Course Syllabus
KNB5341HF
1-2 Chronicles and Ancient Scribal Identity
Knox College
Toronto School of Theology
Fall 2024

Instructor Information

Instructor:	Christine Mitchell, PhD, Academic Dean & Professor of Hebrew Bible
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Course Identification

Course Number:	KNB5341HF
Course Format:	*In-class*
Course Name:	1-2 Chronicles and ancient scribal identity
Course Location:	Room Number, Knox College
Class Times:	Tuesdays, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Course Description

1-2 Chronicles had little attention paid to it after the solidification of historical-critical biblical studies in the mid-19th century. This began to change in the 1980s with a new appreciation for the book as a literary whole. This course examines Chronicles in its context and in ours. Topics include: the context of Persian-period Judah, with comparative materials from elsewhere in the Persian Empire shedding light on the imperial context of Judah and Jerusalem; ancient media and scribal practice to understand textual production and reproduction; questions of individual and community identity formation (gender, ethnicity, class); how Chronicles has been read through the centuries, in both Jewish and Christian contexts. Collaborative and decentering frameworks will be front and centre in both course material and pedagogy.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography

All required texts (except the Bible) are available online through the University of Toronto Libraries and are linked in Quercus. Students may choose to purchase hardcopy through any retailer.

- A complete Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Preferred English translations are NRSV, NJPS, CEB, NIV, NASB. Please check with the instructor before using any other English translation. Students with biblical Hebrew proficiency should work with the Hebrew text in the BHS; students with Hellenistic Greek proficiency should work with the Septuagint text in Rahlfs LXX.
- Blaire A. French, *Chronicles Through the Centuries* (Malden, MA: Wiley, 2017).
- Molly M. Zahn, *Genres of Rewriting in Second Temple Judaism: Scribal Composition and Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2020).
- Brad E. Kelle and Brent A. Strawn (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Historical Books of the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020). Selections as noted in course schedule:
    - Ch. 3, "Achaemenid Political History and Sources," by Amelie Kuhrt (pp. 34-49)
    - Ch. 4, "Text-critical Issues with Samuel and Kings," by Julio Trebolle Barrera & Eugene Ulrich (pp. 50-63)
    - Ch. 10, "New Perspectives on the Return from Exile and Persian-period Yehud," by Mary Joan Winn Leith (pp. 147-169)
    - Ch. 18, "A Theological Comparison of the Deuteronomistic History and Chronicles," by Matthew Lynch (pp. 266-283)
    - Ch. 23, "The Rise and Fall of the So-called Chronicler's History and the Current Study of the Composition of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah," by Ralph W. Klein (pp. 353-366)
    - Ch. 25, "Synthetic and Literary Readings of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah," by Steven J. Schweitzer (pp. 379-392)
- Bruno Jacobs and Robert Rollinger (eds.), *A Companion to the Achaemenid Persian Empire* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2021). Selections as noted in course schedule:
    - Ch. 54, "The Interplay of Languages and Communication," by Jean-Jacques Glassner (pp. 737-747)
    - Ch. 55, "Achaemenid Art – Art in the Achaemenid Empire," by Bruno Jacobs (pp. 749-67)
    - Ch. 58, "Empire, Borders, and Ideology," by Robert Rollinger (pp. 815-830)
    - Ch. 88, "Religions in the Empire," by Manfred Hutter (pp. 1285-1302)
    - Ch. 89, "Schools, Erudition, and Wisdom," by Łukasz Niesiołowski-Spanò (pp. 1305-1314)
- Primary texts in translation:
    - Selections from Amélie Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire: A Corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid Period* (London: Routledge, 2007)
    - Aramaic texts from Egypt (PDF – provided in Quercus)
- Other items as noted in course schedule (journal articles, essays, etc.):
    - Louis Jonker, "Who Constitutes Society? Yehud's Self-understanding in the Late Persian Era as Reflected in the Books of Chronicles," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127 (2008): 703-724.
    - Louis Jonker, "Chronicles in an (Un)Changing World: The 'Persian Context' in Biblical Studies," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 42 (2018): 267-283.
    - Louis Jonker, "Melting Pots and Rejoinders? The Interplay Among Literature Formation Processes During the Late Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods," *Vetus Testamentum* 70 (2020): 42-54.
    - Christine Mitchell, "1 and 2 Chronicles," pp. 278-288 in Newsom et al (eds.) *Women's Bible Commentary*, 3rd edition (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2012).
    - Christine Mitchell, "Berlin Papyrus P. 13447 and the Library of the Yehudite Colony at Elephantine," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 76 (2017): 139-147.
    - Christine Mitchell, "Commonalities Without Equivalence," pp. 203-221 in Fulton et al (eds.) *The Formation of Biblical Texts* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2024).

- One additional book from the following list:
  - Susan Niditch, *Oral World and Written Word: Ancient Israelite Literature* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1996).
  - David M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005).
  - Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2007).
  - Eva Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (New York: Oxford UP, 2016).
  - William M. Schniedewind, *The Finger of the Scribe: How Scribes Learned to Write the Bible* (New York: Oxford UP, 2019).

Course Website

> Quercus: https://q.utoronto.ca/

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at https://q.utoronto.ca/ and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701 . Students experiencing difficulties accessing Quercus should contact the registrar's office of their college.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Note about texts listed as "translate" in Primary sources – In Weeks 5 through 12, every student will be expected to provide a translation of a Hebrew or Greet text, either the MT or LXX of the Chronicles passage cited, or the MT or LXX of a "related text." The list of "related texts" is provided in Quercus. Texts will be assigned at the end of the previous class meeting.

Week 1
Tues. Sept. 10   Course introduction
Content introduction: Chronicles, scribes and media, identity and contexts
Readings: Mitchell, "1 and 2 Chronicles"; French, Introduction (pp. 1-11); Zahn, Introduction (pp. 1-27) – total 49 pp.

Week 2
Tues. Sept. 17   Chronicles: state of the field
Readings: Kelle & Strawn, chs. 23, 25, 18, 4 (pp. 353-366, 379-392, 266-283, 50-63); French, "Coda B" (pp. 190-192); Jonker, "Melting Pots" – total 76 pp.

Week 3
Tues. Sept. 24   Persian-period contexts: empire
Readings: Kelle & Strawn, chs. 3, 10 (pp. 34-49, 147-169); Jonker, "Chronicles in an (Un)Changing World"; Jacobs & Rollinger, chs. 58, 88 (pp. 815-830, 1285-1302) – total 90 pp.
Primary sources: Kuhrt: "Cyrus Cylinder" (ch. 3 no. 21, pp. 70-74), DB (ch. 5 no. 1, pp. 141-158), DNa/b (ch. 11 no. 16-17, pp. 502-505) – total 27 pp.

Week 4
Tues. Oct. 1   Persian-period contexts: writing & media
Readings: Jacobs & Rollinger, chs. 54, 55, 89 (pp. 737-747, 749-767, 1305-1314);
Mitchell, "Berlin Papyrus" – total 49 pp.
Primary sources: Aramaic texts from Egypt (PDF) – approx. 10 pp.

Week 5
Tues. Oct. 8   Methodological questions
Readings: Jonker, "Who Constitutes Society?"; Mitchell, "Commonalities
Without Equivalence"; Zahn, chs. 1-2 (pp. 28-73) – total 87 pp.
Primary source: Translate 2 Chr 13:1-12 /related texts

Week 6
Tues. Oct. 15   Genealogies
Readings: French, ch. 1 (pp. 15-40); Zahn, ch. 3 (pp. 74-97) – total 50 pp.
Primary sources: Read 1 Chr 1-9; translate 1 Chr 6:39-50/related texts

Week 7
Tues. Oct. 22   Saul and David
Readings: French, ch. 2 (pp. 41-62); Zahn, ch. 4 (pp. 98-136) – total 61 pp.
Primary sources: Read 1 Chr 10-20; translate 1 Chr 10/related texts

Reading Week
Tues. Oct. 29   No class

Week 8
Tues. Nov. 5   David and the temple
Readings: French, chs. 3-4 (pp. 63-101) – total 39 pp.
Primary sources: Read 1 Chr 21-29; translate 1 Chr 21:16-30/related texts

Week 9
Tues. Nov. 12   Solomon
Readings: French, first part of ch. 5 (pp. 103-120); Zahn, ch. 5 (pp. 137-168) –
total 50 pp.
Primary sources: Read 2 Chr 1-9; translate 2 Chr 3:1-13/related texts

Week 10
Tues. Nov. 19   Rehoboam to Ahaz
Readings: French, second part of ch. 5 & ch. 6 (pp. 120-147); Zahn, ch. 6 (pp.
169-195) – total 55 pp.
Primary sources: Read 2 Chr 10-28; translate 2 Chr 19

Week 11
Tues. Nov. 26   Hezekiah to Zedekiah
Reading: French, chs. 7-8 (pp. 148-186) – total 39 pp.
Primary sources: Read 2 Chr 29-36; translate 2 Chr 33:10-17/related texts plus 2
Chr 35:20-27 (MT) OR 1 Esdr 1:23-31 (LXX)/related texts

Week 12

Tues. Dec. 3   Concluding Chronicles
                        Course conclusion
                        Readings: French, "Coda A" (pp. 187-189); Zahn, ch. 7 & Conclusion (pp. 196-232) – total 40 pp.
                        Primary sources: Translate 2 Chr 36:22-23 & Ezr 1:1-7 (MT) OR 1 Esdr 2:1-9 (LXX)

Exam Week

Fri. Dec. 13   Final assignment(s) due; all late assignments due

Evaluation

Requirements

The course participants as a group will determine the course requirements and evaluation formats in the first session. The consensus of the group will then be recorded and distributed by Quercus before the second session, forming an addendum to the syllabus. Requirements will include some combination of class participation, oral presentation(s), and written assignment(s).

Grading System - Graduate Degree Students

5000, 6000 and 7000 level courses use the following alpha grading scale;

A+	(90-100)	Profound & creative
A	(85-89)	Outstanding
A-	(80-84)	Excellent
B+	(77-79)	Very Good
B	(73-76)	Good
B-	(70-72)	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level
FZ	(0-69)	Failure

Please see the Graduate Conjoint Degree handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Policies

Class attendance. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner congruent with the vocation they are seeking to enter and in which they desire to give leadership. To that end, it is a regulation of Knox College that a minimum of approximately 80% attendance at courses (10 of 12 weeks) is required for credit; 100% attendance is expected at seminar courses. Habitual lateness for class will be counted as absence.

Teaching and learning are interactive, not passive, activities. Therefore, students may not "attend" an in-person class through unauthorized audio or video streaming or by watching or listening to a recording; I am not obligated to record or permitted to stream my in-person classes. Students requiring accommodations to attend class must present medical and/or Accessibility Services documentation that outlines the type and duration of accommodation(s) required.

Class recording. Much of the learning that goes on in the virtual or in-person classroom is founded upon mutual disclosure that takes place between instructor and student, and between students. Parties

outside of this learning community have not committed themselves to this relationship of trust. A student without an approved accommodation who wishes to make an audio recording of an in-person class must secure my agreement and the agreement of all classmates; livestreaming and video recordings are not permitted. Personal recordings may be used only by the student who made the recording; no recording may be reproduced, posted, or distributed without my written permission.

Late work (Graduate). The deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines as agreed by the course members and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Although I don't penalize late work, students are required to communicate ahead of the due date if they won't be able to submit on time. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework by the last day of exam week can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after that date.

The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or Knox deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student's college Graduate Director, not me. Nevertheless, my signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college Graduate Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST on its website. See Section 7.11 of the Conjoint Graduate Degree Handbook.

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 to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Inclusive Language. Knox College has an inclusive language policy, available at https://knox.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Knox-College-Policy_Use-of-Language-Policy-and-Glossary_221003.pdf . I expect students to use inclusive language, recognizing that in a course dealing with ancient texts and contexts we may debate what inclusive language means and looks like.

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as. 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. If I discover evidence of student plagiarism I'm not permitted to deal with the situation individually; I'm required to report it to my Principal or delegate according to the Graduate program Handbook linked from http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-

2019. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges: https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/

Use of Generative AI, e.g., ChatGPT. Students may choose to use generative artificial intelligence tools as they work through the assignments in this course; this use must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work.

Other academic offences*.* TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019 .

Back-up copies*.* Please make back-up copies of assignments before handing them in.

Obligation to check email*.* At times, I may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. I'm not able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from me may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

Email communication with the course instructor*.* I aim to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address. Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also I cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. I'm not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs, and I will not. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

GRADUATE "DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS"	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
EXPECTATIONS: *In this course students are expected to demonstrate the following:*		
1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge	*Students will be able to explain and evaluate primary (both biblical and extra-biblical) and secondary sources relating to the Persian and Hellenistic periods. Students will be able to assess the value of several methodological approaches to ancient textual and epigraphic material.*	*Lectures, readings, seminars, assignments (including translation).*

GRADUATE "DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS"	CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES	CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS
2. Research and Scholarship **3. Level of Application of Knowledge**	*Students will be able to design a research question and develop an argument about an aspect of 1-2 Chronicles; and assemble and assess the relevant scholarship to create an innovative analysis of the question.*	*Presentation(s), written assignment(s).*
4. Professional Capacity or Autonomy	*Students will be able to formulate further research questions in biblical studies and create connections between the skills and knowledge gained in this course and contemporary contexts.*	*Presentation(s), written assignment(s).*
5. Level of Communication Skills **6. Awareness of the Limits of Knowledge**	*Students will be able to communicate research results clearly both orally and in writing in ways consistent with the conventions of biblical studies at a scholarly level, while recognizing the limits of their knowledge and expertise.*	*Presentation(s), written assignment(s), class participation.*