

THEO5906

Methods and Paradigms of Christian Studies

基督教研究之方法與範式

First Semester, 2022-23

Teachers: Colten Cheuk-Yin YAM 任卓賢
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TA: HO Lap Yan Stephenie

Time and Venue: 7:00pm-9:30pm Wednesday (Wu Ho Man Yuen Building WMY 306)

1. Course Description

Christianity is one of the major religions in the world and has been the cradle of Western civilization, having enduring influence on cultural, philosophical, social, political as well as all other aspects of the whole human society. Study of Christianity, therefore, is not only essential to Christians for understanding their traditions, but also vital to the public, especially to our common goal of making a better world. This course presents the past and explores the future of Christianity via two approaches, namely paradigms and methods. By way of paradigms, it will delineate how Christianity has emerged from the Jewish tradition and developed into various subsequent forms in the course of history (Patristics, Mediaeval Latin, Reformation Protestant, Modernity, Liberal, Neo-orthodox, Evangelism, Pentecostalism, Liberation, Feminist). By way of methods, it will introduce the tasks and methodologies of several major theological disciplines (biblical studies, systematic theology, history of Christianity, practical theology). The course will also introduce theologians of the different paradigms through primary sources, with the aim of giving students a taste of the classics in Christianity.

2. Learning Outcomes

- You can identify the major paradigms and traditions of Christianity and describe their essential features.
- You can recognize the tasks and methods of some major disciplines in Christian studies
- You can appreciate the distinctive features of several classics in Christianity
- You can experience and discover the practice of a Christian tradition through the fieldwork

3. Course Syllabus

Topic	Content
What is Christianity; Christianity in Modern Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ways and approaches in Christian studies○ Christianity in global context (secularism, religious pluralism, post-modernism)
Historical-Theological Paradigms	The characteristics and major figures in the following paradigms: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Early Jewish-Christian Apocalyptic○ Patristic Hellenistic Orthodox

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mediaeval Latin Roman Catholic ○ Reformation Protestant ○ Modernity, Liberal Theology, Neo-Orthodox Theology ○ Evangelicalism, Pentecostalism ○ Liberation Theology, Feminist Theology
Tasks and Methods of various theological disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Biblical Studies ○ History of Christianity ○ Systematic Theology ○ Practical Theology
Theological Research and Academic Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Criteria of good academic writing in Christian studies ○ Skills in literature review and documentation ○ Practical guidelines in writing a paper

4. Course Components (Learning Activities)

Lecture	Research / Reading	Fieldwork	Paper writing
2.5 hours per week	6 hours per week	0.5 hour per week	3 hours per week

- ❖ An individual tutorial with the teacher (30 mins, in person or via Zoom) will be arranged for every enrolled student to help them develop and sharpen the themes of their papers.
- ❖ There will also be two tutorial sessions (via Zoom), offered by the TA, for practical techniques in academic writing.
- ❖ Apart from the weekly workload above, students are expected to devote extra 30 hours to the final phase of the paper.

5. Assessment Type

1.	Class Participation	10%	Show up in class; active participation in discussion
2.	Church Fieldwork Report (Due: 27 Oct)	25%	Attend a worship service in a Christian church (can be Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Roman Catholic, or Protestant) church in Hong Kong that is <i>significantly different</i> in theological/liturgical tradition from the church you belong to or are familiar with. (If you do not belong to any Christian church, please choose any Christian church in Hong Kong.) Write and compile a fieldwork report (in either Chinese or English) of <i>no more than 10 pages</i> (not counting photos, charts, and other materials in the appendix).
3.	Paper Abstract and Proposal (Due: 3 Nov)	10%	Please conduct research and write a paper following <i>one</i> of the following directions— 1. Focus on <i>one</i> doctrine / issue of a particular theologian. Elucidate the features of this doctrine (on the basis of primary sources) and comment critically how this case fits / does not fit into Kūng's categorization in his paradigm
4.	Term Paper (Due: 16 Dec)	50%	

			<p>theory (Origen, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Schleiermacher, Barth, etc).</p> <p>2. Elucidate, compare, and discuss how any <i>two</i> historical-theological paradigms (including the meso-paradigms) have understood, interpreted, critiqued, and/or reconstructed <i>one</i> theological issue or doctrine.</p> <p>3. Focusing on <i>one</i> problem or issue, describe and explain how <i>two</i> of the disciplines in Christian Studies (such as biblical studies, history of Christianity, systematic theology, or practical theology) have contributed and/or can contribute to understanding, addressing, and/or resolving that problem or issue.</p>
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6. Class Schedule (tentative, subject to change)

Wk	Date	Topic	Suggested Readings (refer to the reading list below)
1.	7 Sept	Introduction. Christianity as multi-Paradigmatic.	1. "Christianity," Britannica Academic 2. Küng 1989, "Paradigm Change," 3-31
2.	14 Sept	Historical-Theological Paradigms (1): Early Jewish-Christian Apocalyptic; Patristic Hellenistic Orthodox	<i>Primary Texts 1-2 (Origen and Gregory of Nyssa)</i> 3. Küng 1995: 65-77, 83-105 4. Küng 1995: 111-149, 162-211
3.	21 Sept	Historical-Theological Paradigms (2): Mediaeval Latin Roman Catholic; Reformation Protestant.	<i>Primary Texts 3-7 (Augustine, Aquinas, Aulén, Luther, Calvin)</i> 5. Küng 1995: 283-308, 348-364, 415-433 Küng 1995: 524-544, 561-577
4.	28 Sept	Theological Research and Paper Writing	6. Brown 2008: 1-52 "A Guide to Writing in Religious Studies"
5.	5 Oct	The Tasks and Methods of Biblical Studies	7. 吳國傑 2014, 正邪難辨, 16-69 8. Fitzmyer 1989, "Historical Criticism," 244-259 9. Bruce 1979: 21-59
6.	12 Oct	The Tasks and Methods of Systematic Theology (by Prof. Francis Yip)	10. Fiorenza 1991: 1-87 11. Lonergan 2017: 335-353
7.	19 Oct	Historical-Theological Paradigms (3): Modernity; Liberal Theology; Neo-Orthodox Theology.	<i>Primary Texts 8-11 (Kant, Schleiermacher, Barth, Tillich)</i> 12. Ford 2005: 1-42 13. Livingston 2006: 1-11 14. Küng 1995: 650-700

8.	26 Oct	The Tasks and Methods of History of Christianity (by Prof. Tobias Brandner)	15. Bradley 1995: 1-32
9.	2 Nov	The Tasks and Methods of Practical Theology (by Prof. Angela Wai Ching Wong)	16. Forrester 2000: 1-43
10.	9 Nov	Historical-Theological Paradigms (4): Evangelicalism; Pentecostalism.	<i>Primary Texts 12-14 (Henry, Menzies, Fee)</i> 17. Marsden 1991: 1-82 18. Anderson 2014: 1-38
11.	16 Nov	Historical-Theological Paradigms (5): Liberation Theology; Feminist Theology.	<i>Primary Texts 15-17 (Gutierrez, Boff, Rosemary)</i> 19. Clifford 2001: 46-132
12.	23 Nov No Class (Teacher Conference Leave)		
13.	30 Nov	Global Christianity in the 21 st century	20. Jenkins 2011: 1-20 21. Küng 1995: 773-791
14.	6 Dec	Rounding up and conclusions	

7. Required and Recommended Readings

(C=general introduction to Christianity; M=major historical-theological paradigms; T=disciplines of Christian studies / theological education; B=biblical studies; H=historical study of Christianity; S=systematic / constructive theology; P=practical theology / pastoral studies)

A. Recommended Readings

Textbooks

1. *Küng, Hans (1995). *Christianity: Essence, History and Future*. Translated by John Bowden. New York: Continuum.

Primary Texts of Theologians (will be provided in the course)

2. Primary Text 1 – Origen, *On First Principles* 2,9 (Oxford 2018, p. 236-251)
3. Primary Text 2 – Gregory of Nyssa, “An Answer to Ablabius”
4. Primary Text 3 – Augustine, *On the Trinity*, Book 9 (Cambridge 2002)
5. Primary Text 4 – Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Question 113
6. Primary Text 5 – Gustaf Aulén, *Christus Victor*, 17-23, 162-172
7. Primary Text 6 – Martin Luther, “Preface to the Latin Works 1545” (anotated by Robert Kolb, p. 489-501)
8. Primary Text 7 – John Calvin, *Institutes of The Christian Religion* 4,17,1-22
9. Primary Text 8 – Emmanuel Kant, J.K.W. Möhsen, Moses Mendelssohn, “What is Enlightenment” (ed. Schmidt, p. 1-64)

10. Primary Text 9 – Schleiermacher, “On the Essence of Religion (the second speech)”
11. Primary Text 10 – Karl Barth, *Epistle to the Romans*, p. 271-285, 511-515
12. Primary Text 11 – Paul Tillich, “What is Wrong with the Dialectic Theology”
13. Primary Text 12 – Carl Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, p.
14. Primary Text 13 – Robert Menzies and William Menzies, *Spirit and Power. Foundations of Pentecostal Experience*, Chapter 8 (Zondervan 2000)
15. Primary Text 14 – Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence. The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (section on 1 Cor 12.1-11, p. 158-183)
16. Primary Text 15 – Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, part 1 (p. 1-24)
17. Primary Text 16 – Leonardo Boff, Introduction to Liberation Theology, ch. 3 (p. 23-42)
18. Primary Text 17 – Rosemary R. Ruether, *Sexism. God Talk* p. 116-138

Supplementary Materials

19. “Christianity” article in *Britannica Academic*, <https://academic-eb-com.easyaccess1.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/levels/collegiate/article/Christianity/105945>.
20. Anderson, Allan (2014). *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, chapters 1-2. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
21. Boff, Leonardo and Clodovis Boff (1987). *Introducing Liberation Theology*. Translated by Paul Burns. Kent: Burns & Oates, 1987.
22. Bruce, F. F. (1979). “The History of New Testament Study.” *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*, ed. I. Howard Marshall, 1977. Carlisle: The Paternoster Press, revised 1979, 21-59.
23. Clifford, Anne M (2001). *Introducing Feminist Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis.
24. Fiorenza, Francis Schüssler (1991). “Systematic Theology: Tasks and Methods.” In *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*, edited by Francis Schüssler Fiorenza and John P. Galvin, 1:1–87. Minneapolis: Fortress. S
25. Fitzmyer, Joseph A (1989). “Historical Criticism. Its Role in Biblical Interpretation and Church Life.” *Theological Studies* 50: 244-259.
26. Ford, David E. (2005). “Introduction to Modern Theology.” In *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology Since 1918*, ed. David E. Ford with Richard Mauers, 3rd ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1-17.
27. Ford, David F. with Rachel Muers (2005) (eds.). *The Modern Theologians*. 3rd. ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell. 第二版中譯—福特編：《現代神學家：二十世紀基督教神學導論》。董江陽、陳佐人譯。香港：道風書社，2005。S/M
28. Forrester, Duncan B (2000). *Truthful Action. Explorations in Practical Theology*. Edinburgh, T&T Clark.
29. Helm, Thomas E. (1991). *The Christian Religion: An Introduction*, 59-62, 66-78, 181-241. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
30. Jenkins, Philip (2011). *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
31. Küng, Hans (1989). “Paradigm Change in Theology: A Proposal for Discussion.” In *Paradigm Change in Theology: A Symposium for the Future*, ed. Hans Küng and David Tracy. New York: Crossroad, 3-33.

32. Livingston, James C. and others (2006). *Modern Christian Thought*, 2nd. ed. Minneapolis: Fortress.
33. Lonergan, Bernard J. F (2017). *Method in Theology*. 2nd ed. Edited by Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
34. Marsden, George M (1991). *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991. [You may read the corresponding pages in the Chinese translation: 馬斯丹：《解構基要主義與福音主義》。宋繼杰譯。陳佐人審校。香港：天道，2004。
35. 吳國傑 (2014)：《正邪難辨：再思基督宗教判斷正統與異端的權威標準》。香港：浸信會出版社。 C/H
36. 邢福增 (2004)：〈香港基督教史研究回顧〉，載《香港基督教史研究導論》。香港：建道神學院，頁 185-266。

B. Further Readings

Historical-Theological Paradigms

37. Anderson, Allan and Edmond Tang, eds. *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*. Foreword by Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. Oxford, UK: Regnum Books International; Baguio City, Philippines: APTS Press, 2005. H/M
38. Bays, Daniel H. *A New History of Christianity in China*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. H.
39. Boeve, Lieven (2016). "Paradigm Change in Theology? Assessing the 1983 Küng-Tracy Symposium." In *The Normativity of History. Theological Truth and Tradition in the Tension between Church History and Systematic Theology*. Leuven: Peeters, 101-114.
40. Kay, William K. *Pentecostalism*. London: SCM, 2009. M/H
41. Kelly, J. N. D. *Early Christian Doctrines*. Rev. ed. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978. = 凱利：《早期基督教教義》。康來昌譯。台北：中華福音神學院出版社，1984。H/S
42. Kim, Sebastian and Kirsteen Kim. *Christianity as a World Religion*. London; New York: Continuum, 2008. C
43. Küng, Hans. *Great Christian Thinkers*. New York: Continuum, 1994. = 漢斯·昆：《基督教大思想家》。包利民譯。香港：漢語基督教文化研究所，1995。M/H
44. Kwok Pui-lan. *Introducing Asian Feminist Theology*. Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2000. S
45. MacCulloch, Diarmaid. *A History of Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*. New York: Allen Lane, 2009. H
46. McGrath, Alister E. *Historical Theology: An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998. = 麥格夫：《歷史神學》。趙崇明譯。香港：天道，2002。H/S
47. Miles, Margaret R. *The Word Made Flesh: A History of Christian Thought*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005. = 瑪格麗特·邁爾斯：《道成肉身：基督教思想史》。楊華明、李林譯。北京：中央編譯，2012。H/S
48. Miller, Ed. L. and Stanley J. Grenz, eds. *Fortress Introduction to Contemporary Theologies*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998. M/S

49. Noll, Mark. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker / IVP, 1997. = 樂馬可：《轉捩點—基督教會歷史里程碑》。邱清萍譯。Pentaluma, CA: 中信，2002。 H
50. Rowland, Christopher, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. M
51. Ware, Kallistos. *The Orthodox Way*. Rev. ed. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996. M
52. Woodhead, Linda. *Christianity: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
53. 何光滬、楊熙楠編。《漢語神學讀本》(上下冊)。香港：道風書社，2009。 S/M
54. 吳國傑：《10大香港宗派巡禮：透視主要基督教宗派》。香港：基稻田，2008。 H/M
55. 胡露茜、黃慧貞、黃慧賢、麥明儀：《神學起動：女性主義神學家素描》。香港：婦女基督徒協會，2011。
56. 趙志廉：《基督教簡史》。上海：中國基督教協會神學教育委員會，1989。 H
57. 郭鴻標、堵建偉編：《新世紀的神學議程》。沈宣仁審訂。二冊。香港：基督徒學會，2002–2003。〔尤參該書上冊載：沈宣仁，「基督教研究與神學的多元意義」〕 S
58. 黃慧貞編：《亞洲女性主義神學》。香港：基督教文藝，2008。 S/M
59. 龔立人：《解放神學與香港困境》。香港：香港基督徒學會，1999。 S/M

Methods of Theological Disciplines

60. Bailey, Stephen. *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students*. 3rd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2011.
61. Bevans, Stephen B. *Models of Contextual Theology* Rev. ed. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2002. S
62. Bosch, David. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991. = 《更新變化的宣教》。白陳毓華譯。台北：華神，1999。 P
63. Bradley, James E. and Richard A. Muller. *Church History: An Introduction to Research, Reference Works, and Methods*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. H
64. Browning, Don S. *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991. P
65. Cameron, Helen, et al. *Studying Local Churches: A Handbook*. London: SCM, 2005. P
66. Conzelmann, Hans and Andreas Lindemann. *Interpreting the New Testament: An Introduction to the Principles and Methods of N.T. Exegesis*. Translated by Siegfried S. Schatzmann. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988. B
67. Dunn, James. *New Testament Theology in Dialogue*. London: SPCK, 1987. B
68. Dunn, James. *The Living Word*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009. B
69. Ebeling, Gerhard. *The Study of Theology*. Translated by Duane A. Priebe. London: Collins, 1978. = 艾伯林：《神學研究：一種百科全書式的定位》。李秋零譯。香港：漢語基督教文化研究所，1999。 T
70. Farley, Edward. *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983. T
71. Fiorenza, Francis Schüssler. "Thinking Theologically about Theological Education." *Theological*

- Education* 24, supplement 2 (1988): 89–119. T
72. Kwok Pui-lan, Don H. Compier and Joerg Rieger, eds. *Empire and the Christian Tradition: New Readings of Classical Theologians*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007. H/S
 73. Marshall, I. H. "Historical Criticism." *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*, ed. I. Howard Marshall, 1977. Carlisle: The Paternoster Press, revised 1979, 126-138.
 74. McKenzie, Steven L. and Stephen R. Hayes, eds. *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999. B
 75. Messer, Neil. *SCM StudyGuide to Christian Ethics*. London: SCM, 2006. P
 76. Osmer, Richard Robert. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2008. P
 77. Poling, James N. and Donald E. Miller. *Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1985. P
 78. Robbins, Vernon. *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-rhetorical Interpretation*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996. B
 79. Schleiermacher, F. *Brief Outline of Theology as a Field of Study: Revised Translation of the 1811 and 1930 Editions*. 3rd. ed. Translated by Terrence N. Tice. Richmond: John Knox Press, 2011. T
 80. Schüssler-Fiorenza, Elisabeth. *Wisdom Ways: Introducing Feminist Biblical Interpretation*. New York: Orbis Books, 2001. B/M
 81. Sölle, Dorothee. *Thinking About God: An Introduction to Theology*. London: SCM, 1990. S/M
 82. Standaert, Nicolas. *Handbook of Christianity in China*. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001–2010. H
 83. Stone, Howard W. and James O. Duke. *How to Think Theologically*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006. = 霍華德·斯通、詹姆斯·杜克：《基督徒的神學思考》。陳永財譯。香港：基道出版社，2007。S/P
 84. Swinton, John and Harriet Mowatt. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. London: SCM, 2006. P
 85. White, James F. *Introduction to Christian Worship*. 3rd ed. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2000. = 詹姆斯·懷特：《基督教崇拜導論》。禮亦師。香港：基督教文藝，2011。P
 86. Wiles, Maurice. *What Is Theology?* London: Oxford University Press, 1976. T
 87. Wogaman, J. Philip. *Christian Perspectives on Politics*. Rev. and expanded. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.
 88. Woodward, James and Stephen Pattison. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology, Part Two*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000. P
 89. 吳國傑：《真貌重尋：教會歷史研究導引》。香港：基道，2005。H
 90. 周天和：《新約研究指南（增訂本）》。第三版。香港：崇基學院神學組教牧事工部，1998。B
 91. 李熾昌等：《基督教會崇拜的重探》（增修版）。香港：基督徒學會，2003。C
 92. 江大惠編：《崇基神學四十年：1963–2003》。香港：香港中文大學崇基學院神學組，2003。T
 93. 沈宣仁：《三十年來情與理》。陳慎慶編。香港：基督徒學會，1992。T
 94. 紀治興編：《社會企業——信仰實踐與反思》。香港，基督教文藝，2013。P

95. 葉菁華、盧龍光：《我們信：尼西亞信經釋義》。香港：基督教文藝，2014。 S
96. 邢福增：《香港基督教史研究導論》。香港：建道神學院，2004。 H
97. 陳俊偉編：《神學方法論》。香港：天道，2013。 T
98. 黃保羅：《漢語學術神學：作為學科體系的基督教研究》。北京市：宗教文化出版社, 2008。 T
99. 黃慧貞：《性別意識與聖經詮釋》。香港：香港基督徒學會，2000。 B/M

8. E-Learning Platform

Besides lectures in class, the course also uses a web-based learning platform called Blackboard (<https://blackboard.cuhk.edu.hk/>) for teaching.

- Course announcements (including changes in class schedule) will be posted on Blackboard.
- All assignments should be submitted electronically. **(Do not submit any assignment through email or in hardcopy.)**
- Students are encouraged to make use of the Discussion Board in Blackboard to communicate with fellow students, to discuss issues related to the course, and to give feedback.

9. Academic Honesty

- Students should pay serious attention to the policy and regulations of the University on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. For details, please refer to <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty>.
- **Besides submitting the assignments to Blackboard, students should at the same time submit them to VeriGuide** (https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.jspx) for plagiarism checking. VeriGuide will issue a statement (in the form of a receipt), on which the student declares that they are aware of the policies, regulations, guidelines, and procedures on academic honesty.
- Please upload a scanned copy of the signed receipt to Blackboard. **(Do not send it through email.)** In case this cannot be done, please mail/deliver the signed receipt to the teacher's office (Address: LG 109, Theology Building, The Chinese University of Hong Kong). An assignment without the signed receipt would not be graded.

10. Feedback for evaluation

Feedback and recommendation are welcome. Students are advised to give feedback either during the lectures or through email. Response will be made promptly according to the need of students.

Appendix: Paper-Grading Rubrics

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable
Thesis	Clear statement of what is being proposed or argued in the paper.	The thesis is easily detectable after reading the paper, but it is not presented in a single and clear statement.	The thesis is present, but a reader must work hard to reconstruct from the entire paper.	There is no thesis or central argument/proposal to tie the paper together, or the thesis is unclear.
Arguments	Each reason, support, or argument to follow the thesis is made clear, thorough, relevant and convincing. Proper references are consistently made to the text in question (biblical and/or a textbook) to show why the proposed thesis is valid.	Arguments made to support the thesis are clear, but less thorough, relevant, and/or convincing. References are often made to the text in question (biblical and/or a textbook) to show why the proposed thesis is valid, but this is done not as consistently.	Arguments made to support the thesis are acceptable but sketchy or their relevance unclear. Some references are made to the text in question (biblical and/or a textbook) to show why the proposed thesis is valid.	Arguments to support the thesis are missing, irrelevant, or not convincing. The paper makes lots of claims or assertions that are not substantiated. There are few or no references to the text in question (biblical and/or a textbook) to show why the proposed thesis is valid.
Counter-Arguments	The paper acknowledges, anticipates, and accounts for conflicting evidence, counter-examples, counter-arguments, and/or opposing positions, even ones that are not obvious or not yet been made in writings of others.	The paper acknowledges and accounts for obvious conflicting evidence, counter-examples, counter-arguments, and/or opposing positions.	The paper acknowledges and accounts for a few obvious conflicting evidence, counter-examples, and counter-arguments, but miss other obvious opposing positions. Or the paper acknowledges counter-arguments without accounting for them.	No awareness or acknowledgement of conflicting evidence, counter-examples, counter-arguments, or opposing positions.
Organization	The paper's flow, from one paragraph to another, is consistently sensible, logical, and always with clear transitions. The movement from introduction to the	The paper's flow, from one paragraph to another, is largely sensible and logical. Transitions are mostly appropriate. The movement from introduction to the body and then the	There are signs of sensible and logical organization, but these are mixed with abrupt or illogical shifts and ineffective flow of ideas. The movement from introduction to the body and then the	The paper does not flow well in terms of organization or for the argument of the thesis. Transitions from paragraph to paragraph or from one idea to the next are missing. The

	body and then the conclusion is easy to follow and coherent.	conclusion is distinguishable if not easy to follow.	conclusion is not clearly distinguishable.	movement from introduction to the body and then the conclusion is non-existent.
Style	The paper is written in complete and grammatically correct sentences. Word choice is precise; definitions are provided if and when needed. Paper has been spell-checked, proofread, and contains no errors.	The paper is written in complete sentence and grammatically correct sentences. Word choice is understandable, definitions are generally (though not always) provided if and when needed. Paper has been spell-checked, proofread, and contains only a few errors.	The paper contains some incomplete or grammatically incorrect sentences. Word choice is imprecise, at times not understandable, and/or not defined when needed. Not clear if the paper has been spell-checked and proofread because of the number of errors present.	The paper is written with many incomplete or grammatically incorrect sentences. Word choice is not understandable and definition of particular terms or words is not given even when needed. The paper has clearly not been spell-checked or proofread, and hence contains an excessive number of errors.
Quality of references	All references used are of excellent quality; both primary source and secondary materials have been referenced in the discussion.	References used are in general of good quality; both primary source and secondary materials have been referenced in the discussion.	References of good quality are used, but insufficient in amount. OR References of bad quality such as online blog articles are used.	References used are simply introductory materials or online blog articles. Lack of either primary sources or secondary materials.
References and Documentation	Notes to indicate sources of information are given whenever they are needed. Both notes and bibliography use consistent and academically acceptable format.	Notes to indicate sources of information are generally given when they are needed. Notes and bibliography are generally but not always consistent or conform to required academic standard.	Sources of information are not consistently documented. If they are, format is inconsistent or does not conform to required academic standard.	Source materials are used without documentation.