

<b>Course ID:</b>	<b>Course Title:</b>	<b>Winter 2023</b>
<b>NT 502</b>	<b>Synoptic Gospels</b>	<b>Prerequisite: None</b>
		<b>Credits: 3</b>

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
<b>Delivery:</b>	Hybrid	<b>Instructor:</b>	Jonathan W. Lo, Ph.D.	<b>First Day of Class:</b>	Jan 9, 2023
<b>Days:</b>	Wednesdays	<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:Jonathan.Lo@ambrose.edu">Jonathan.Lo@ambrose.edu</a>	<b>Last Day to Add/Drop:</b>	Jan 22, 2023
<b>Time:</b>	2:30-5:30 pm	<b>Phone:</b>	(403) 410-2000 ext. 6940	<b>Last Day to Withdraw:</b>	Mar 31, 2022
<b>Room:</b>	A2133	<b>Office:</b>	L2064		
<b>Course TA:</b>	Wendy Eeles <a href="mailto:WEeles@my.ambrose.edu">WEeles@my.ambrose.edu</a>	<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment	<b>Last Day to Apply for Extension:</b>	Apr 3, 2022
<b>Final Exam:</b>	Wednesday, Apr 19	Join Zoom Meeting <a href="https://ambrose.zoom.us/j/99210738483?pwd=TDNqUDhmME44ckw3endLSG1ZankvUT09">https://ambrose.zoom.us/j/99210738483?pwd=TDNqUDhmME44ckw3endLSG1ZankvUT09</a> Meeting ID: 992 1073 8483 Passcode: 460276			

### Important Dates and Information

For a list of all important dates and information regarding participating in classes at Ambrose University, please refer to the Academic Calendar at <https://ambrose.edu/academic-calendar>.

### Course Description

An introduction to New Testament studies and exegetical skills through the study of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a foundation in the Synoptic Gospels (SG), so they can study biblical literature with competence and rigor and be prepared for subsequent research in the NT. Students will be introduced to the benefits and challenges of reading the SG from a critical perspective and encouraged to engage the NT on a deeper level using exegetical principles, methods, and tools. The course will begin with the topic of biblical interpretation and its role within the broader disciplines of history and theology. Preliminary matters about the SG will be addressed, including questions about their origins, genre, and possible relationships with one another (“The Synoptic Problem”). The background and message of each gospel will be analyzed via investigations of their historical and literary contexts, as well as their narrative forms. The remainder of the course will consist of analytical surveys of the contents and themes of the SG, accompanied by lectures that identify and explore a specific narrative element within each gospel. The course will conclude with discussions about the theologies of the SG, their contribution to the NT canon, and implications for use in ministry.

## Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to complete the following tasks:

1. *Understand* the significance of contextual biblical exegesis for nurturing theological depth and breadth.
2. *Describe* the principles and processes of biblical interpretation.
3. *Apply* exegetical skills to the reading of biblical texts.
4. *Discuss* the question of the genre of the Synoptic Gospels.
5. *Describe* the historical and social world of the Synoptic Gospels.
6. *Acquire* basic library and research skills needed for studying the New Testament at a postgraduate level.
7. *Describe* the literary relationship between Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
8. *Explain* the contents, structures and themes of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
9. *Identify* sources of inspiration in the Synoptic Gospels for contextualization in ministry and personal spiritual growth.

There is a new initiative in the Seminary called “Seminary 101” (SEM 101), which brings the library staff and their information literacy resources, as well as the Student Academic Success and their writing and critical thinking skills into the classrooms of four required courses across the academic year. NT 502 is one of these courses and will partner with Student Academic Success in particular to teach the following skills:

1. A demonstrable grasp of the aims and strategies of academic writing.
2. A measurable improvement in the clarity, brevity, and cogency of such writing.
3. An ability to identify the genre of an assignments and to devise appropriate strategies for completing them.

## Required and Recommended Textbooks and Readings

Brown, Jeannine K. *The Gospels as Stories: A Narrative Approach to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020.

Nickle, Keith F. *The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction*. Revised and Expanded version. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

A modern English translation of the New Testament (NRSV, ESV, NIV recommended).

Additional readings listed in the required reading will be provided via Moodle.

## Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Required Reading	Assignments Due
Jan 11	1. Introduction to “Reading” the Bible	*N.T. Wright, <i>The New Testament and the People of God</i> , 3-28	
Jan 18	2. What is Exegesis? Tools of the Trade— Principles, Sources and Methods	*Jeannine K. Brown, <i>Scripture as Communication</i> , 29-55, 275-280.	
Jan 25	3. Biblical Criticism: Ways of Reading, Asking the Hard Questions (The “Synoptic Problem”)	*John T. Carroll, <i>Jesus and the Gospels</i> , 20-44.	<i>Synoptic Comparison</i>

Feb 1	4. The Historical Context: Origins (Authorship, Dating, Provenance, Textualization)	Keith F. Nickle, <i>The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction</i> , 1-43, 45-62.	
Feb 8	5. The Literary Context: The question of Genre (What IS a gospel?), Rhetorical Criticism and Narrative Criticism	Jeannine K. Brown, <i>The Gospels as Stories</i> , 3-19.	
Feb 15	6. Mark (1): Jesus and God's Mighty Deliverance	Keith F. Nickle, <i>The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction</i> , 63-102.	<i>Mark Diagrammatic Summary</i>
Feb 22	NO CLASS— <i>Reading Week</i>		
Mar 1	7. Mark (2): Narrative Element in Focus: Intertextuality	Jeannine K. Brown, <i>The Gospels as Stories</i> , 107-125; *Jonathan W. Lo, "Composite Citations"	
Mar 8	8. Matthew (1): Jesus the Wise King, Who Leads God's People in Righteousness	Keith F. Nickle, <i>The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction</i> , 103-133.	<i>Matthew Diagrammatic Summary</i>
Mar 15	9. Matthew (2): Narrative Element in Focus: Characterization	Jeannine K. Brown, <i>The Gospels as Stories</i> , 65-104.	
Mar 22	10. Luke (1): Jesus and the Inclusive Salvation of God	Keith F. Nickle, <i>The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction</i> , 135-163.	<i>Luke Diagrammatic Summary</i>
Mar 29	NO CLASS – <i>Ambrose Research Conference 23</i>		
Apr 5	11. Luke (2): Narrative Element in Focus: Plot	Jeannine K. Brown, <i>The Gospels as Stories</i> , 23-62.	<i>Short Paper</i>
Apr 12	12. The Synoptic Gospels: Theology, Canon, and Contextualization	Keith F. Nickle, <i>The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction</i> , 165-196; *Jeannine K. Brown, <i>Scripture as Communication</i> , 232-273.	
Apr 19	Final Exam		

**Requirements:**

Evaluation for this course will consist of three minor assignments and a final exam:

1. Synoptic Comparison: 25% of the final grade, Due: Jan 25 (9pm)

The student will choose a pericope that is present in all three Synoptic gospels and perform an analysis that observes the similarities and differences and summarizes their findings in a single page report. Further instructions for this assignment will be given in class.

The essay is due at 9pm on Apr 5<sup>th</sup> and only electronic submissions (PDF) via Moodle are accepted. Please include the name of the Course Code, the Student's Name, and the Assignment *in the name of the PDF document*:

e.g. NT502\_PeterLaraque\_SynopticComparison.pdf

If there are any questions about how to do this, the IT department is ready to provide assistance ([helpdesk@ambrose.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ambrose.edu)). A 5% penalty will be deducted for each working day the assignment is late unless an extension has been arranged and granted prior to the due date.

2. Diagrammatic Summary: 25% of the final grade, Due: Before class: Mark (Feb 15), Matthew (Mar 8), Luke (Mar 22)

A Diagrammatic Summary is a tool for visually laying out the contents and arguments of an entire Biblical text so that its structures and themes can be seen at a glance. The student will produce a Diagrammatic Summary of a chosen Synoptic Gospel. The summary should consider every verse in the gospel and present the structural and thematic units of the letter on one piece of paper. Assessment will be based on the ability of the student to articulate the structure and themes of the book, showing how the parts contribute to the whole. The student should carefully trace the development of the plot and make note of important themes and recurring motifs and present them in their diagrammatic summary in a clear and thoughtful manner. Some marks will be awarded for creativity and artistic merit.

The Diagrammatic Summary is due at 9pm on the first day that the chosen Synoptic Gospel is taught (see Course Schedule). Both paper and electronic submissions (PDF) via Moodle are accepted. If submitting through Moodle, please include the name of the Course Code, the Student's Name, and the Assignment *in the name of the PDF document*:

e.g. NT502\_PeterLaraque\_DiagrammaticAssignment.pdf

If there are any questions about how to do this, the IT department is ready to provide assistance ([helpdesk@ambrose.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ambrose.edu)). A 5% penalty will be deducted for each working day the assignment is late unless an extension has been arranged and granted prior to the due date.

3. Short Research Paper: 25% of the final grade, Due: Apr 5, 2022 (9pm)

Topic: "What is relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus?"

Maximum length: 2500 words

This paper is interpretative or analytical in nature: it asks you to analyze evidence from the bible, as well as other primary and secondary sources, to present an argument about the nature of John and Jesus' relationship and its meaning or function within the gospels."

The research paper must contain research and argumentation at a postgraduate level, as well as the ability to locate, comprehend and utilize relevant primary & secondary sources of different kinds to substantiate one's claims. Effort should be made to identify and include primary and secondary resources, seeking assistance from the Ambrose Library staff if needed. The paper should be accompanied by proper footnotes and a bibliography and demonstrate a level of

rigor in terms of the level of research, the accuracy of claims, logic and consistency, and clarity of presentation and thought.

Required number of sources: 10, including primary texts, periodical literature, monographs, and other reference materials (Bible encyclopedias/dictionaries, introductions/commentaries).

As part of your SEM 101 requirements for this course, this assignment will help you strengthen your writing and editing skills. Thus, you must meet with a research and communication tutor from Learning Services to review a draft of your paper. During that session, you and your tutor should identify your paper's strengths and weaknesses and work to make improvements in a couple of significant areas, prioritizing topics according to the attached editing checklist.

You can book your appointment here: <https://ambrose.edu/learning-services/consultations>. Please book early, as you'll be competing with your classmates for slots around the same time of the semester! After your session, email [learningservices@ambrose.edu](mailto:learningservices@ambrose.edu) to request confirmation of your attendance.

The essay is due at 9pm on Apr 5<sup>th</sup> and only electronic submissions (PDF) via Moodle are accepted. Please include the name of the Course Code, the Student's Name, and the Assignment *in the name of the PDF document*:

e.g. NT502\_PeterLaraque\_ShortPaper.pdf

If there are any questions about how to do this, the IT department is ready to provide assistance ([helpdesk@ambrose.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ambrose.edu)). A 5% penalty will be deducted for each working day the assignment is late unless an extension has been arranged and granted prior to the due date.

4. Final Exam: 25% of the final grade, to be completed on Apr 19

The scope of the final exam will cover the contents of the Synoptic Gospels and is based on the course lectures, readings, and the students' own reading of the Bible. Students will have 3 hours to complete the exam.

Please document using Chicago style. For assistance with citation and other writing skills, see:

<https://ambrose.edu/learning-services/resources>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/03/>

[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html)

#### Grade Summary:

1. Synoptic Comparison	25%	Due: Jan 25
2. Diagrammatic Summary	25%	Due: Feb 15 (Mark), Mar 8 (Matt), Mar 22 (Luke)
3. Short Research Paper	25%	Due: Apr 5
4. Final Exam	25%	Due: Apr 19

**Note:** No student can pass this course without completing every assignment.

**Attendance:** Unexcused absences will be considered in calculating the final grade.

## Grade Summary:

Grade		Interpretation	Grade Points
A+	100	Mastery: Complete Understanding of Subject Matter	4.00
A	96-99		4.00
A-	91-95		3.70
B+	86-90	Proficient: Well-Developed Understanding of Subject Matter	3.30
B	81-85		3.00
B-	76-80		2.70
C+	71-75	Basic: Developing Understanding of Subject Matter	2.30
C	66-70		2.00
C-	61-65		1.70
D+	56-60	Minimal Pass: Limited Understanding of Subject	1.30
D	51-55		1.0
D-	50		
F	Below 50	Failure: Failure to Meet Course Requirements	0.00
P		Pass	No Grade Points

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g., percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

## Bibliography:

Bauckham, Richard. *God Crucified: Monotheism & Christology in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998.

Black, David Alan, Dockery, David S., eds. *New Testament Criticism & Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991.

Brown, Jeannine K. *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007.

Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997.

Burridge, Richard A. *Four Gospels, One Jesus?* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994.

Carroll, John T. *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2016.

Dawes, Gregory, W., ed. *The Historical Jesus Quest: Landmarks in the Search for the Jesus of History*. Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1999.

DeSilva, David A. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Context, Methods & Ministry Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: IVP Academic, 2004.

Dunn, James D. G. *Unity & Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*. London: SCM Press, 1977.

- Evans, C. Stephen. *The Historical Christ & The Jesus of Faith: The Incarnational Narrative as History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- Goodacre, Mark. *The Case Against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2002.
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- Hurtado, Larry W. *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*. Rev. ed. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1999.
- Keith, Chris. *The Gospel as Manuscript: An Early History of the Jesus Tradition as Material Artifact*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Lo, Jonathan W. "The Conflation of Messianic Traditions in Mark's Composite References." *Hill Road* 43, July (2019): 52-80.
- MacEwan, Robert. *Matthean Posteriority: An Exploration of Matthew's Use of Mark and Luke as a Solution to the Synoptic Problem*, LNTS 501. New York: T&T Clark, 2015.
- Martin, Ralph P. *New Testament Foundations: A Guide for Christian Students, vol 1. The Four Gospels*. Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1975.
- Neill, Stephen and Wright, Tom. *The Interpretation of the New Testament: 1861-1986*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Perkins, PHEME. *Reading the New Testament: An Introduction*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1987.
- Porter, Stanley & Dyer, Bryan R., eds. *The Synoptic Problem*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016
- Powell, Max Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.
- Schneiders, Sandra M. *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999.
- Soulen, Richard N., Soulen, Kendall R. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster, 2001.
- Throckmorton, Jr., Burton H. *Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1992.
- Wright, N. T. *The New Testament and the People of God*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992.
- . *Jesus and the Victory of God*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996.
- . *The Resurrection of the Son of God*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2003.

## **Ambrose University Important Policies & Procedures: Communication**

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions.

### **Exam Scheduling**

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a *Revised Examination Request* form to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

### **Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting**

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class. Please refer to your professor regarding their electronic etiquette expectations.

### **Academic Integrity**

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

### **Academic Policies**

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/content/academic-calendar-2>.

### **Privacy**

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at [privacy@ambrose.edu](mailto:privacy@ambrose.edu).

### **Coursework Extensions**

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and are normally granted for 30 days beyond the last day of the term.

Normally, Course Extension Applications will be considered only when all of the following conditions are met:

- the quality of prior course work has been satisfactory;
- circumstances beyond your control, such as an extended illness or death of a family member, make it impossible for you to complete the course work on time; and
- you submit *Coursework Extension Application* to the Office of the Registrar on or before the deadline specified in the Academic Schedule.

If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course.

A temporary grade of TX will be assigned until a final grade is submitted in accordance with the new deadline. A final grade of F will apply to:

- all course work submitted after the end of the semester unless a coursework extension has been granted; and all course work submitted after the revised due date provided by an approved extension to coursework.

## **Academic Success and Supports**

### **Accessibility Services**

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

### **Ambrose Writing Services**

150 Ambrose Circle SW, Calgary, AB T3H 0L5  
T 403-410-2000 TF 800-461-1222  
[info@ambrose.edu](mailto:info@ambrose.edu)  
**ambrose.edu**



Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/writingcentre>

### **Ambrose Tutoring Services**

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

### **Mental Health Support**

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

#### On Campus:

- Counselling Services: [ambrose.edu/counselling](https://ambrose.edu/counselling)
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at [ambrose.edu/wellness](https://ambrose.edu/wellness).
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See [ambrose.edu/crisissupport](https://ambrose.edu/crisissupport) for a list of staff members.

#### Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

### **Sexual Violence Support**

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – [ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness](https://ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness).

#### Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888

**Note:** Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.