



**NT 506 – NEW TESTAMENT EXEGESIS II: SYNOPTIC GOSPELS**  
**Online Course Syllabus**  
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## **I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

This course is designed to assist students in developing increased skills in exegeting the Greek text of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) for preaching and teaching. The course will also introduce students to the unique challenges involved in understanding the literary relationships between the three Synoptics and in harmonizing parallel Gospel narratives. Finally, the course will introduce students to the realm of New Testament Textual Criticism and foster skill in making textual analyses. Regular translation assignments from the Greek text of the Synoptic Gospels will serve to strengthen the student's foundation for future exegetical work.

Prerequisite: NT 505

## **II. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

- to deepen our appreciation of the words and deeds of our Lord Jesus Christ and their application to the lives of people today;
- to grow in the skills of Greek translation and interpretation;
- to clarify the relationships between the various gospel accounts of Jesus' words and deeds;
- to grapple with the so-called "synoptic problem" for the purpose of understanding how the three Synoptic Gospels present a complex yet complimentary portrait of the life and message of Jesus Christ;
- to gain an introductory knowledge of the realm of New Testament textual analysis;
- to develop skill in preparing gospel pericopes for preaching and teaching.

## **III. ONLINE COURSE STRUCTURE**

Modules: You have up to fifteen weeks to complete this online course. The course is divided into thirteen modules, designed to be completed in order over the course of 13-14 weeks. To see a detailed outline of the structure, click the "Modules" link on the left side of this page.

Conferences: Your course instructor will want to meet with you at least monthly using the conferencing capabilities of Canvas. Contact your instructor about setting up a conference within the first couple of weeks of the course.

Mentor: As you proceed through this course, you will need to obtain the services of a course mentor who will meet with you on a monthly basis to interact with you regarding your studies and to proctor the course exams. Ideally, your course mentor will be a pastor, youth pastor, or other spiritual authority in your church who can guide and counsel you as you pursue biblical and theological training. In the course materials there is a mentor agreement form that your mentor will need to sign and return to New Geneva Seminary before you begin the course.

## **IV. READING AND TRANSLATION**

Readings: The assigned readings from the Stein and Greenlee texts will parallel the weekly lecture and discussion themes covering essential topics for exegesis and textual analysis of the Synoptics. Thus, the timely completion of each reading is essential to fulfilling the learning goals of the course. Completion of the reading assignments will be assessed by reading quizzes given throughout the semester, each covering the previous week's reading assignment. The quizzes will seek to focus on broad themes and major points of each reading assignment rather than minutia.

**Translation:** The completion of weekly translation assignments will enable you to develop increasing skill in handling the New Testament in the original Greek and in expanding your understanding of the methods of NT exegesis. Translation work will be done using standardized forms that will guide you in analyzing the Greek text. Completed translation forms are due prior to the beginning of class on their assigned date and should be submitted online.

#### **V. SYNOPTIC ANALYSIS PAPER**

Each student will prepare a 2000-word analysis of a particular pericope from the gospel of Mark, to be submitted the last day of class. The pericope chosen should be three to six verses in length and should have synoptic parallels in both Matthew or Luke. The paper should include 1) a parsing analysis and translation of the passage using the standard form provided in class; 2) brief discussions of any significant textual, vocabulary, grammatical, or historical-cultural information that may shed light on the meaning of the passage; and 3) a comparison of the pericope from Mark with its parallels in the other Synoptics, including an explanation of how the Synoptic parallels shed light on each other and a discussion of any difficulties that may exist in harmonizing the synoptic accounts. An “A” paper will include interaction with at least three scholarly resources beside the Stein text. Footnote and bibliographic references to scholarly resources should be in Turabian format. (An excellent guide to Turabian can be found on the Covenant Seminary Library’s website: (<https://www.covenantseminary.edu/library/turabian/>.)

#### **VI. PRESENTATION**

The pericope from Mark’s Gospel chosen for the exegetical paper will form the basis for a 20-minute synoptic analysis presentation. The focus of the presentation will be on how synthesizing the variations in the synoptic accounts sheds light on the meaning of the account as recorded in Mark’s Gospel. Any difficulties related to the harmonization of the three accounts should also be discussed, along with proposed resolutions to the difficulties. You should provide your instructor students with an outline of the presentation, including a Greek synopsis, prior to your presentation. The use of audio-visual media is optional. The material presented may be included in the exegetical paper.

#### **VII. RESOURCES**

##### Textbooks:

Stein, Robert. *Studying the Synoptic Gospels: Origin and Interpretation*. Baker Academic, 2001. ISBN 9780801022586.

Greenlee, J. Harold. *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, Rev. ed. Baker Academic, 1993. ISBN: 9780801046445.

Aland, Kurt, ed. *Synopsis of the Four Gospels, Greek-English Edition*. Hendrickson Publishers, 2006. ISBN: 9781598561777. (A computerized synopsis of the Greek text such as those included in Accordance, BibleWorks, or Logos is an acceptable alternative to purchasing the Aland Synopsis. There are also English and Greek synopses available online.)

**Exegetical Resources:** The following resources are not required but are essential reference works for a number of courses and for the future preaching and teaching of the Word of God from the original text. Electronic editions for most resources are available for Accordance or Logos Bible Software.

Aland, B. et al. eds. *The Greek New Testament with Revised Concise Greek-English Dictionary*. UBS 4. Hendrickson Publishers, 2011. ISBN: 9781598567205. The critical apparatus in this edition

contains a wealth of helpful information for analyzing variants in the NT text.

Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich, eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 3rd ed. (BDAG). University of Chicago, 2000. ISBN 9780226039336.

Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*. Zondervan, 1996. ISBN 9780310218951.

### VIII. GRADING

Your final grade for this course will be based the following elements:

- Reading quizzes: 30%
- Translation Assignments: 30%
- Exegetical Presentation: 20%
- Exegetical Analysis Paper: 20%

### Lecture, Reading and Translation Schedule

Date	Lecture	Reading	Translation
<b>Week 1</b>	Exegeting the Synoptic Gospels: Course Overview and Introduction		
<b>Week 2</b>	Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels	Stein: Introduction	Mark 1:4-8
<b>Week 3</b>	The “Synoptic Problem”; The Question of Gospel Priority	Stein 1. The Literary Interdependence of the Synoptic Gospels Stein 2: The Priority of Mark	Mark 2:15-17
<b>Week 4</b>	The Quest for “Q”: The Missing Source Hypothesis	Stein 3. The Existence of Q Stein 4. The Matthew-Luke Agreements against Mark	Mark 3:24-27
<b>Week 5</b>	Synthesizing the Synoptics: Appreciating Gospel Unity and Diversity	Stein 5. The “Solution” to the Synoptic Problem Stein 6. The Value of Source Criticism	Mark 4:21-25
<b>Week 6</b>	Getting behind the Gospels? The Analysis of Gospel Sources	Stein 7. The Rise and Presuppositions of Form Criticism	Matt 5:13-16
<b>Week 7</b>	Getting behind the Gospels? The Analysis of Traditional Forms	Stein 8. The General Reliability of the Oral Transmission of the Gospel Traditions Stein 9. The Value of Form Criticism	Matt 8:18-21
<b>Week 8</b>	Getting behind the Gospels? The Role of the Redactor	Stein 10. The Rise of Redaction Criticism Stein 11. The Method and Practice of Redaction Criticism Stein 12. The Value of Redaction Criticism	Matt 9:35-38
<b>Week 9</b>	Probing the NT Text: The Documents	Greenlee 1: Introduction Greenlee 2: Paleography	Matt 11:27-30
<b>Week 10</b>	Probing the NT Text: The History	Greenlee 3: Sources of NT Text. Criticism Greenlee 4: Transmission of the Text	Luke 15:8-10
<b>Week 11</b>	Probing the NT Text: Using the Critical Apparatus	Greenlee 5: The Text in Print Greenlee 6: The Age of the Critical Text	Luke 17:1-4
<b>Week 12</b>	Probing the NT Text: Making Textual Decisions	Greenlee 7: The Praxis of NT Text. Crit. Greenlee 8: Collation & Classification	Luke 18:15-17
<b>Week 13</b>	Preaching the Gospels		