

Course ID:	Course Title:	Winter 2022
NT 502	Synoptic Gospels	Prerequisite: None
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Delivery:	Hybrid	Instructor:	Jonathan W. Lo, Ph.D.	First Day of Class:	Jan 14, 2022
Days:	Fridays	Email:	Jonathan.Lo@ambrose.edu	Last Day to Add/Drop:	Jan 23, 2022
Time:	8:15-11:00am	Phone:	(403) 410-2000 ext. 6940	Last Day to Withdraw:	Mar 18, 2022
Room:	RE 110	Office:	L2064		
Lab/Tutorial:	N/A	Office Hours:	By appointment	Last Day to Apply for Extension:	Mar 28, 2022
Final Exam:	Yes (Friday, Apr 22)	Course Zoom Link: https://ambrose.zoom.us/j/4152751948?pwd=aW9ibk5vTmtWUUkvbndPaDhkT3ZrQT09 Meeting ID: 415 275 1948 Passcode: 31415			

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, so they can read and study biblical literature with competence and rigor and be prepared for subsequent research in the New Testament. Students will be introduced to the benefits and challenges of reading the Synoptic Gospels from a critical perspective and encouraged to engage the New Testament 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 Synoptic Gospels will be addressed, including questions about their origins, genre, and possible relationship to one another. 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 Synoptic Gospels, accompanied by lectures that identify a specific narrative element within each gospel. The course will conclude with discussions about the theologies of the Synoptic Gospels, their contribution to the New Testament 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 process of biblical interpretation.
3. *Apply* exegetical skills to the reading of biblical texts.
4. *Discuss* the genre of the Synoptic Gospels.
5. *Describe* the historical and social world of the Synoptic Gospels.
6. *Undertake* historical research related to New Testament studies.
7. *Describe* the literary relationship between Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
8. *Identify* the contents, structures and themes of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
9. *Identify* opportunities for contextualization in ministry and for cultivating a heart after God.

Nurture theological depth and breadth
 Cultivate a heart after God
 Foster vocational clarity and effectiveness

Required and Recommended Textbooks and Readings

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

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

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Recommended Reading	Assignments Due
Jan 14	1. Introduction to “Reading” the Bible	*N.T. Wright, <i>The New Testament and the People of God</i> , 3-28	
Jan 21	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 28	3. Biblical Criticism: Ways of Reading, Asking the Hard Questions (The “Synoptic Problem”)	*John T. Carroll, <i>Jesus and the Gospels</i> , 20-44.	
Feb 4	4. The Historical Context: Origins (Authorship, Dating, Provenance, Textualization)	Keith F. Nickle, <i>The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction</i> , 1-43, 45-62.	<i>Short Paper</i>
Feb 11	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 18	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 25	NO CLASS— <i>Reading Week</i>		
Mar 4	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 11	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 18	9. Matthew (2): Narrative Element in Focus: Characterization	Jeannine K. Brown, <i>The Gospels as Stories</i> , 65-104.	
Mar 25	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>
Apr 1	11. Luke (2): Narrative Element in Focus: Plot	Jeannine K. Brown, <i>The Gospels as Stories</i> , 23-62.	
Apr 8	12. The Synoptic Gospels: Theology and Contextualization	Keith F. Nickle, <i>The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction</i> , 165-196; *Jeannine K. Brown, <i>Scripture as Communication</i> , 232-273.	<i>Synoptic Comparison</i>
Apr 15	NO CLASS— <i>Good Friday</i>		
Apr 22	Final Exam		

Requirements:

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

1. Short Research Paper: 20% of the final grade, Due: Feb 4, 2022 (midnight)

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

Maximum length: 5 pages (approximately 2000 words)

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 to substantiate one's claims. The successful paper will also demonstrate a strong grasp of the chosen text/topic and be able to situate it within the broader content and themes in Matthew discussed in class throughout the semester. 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 and monographs (or parts thereof).

2. Diagrammatic Summary: 20% of the final grade, Due: Before class: Mark (Feb 18), Matthew (Mar 11), Luke (Mar 25)

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.

3. Synoptic Comparison: 20% of the final grade, Due: Apr 8

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 will be given in class.

4. Final Exam: 40% of the final grade, to be completed on Apr 22

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.

All assignments are to be submitted through the course Moodle site.

Please document using Chicago style. For assistance see:

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

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html

Grade Summary:

1. Short Research Paper	20%	Due: Feb 4
2. Diagrammatic Summary	20%	Due: Feb 18 (Mark), Mar 11 (Matt), Mar 25 (Luke)
3. Synoptic Comparison	20%	Due: Apr 8
4. Final Exam	40%	Due: Apr 22

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 they Synoptic Problem*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2002.

Green, Joel B., ed. *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.

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.
- 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*. 2nd 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*, 3rd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster, 2001.
- Throckmorton, Jr., Burton H. *Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels*. 5th 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.

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
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
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at 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 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.

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.