Course Syllabus for NT 421: Studies in the Gospels, Interpretive Issues in the Synoptics
A course offered at BMATS

Instructor: Mr. David G. Hellwig
Contact Information:
- Seminary number 903-586-2501, ext. 2231
- Cell number 501-626-0156
- Seminary email dkhellwig4@bmats.edu

Course Description:

According to the catalog, this course is defined as follows: “Topical and exegetical studies are made in the Synoptic and/or Johannine gospels with emphasis on important theological concepts and great events in the life of Christ, such as the Messianic consciousness of Jesus, His miracles, and His parabolic teachings.” The focus of this course will be on the Synoptic Gospels. This includes issues surrounding the harmonization of the Gospels, the Synoptic Problem, and various issues related to the contents of the first three Gospels.

Required Course Textbooks:

- The Holy Bible


Course Objectives:

*By the end of this course, the student should . . .*

- possess an understanding for the value of a harmonization of the Gospels.

- be able to define what is meant by the *Synoptic Problem*, and possess an introductory knowledge of the issues surrounding the Synoptic Problem.

- be able to articulate some of the major theories that offer a solution to the Synoptic Problem.

- possess a clearer understanding of the genealogies and early years of Jesus as provided in the first three Gospels.

- possess a clearer understanding of what Jesus taught related to His parables, the Kingdom, and eschatology.
- be more familiar with particular events surrounding the life of Jesus such as the relationship with His disciples, Pharisees and Sadducees, the resurrection, and the Lord’s Supper.

- obtain a greater appreciation of the Synoptic Gospels as inspired Scripture, and possess a tool for teaching and preaching through the Gospels.

**Course Requirements:**

**Writing Assignments:**

1) Each student will write a one page review on each of the following articles from a *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (this book is found in the reference section of the BMATS library – R 226.03 D554):

   - “Baptism of Jesus,” pp. 55-58
   - “Birth of Jesus,” pp. 60-74
   - “Disciples,” pp. 176-81
   - “Mark, Gospel of,” pp. 512-24
   - “Matthew, Gospel of,” pp. 526-40
   - “Parables,” pp. 591-600
   - “Synagogue,” pp. 781-83

2) Each student will write an 8-10 page research paper on any topic or passage related to the Synoptic Gospels. The paper should contain the following:

   - title page
   - contents page
   - footnotes (Times New Roman 12 pt. font)
   - bibliography (at least 10 sources, including one journal article)
   - body of the paper should be 8-10 pages

   The body of the paper should be double-spaced using Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, and written according to Turabian, 7th edition. The paper will be graded on grammar, sentence structure, logical flow of thought, and neatness.

**Reading Assignments:**

1) Each student will read *Harmony of the Gospels* by Cox and Easley.

2) Each student will read the articles above from *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. 

Policy on Late Work:

Students are expected to turn in assignments on time. Any late work will be deducted 2% points for every day it is late.

Class Attendance:

Students are expected to attend each class session. According to the catalog, missing more than ¼ of class sessions constitutes grounds for failure in the course. The seminary has a fifteen week semester, so missing four or more classes places one over the limit. Guard your absences carefully!! Two points will be deducted from your class attendance and participation grade for each class period that is missed. Also, three tardies equals one absence. It is important to be on time for class!!

Course Exams:

Two exams will be given in this course, a mid-term and a final exam. The final exam is not cumulative, but covers only the material in the latter half of the course. Tests must be taken on the day they are scheduled.

Course Grading:

There are a total of 1,000 points that can be earned for this course. Each percentage point must be earned as grades will not be rounded up. For example, if you earn 907 points for the course, your grade will be a 90.7%, which is a B. The breakdown of the point totals and percentage points are as follows:

- Mid-term exam: 200 pts. (20%)
- Final exam: 200 pts. (20%)
- Research Paper: 250 pts. (25%)
- Reading: 100 pts. (10%)
- One page reviews: 200 pts. (20%) (25 pts. each)
- Class attendance & participation: 50 pts. (5%)

BMATS Grading Schedule:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>81-90%</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>71-80%</td>
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Course Schedule:

Aug. 31 – Introduction to course; Harmonizing the Gospel Story

Sept. 7 – Harmonizing the Gospel Story

14 – Understanding the Synoptic Problem

21 – Understanding the Synoptic Problem

28 – The Genealogies of Jesus

Oct. 5 – The early years of Jesus: birth, presentation in temple, flight to Egypt, growing up in Nazareth (Paschal Lectures)

12 – Jesus and the Storms

19 – MID-TERM

26 – Making Sense of Parables

Nov. 2 – Teaching on the Kingdom (One page reviews due)

9 – Jesus’ Issues with the Pharisees and Sadducees

16 – The Eschatology of Jesus

23 – What Should We Drink at the Lord’s Supper? (Research Paper Due)

30 – The Time Between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection

Dec. 7 – FINAL EXAM

* The professor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus and course schedule at his discretion.

* This class will meet each Tuesday from 8 AM to 12 noon. Chapel will begin at 10:00 AM, and class will resume at 11:00 AM following chapel.

* This class will meet in the Mt. Olive room.
Course Syllabus Contract

I have carefully read through the syllabus for this course. I fully comprehend what is expected of me as a student in this course.

I have duly noted the due dates on the course schedule and agree that I will turn in all assignments on time.

If I am late for any assignments, I understand that they will be deducted 2 percentage points for every day they are late.

I understand that tests must be taken on the day they are scheduled.

I understand the 1,000 point grading scale for this course, and further understand that percentage points will not be rounded up.

I understand that attending class is vital to my seminary education, and that missing class will result in 2 points deducted from my class attendance and participation grade for each day that is missed. I further understand that three tardies is equal to one absence according to the BMATS catalog.

By affixing my signature below, I fully comply with the procedures for this course:

Date ______________ Signature ___________________________
Bibliography

Gospel of Matthew


Gospel of Mark


*The Gospel of Luke*


