



# **Synoptic Gospels, NT 203**

## **Course Syllabus, Fall 2019**

### **Oikos University**

#### **OIKOS UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT:**

The mission of Oikos University is to educate men and women to be the leaders to serve the church, local communities, and the world by using their learned skills and professions in the areas of biblical studies, music performance, Asian medicine and practical vocational nursing.

Course Number and Title: **NT 203 - Synoptic Gospels**

Semester: Fall 2019

Professor: David A. Sylvester

Classroom C101

Time: Tuesdays 1 - 3:30 p.m.

E-mail address/Phone: [dsylvesterteacher@gmail.com](mailto:dsylvesterteacher@gmail.com) / 510-435-9017

Office Hours: (Students may meet with their professor by appointment or during the following regularly scheduled office hours or during or after the class):

Day and Time: Tuesday, 3:30 - 4pm, by appointment

Place: Classroom or library

#### **RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO OIKOS UNIVERSITY'S MISSION:**

It is crucial for the students of Oikos University to understand the meaning of Jesus' teaching, life, suffering, death, and resurrection embedded in the Synoptic Gospel in order to be His disciples, share in His Kingdom of God and provide a Christian witness to the world.

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to give students the opportunity to study and encounter the Risen Christ by following the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ through the experiences of his disciples in the Synoptic Gospels. We will study in four ways: 1) First, students will read the Synoptic Gospels at home during the semester by following a program of harmonized, parallel series readings of the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. Then, in class, we will do a "close reading" of specific key passages on multiple levels for deeper understanding.

2) Second, we will discuss examples of spiritual reality of gospels in everyday life by reflecting on daily experience and popular culture. 3) Students will have the opportunity to experience Gospel Bible-centered meditation for a personal encounter with the texts as we read them. 4) As a class, students will write a spiritual autobiography during the semester and compile their written reflections on the gospels into a student-managed publication as a final class project to clarify and articulate their experience during the course.

**3. COURSE OBJECTIVES (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):**

<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Assignments for Assessment</b>
1) Demonstrate a clear and informed knowledge of the three Synoptic Gospels.	Homework reading of the three gospels and class presentations.
2). Display ability to interpret the gospels following clear guidelines fundamental to Christian church tradition.	Required class discussions and in-class presentations in writing, to be kept in individual Writing Portfolios.
3) Recognize their own worldview compared to gospel perspective.	Homework reflection and group presentations.
4) Directly experience and reflect on Christian meditation and prayer styles with the gospel passages.	Individual reflection and sharing, journals, and reflection papers
5) Grow in understanding of how to apply gospel values, become a more effective witness to the Risen Christ in their lives.	Spiritual autobiography kept during semester and final class presentations.

**4. COURSE TEXTS & MATERIALS:****Required Texts and Reading:**

- 1. Native Language - English Bible**, with translation in student's own language, preferably NIV or RSV bible.
- 2. Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke:** Students will read Mark for an overview of Jesus' life and death. Then each week, students will follow a daily reading schedule of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and end with a short reading in the Book of Acts.
- 3. Reading completion statement:** At the end of the course, students will sign a statement that indicates what percentage of the gospels they completed. Honor system.
- 4. Class Handouts:** Any reading handouts distributed by email or paper copy.

**Required Work & Materials:**

**Writing Portfolio:** Students are required to keep all their writing and class paper handouts for the course in a folder as their Writing Portfolio and bring it to every class. It will be reviewed during the semester for grading. Lost writing is a lost grade.

**Portfolio writing paper:** Students must bring to class 8.5" x 11" lined notebook paper for class writing and saving in Portfolio (*clean cut, not ripped out of spiral notebook.*)

**Personal journal:** Students are encouraged to maintain a private journal that will serve as the basis for their spiritual autobiography and personal reflections during the reading program. Students choose their journal and bring it to class. This journal is entirely private. Participation, not content, will influence grade, but not be graded. This is intended to help students engage personally with the gospel texts.

**Final Class Project:** Students will develop and manage a class publication by compiling a series of individual and group reflections to help clarify and articulate their own questions and encounters with the gospels.

**Required Access to Equipment**

**Computer/smartphone & Software & Printer**-- Students must have access to a working computer in order to receive and send Word documents, both for reading and writing, throughout the semester.

**Email access** -- Students must have daily access to valid email address to receive and respond to email messages from the instructor and communicate with students between classes.

**Supplemental Reference Texts:**

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Writings of the New Testament*, 3rd edition. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. 2010.

Carson, D.A. & Moo, Douglas J. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI. Zondervan. 2005.

Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd Edition. Grand Rapids, MI. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1193.

**5. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND TIME ESTIMATES (at least 15 class hours/credit)**

Requirements	Time Estimate
Homework Reading	10
In-Class Writing	10
Spiritual autobiography	10
Final Project	15
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>45 (3 credits)</b>

**6. GRADING INFORMATION:****1) Grading Scale**

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Grade Points	Quality of Performance
A+	98-100	4.0	Exceeds class level
A	94-97	4.0	Outstanding
A-	90-93	3.7	Excellent
B+	87-89	3.3	Good +
B	84-86	3.0	Good
B-	80-83	2.7	Good -
C+	77-79	2.3	Satisfactory +
C	74-76	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70-73	1.7	Satisfactory -
D+	67-69	1.3	Poor
D	64-66	1.0	Very Poor
D-	60-63	0.7	Barely Acceptable
F	59 or lower	0	Failure

**2) Grading Rubric**

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Attendance (On Time, Full Class)	15%
Participation & Assistance to Class	15%
Homework Gospel Reading	15%
In-Class Writing, Autobiography	15%
Final Project	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**7. INCOMPLETE POLICY:**

All course work is due on the dates assigned. Students who fail to submit assignments on time will be subject to the course's late grading policy. In all other cases and unless otherwise stated by the instructor, all course work is due by 4:00 p.m. on the last day of the semester.

A grade of incomplete will only be awarded to students who cannot physically complete their course work by the last day of the semester due to an avoidable situation such as a serious illness. In such cases, students must provide valid evidence of their condition. After a semester has ended it is no longer possible to request an incomplete. Incompletes will not be granted simply because of poor time management. Students who assume that an incomplete will be issued because they failed to finish their course work by the end of the semester will automatically receive a grade of F.

Incompletes must first be approved by the Academic Affairs office. To apply for an incomplete, students must fill out an incomplete-grade-request form and submit it to the office by the required deadline set by Oikos policy near the end of the semester. After receiving approval from the office, the student must then obtain approval from his or her instructor.

**8. ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

In the classroom, put your whole self into the discussions and make a real effort when you do the assignments. Break a sweat! This class meets once a week for extended hours, so missing one class is the same as missing one week of a normal semester. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class. Students who arrive after the beginning of class must sign the "Late Sheet" near the door of the classroom and note the correct time. Otherwise, they will be counted as absent.

There are 15 classes, one point for full attendance and one point for full participation: 2 points per class. That's a total of 30 points toward the final grade. A student may be excused from an absence if the student submits documents to the school administrator Ann Park [http://info@oikos.edu](mailto:info@oikos.edu) to show medical appointment or other circumstance to the office administrator during the week following the absence. Student who expect to be absent in advance. should call or email Ann Park [http://info@oikos.edu](mailto:info@oikos.edu).

<p style="text-align: center;">One absence = discussion with teacher.  Two absences = discussion with Oikos administration.  Three absences = Academic probation.  Four absences = failing grade of F.  Three late arrivals or early departures = one absence.</p>
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Oikos test policy: Tests must be taken on the assigned dates. Except in cases of documented medical emergency, make-up exams are not permitted without prior approval from the instructor.

**9. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Plagiarism and cheating are unacceptable. Plagiarism is defined as the use of someone else's ideas, arguments or other original material without acknowledging the source, including any material from Wikipedia, public websites or educational materials on the Internet. All materials from sources must be correctly noted, with author, title and page numbers, in footnotes or endnotes. Plagiarism and cheating will be reported to the administration for academic discipline.

#### **10. COURSE PRAYER SUBJECTS:**

- Pray for the grace to be blessed with a real knowledge of the three Synoptic Gospels and be open to whatever they are saying to you;
- Pray for the grace of an interior encounter with the Risen Christ who meets you exactly as you are and where you are.
- Pray for the grace of spiritual renewal of your life through the light of the gospels.

## 11. COURSE SCHEDULE NT 203 FALL 2019

Wk	Date	Synoptic Topic	HW Reading Due	Assignments
1	8/27/19	Introduction to Reading Synoptic Gospels, first close reading, meditation.	In-class reading: Mark: 1:1-8	In-class discussion, writing
2	9/3/19	Overview of Gospel in Mark - Birth of Jesus & ministry of John the Baptist, ministry of Jesus	Gospel reading: Mark 1-9	In-class discussion, writing
3	9/10/19	To Jerusalem, entry, arrest, death, Mark's endings	Gospel reading: Mark 10-16	In-class discussion, writing
4	9/17/19	<u>Parallel Harmony</u> - Genealogy, Births, Baptisms, Temptations	Gospel reading - <i>See Burton-Goodspeed* 1-19.</i>	In-class discussion, writing
5	9/24/19	Galilee preaching, healings, Sermons on Mount, Plain	Gospel reading - <i>See BG 20 - 37.</i>	In-class discussion, writing
6	10/1/19	Opposition, teaching, parables,	Gospel reading - <i>See BG 38 - 65.</i>	In-class discussion, writing
7	10/8/19	Calming sea, healing, walking on water, John's death, Transfiguration	Gospel reading - <i>See BG 66 - 91</i>	In-class discussion, writing
8	10/15/19	Mission of disciples, conflict, Good Samaritan	Gospel reading - <i>See BG 92 - 118.</i>	In-class discussion, writing
9	10/22/19	Predictions of death, to Jerusalem, entry, cleansing temple	Gospel reading - <i>See BG 119 - 148.</i>	In-class discussion, writing
10	10/29/19	Lament for Jerusalem, signs of end times, Mount of Olives	Gospel reading - <i>See BG 149 - 169.</i>	In-class discussion, writing
11	11/5/19	Last Supper, arrest, trials, crucifixion, death, empty tomb	Gospel reading - <i>See BG 170 - 180</i>	In-class discussion, writing
12	11/12/19	Resurrection Appearances, Ascension & Pentecost	Gospel reading - <i>See BG 181 - Acts #3</i>	Discuss, prepare Final Project
13	11/19/19	Gospel review	Gospel review	Discuss, prepare Final Project
		<b>THANKSGIVING NO CLASS</b>		
14	12/03/19	Class Review	Final Project	Class discussion
13	12/10/19	Final Exam Period: Final Project	In-class reflections	Final writing

\* Burton, Ernest DeWitt and Goodspeed, Edgar Johnson. *A Harmony of the Synoptic Gospels in Greek*, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1920.) Numbers refer to sections listed in Burton-Goodspeed, pp. ix - xxi. See class handout "Daily Gospel Readings Schedule."