**THIS SYLLABUS IS TENTATIVE. IT IS INTENDED TO GIVE STUDENTS AN IDEA OF THE
ANTICIPATED STRUCTURE, SCHEDULE, AND ASSIGNMENTS OF THE COURSE, BUT IS
NOT FINAL. THE PROFESSOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE SYLLABUS. THE
FINAL SYLLABUS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS.**

1-NT510—SYNOPTICS & ACTS
Spring 2011—3 Credit Hours
Dennis J. Ireland, Ph.D.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: "This course emphasizes the distinctive portraits of Christ in Matthew, Mark, and
Luke and the continuation of Christ's ministry in Acts. Attention is given to each writer's literary art, theological
 teachings, and pastoral purpose" (RTS 2009-2011 Catalog, p. 67).

SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To gain a working knowledge of the content of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in each of the Synoptic
   Gospels and the spread of Christianity in Acts;

2. To appreciate the Synoptic Gospels and Acts as theological documents, the former providing distinctive
   inspired and inerrant portraits of the same Christ and the latter a record of the beginning and growth of the
   Christian church;

3. To familiarize the student with introductory issues relating to the Synoptics and Acts (authorship, audience,
   date, etc.);

4. To highlight the place of the Synoptics and Acts in the unified redemptive-historical message of the Bible;

5. To relate Acts to the letters of Paul.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. English Bible; translation of your choice (the professor will use NIV in class, but will refer to the Greek text)—
   Read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts, at least one time each.

2. Greek New Testament Greek New Testament (for M.Div. students who have had Greek I & II & Exegesis).
   Translate and parse assigned texts and use in class.

3. C. L. Blomberg, Jesus and the Gospels, 2nd ed., B & H, 2009—Read Introduction, Chs. 1-8, 10-19 (i.e.,
   the whole book, except Ch. 9).

   Read Preface, Chs. 1-5, 7.


It is assumed that each student will personally and carefully do all the assigned reading. Students will write and
submit digests of each book throughout the semester (see Course Assignments and Tentative Schedule below).
There will also be a question on each exam asking you to report whether you have done all the reading to that point
in the course, and, if not, what percentage you have read.

COURSE PROCEDURES: Given the size of the class and the volume of material to be covered, much of the
course will be devoted to lecture. Students may ask questions, but the professor reserves the right to defer discussion. Students are encouraged to submit questions via e-mail (direland@rts.edu) at any time. The general outline of the course is indicated on the Tentative Schedule below. Attendance will not be taken, but it is expected that the student will be present and on time each time the class meets, unless providentially hindered.

**COMPUTER USE IN CLASS:** You may use a computer in class for class-purposes only (e.g., note taking) writing essays for exams). Please do not abuse this policy by other uses (e.g., surfing the net, doing work for other classes, playing games or videos, etc., during class). Violators of this policy will be prohibited from all use of a computer in class.

**COURSE GRADE/ASSIGNMENTS:** The grade for this course will be based on the student's scores on the following assignments:

1. **Two exams (450 + 50 points).** Two exams will be given—a mid-term and final—covering outlines, biblical content, Greek translation and parsing AND vocabulary (for M.Div. students with Greek) OR substitute reading and memorization (for others), and lectures. Each exam will be worth 225 points. There will also be a question on each exam asking whether you personally completed all the assigned reading, and, if not, what percentage you did read. The reading-report question will be worth an additional 25 points on each exam.

   The biblical content component of the mid-term will cover Matthew and Mark, and the final, Luke and Acts. M.Div. students will be asked to translate and parse several of the assigned verses on each exam, and will also be tested on Greek vocabulary (on the mid-term, all of Mounce [50X and above]; on the final, Trenchard [down to 20 times; pp. 134-41]). Other students will be tested on substitute reading assignments and memorization (see Tentative Schedule below). With regard to memorization, students are to memorize the assigned texts (from the translation of their choice), and will be asked on the exams to specify the translation and write out verbatim several of the assigned verses.

2. **Reading Digests (200 points).** Students will write and submit digests for each chapter of the required reading. A digest is “a condensed but comprehensive” summary of “a body of information” (from Webster’s New World College Dictionary). A written digest is not merely a repetition of what an author says, but is an overview organized to highlight the author’s main points and emphases. The digests for this class can be in outline or narrative form of several paragraphs, and should be no longer than one typewritten page per chapter of each book. Each set of digests will be worth 20 points. The digests are due at the beginning of class per the Tentative Schedule below. Late digests will lose five points per day late. The digests will be graded on the following criteria: submitted on time; within the space limitations; clear and thorough; relatively free of typos and grammatical mistakes. Digests for Blomberg’s book should include any material on John’s Gospel in a given chapter, except chapter nine.

3. **Reading Report (50 points, included above under Exams).** There will be question, worth an additional 25 points, on each of the two exams asking students to report whether they have personally completed all the assigned reading (including translations for Greek students), and, if not, what percentage they did read.

The student's cumulative points will be divided by the total possible points (700) to arrive at the percentage which will then be given a letter grade according to the Grading System in the RTS Catalog 2009-11 (p. 44).
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

‘Greek’ = assignment for M.Div. students who have had Greek I & II & Exegesis
‘Memorization’/‘No Greek’ = assignment for M.A. students and M.Div. students who have not yet had Greek I & II & Exegesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture /Assignment:</th>
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| Feb 8 | Syllabus & Introduction to the Course  
*Introduction to the Synoptics*  
Blomberg, Introduction, Chs. 1-3  
CM, Ch. 1-2  
Ridderbos, Introduction |
| Feb 15 | Matthew—Introduction & Structure  
Matthew 1 [Genealogy & Birth]  
Blomberg, Chs. 4-5, 7  
CM, Ch. 3  
Ridderbos, Ch. I  
Greek/Memorization: Matthew 6:1-4  
| Feb 22 | *DIGESTS 1* (reading for Feb. 8 & 15)  
Matthew 2 [Magi & Escape to/Return from Egypt]  
Matthew 3—4 [John the Baptist; Jesus' Baptism & Temptation]  
Matthew 5—7 [Sermon on the Mount—overview]  
Blomberg, Chs. 10-11  
Ridderbos, Ch. II  
Greek/Memorization: Matthew 6:5-8  
No Greek: Guthrie, *NTI*, Ch. 2 (“Matthew’s Gospel”) |
| Mar 1  | *DIGESTS 2* (reading for Feb 22)  
Matthew 13 [Parables of the Kingdom]  
Matthew 16—17, 28 [Peter’s Confession; Transfiguration; Great Commission]  
Blomberg, Chs. 12-14  
Ridderbos, Ch. III  
Greek: Matthew 6:9-15 |
| Mar 8  | *DIGESTS 3* (reading for Mar 1)  
*Mark—Introduction & Structure*  
Mark 1—5 [Overview; Miracles]  
Mark 11 [Triumphal Entry; Clearing temple/fig tree]  
Blomberg, Chs. 6, 15  
CM, Ch. 4  
Ridderbos, Ch. IV  
Greek: Mark 16:1-4  
No Greek: Guthrie, *NTI*, Ch. 3 (“Mark’s Gospel”) |
| Mar 15 | NO CLASS (Spring Break) |
Mar 22 *DIGESTS 4 (reading for Mar 8 AND Mar 22)
   Mark 13 ["Olivet Discourse"]
   Mark 14 [Lord's Supper]
   Mark 14—16 [Gethsemane, Arrest, Trials, Crucifixion, Resurrection]
      Blomberg, Chs. 16-17
      Ridderbos, Chs. V, IX
      Greek: Mark 16:5-8, including “Shorter Ending”

Mar 29 MID-TERM EXAM (Matthew and Mark)

Apr 5 *DIGESTS 5 (reading for Apr 5)
   Luke—Introduction & Structure
   Luke 1—2 [Preface; Birth Predictions; Songs; Birth; Shepherds; Circumcision/temple]
      Blomberg, Ch. 8
      CM, Ch. 5
      Ridderbos, Ch. VI
      Greek/Memorization: Luke 1:1-4
      No Greek: Guthrie, NTI, Ch. 4 (“Luke’s Gospel”)

Apr 12 *DIGESTS 6 (reading for Apr 12)
   Luke 3—4 [Genealogy; Temptation; Sermon at Nazareth]
   Luke 5—9 [Overview]
      Blomberg, Ch. 18
      Ridderbos, Ch. VII
      Greek: Luke 4:16-21
      No Greek: Guthrie, NTI, Ch. 5 (“The Synoptic Problem”)

Apr 19 *DIGESTS 7 (reading for Apr 19)
   Luke 9—10 [Central Section (9:51 ff.); Jesus at home of Martha and Mary]
   Luke 16 [Parables about Stewardship]
   Luke 24 [Resurrection; Emmaus Road; Ascension]
      Blomberg, Ch. 19
      Ridderbos, Chs. VIII, X
      Greek/Memorization: Luke 24:44-49
      No Greek: Guthrie, NTI, Ch. 7 (“Towards a Solution”)

Apr 26 *DIGESTS 8 (reading for Apr 26)
   Acts—Introduction & Structure
   Acts 1—6
      CM, Ch. 7
      Johnson, Preface & Chs. 1-2
      Greek/Memorization: Acts 1:1-5
      No Greek: Guthrie, NTI, Ch. 9 (“The Acts of the Apostles”)

May 3 *DIGESTS 9 (reading for May 3)
   Acts 7—15
      Johnson, Chs. 3-7
      Greek/Memorization: Acts 1:6-8

May 4 *DIGESTS 10 (reading for May 4)
   Acts 16—28
Johnson, Chs. 8-12
Greek: Acts 28:30-31

TBA  FINAL EXAM (Luke and Acts)
### Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes

**Course:** 1-NT510 Synoptics & Acts  
**Professor:** Dennis Ireland  
**Campus:** Jackson  
**Date:** Spring 2011

<table>
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<tr>
<th>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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