Bible: More Lessons from Less-Than-Perfect Women*. WaterBrook Press, 2000.
- _____. *Slightly Bad Girls of the Bible: Flawed Women Loved by a Flawless God*. WaterBrook, 2007.
- Labowitz, Shoni. *God, Sex and Women Of The Bible: Discovering Our Sensual, Spiritual Selves*. Simon and Schuster, 1998.
- McKenna, Megan. *Not Counting Women and Children: Neglected Stories from the Bible*. Orbis, 1994.
- Ogletree, Thomas. *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics*. Fortress Press, 1983.
- Pardes, Ilana. *Countertraditions in the Bible: A Feminist Approach*. Harvard University Press; Reprint edition, 2004.
- Sakenfeld, Katharine Doob. *Just Wives: Stories of Power and Survival in the Old Testament and Today*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.
- Schussler-Fiorenza, Elisabeth. *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Introduction*. Crossroad, 1997.
- Trible, Phyllis. *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives (Overtures to Biblical Theology)*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1984.
- Weems, Renita, *I Asked for Intimacy: Stories of Blessings, Betrayals, and Birthings*. Innisfree Press, 1993.
- _____. *Just A Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible*. Innisfree Press, 1988
- Wimbush, Vincent. *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Texts, Social Textures*. Continuum, 2000.