I. Purpose of the Course

The primary purpose of this course is to develop further the exegetical skills that have been acquired in the basic Greek language sequence and in Interpreting the NT. These prior courses or their equivalent are thus a prerequisite, without which credit cannot be given for this course. The Gospel of Mark provides the laboratory in which we will work. The secondary purpose is to gain a basic understanding of the argument and themes of the Gospel of Mark itself. The third goal is to learn to use the Synopsis, the most important tool for studying the synoptic gospels. The fourth goal is to begin to develop a framework from which we can build a basic understanding of the theological significance of the life and teachings of Jesus. These goals will be accomplished inductively through studying the Greek syntax and arguments of Mark's pericopes and deductively through the reading of Marcus and Ladd.

II. The Structure of the Course

Chairman Mao told the story about the wise man who, when confronted with a hungry beggar, gave him a fishing pole instead of a meal. When asked why, he replied with the basic insight: "If you give a man a fish you feed him for a day, but if you teach a man to fish you feed him for a life-time." The structure of this course, like that of a seminary education in general, is built upon this insight. This course is not primarily designed to transfer a body of information from my notebooks into yours, though of course there will be plenty of "raw material" that will need to be mined before you can make your own chalice of silver. The role of the teacher is not to dispense information like a pop (= soda) machine, but to help the student gain tools and skills. This means that one's memory will not be enough to pass this course. This also means that the course is built around daily assignments. The "typical" class session will be devoted to analyzing your work for that day and providing you with the necessary background to go on to the work ahead. Most often the work assigned will revolve around an analysis of the structure and logic of an assigned text, read within its own context and that of the Synopsis. You will be responsible not only for translating the text, but also for exegeting it according to the methods I will assign, as well as reading the assigned pages from the required textbook.

III. Textbooks

1. It is assumed that all students will have access to the following:
2. In addition, the following textbooks are required:

IV. Course Requirements

1. Each student will be responsible for turning in diagrams or flows and a discourse analysis (or SSA) of the passage assigned for that day and announced quizzes on the Greek text!

2. Each student will be responsible to read the assigned secondary literature. Marcus' commentary is required for every passage assigned in the Study Guides. Ladd is to be read as assigned below.

3. Each student will be responsible to complete the three study guides.

4. Each student will be required to turn in his/her synopsis at the end of the course for evaluation.

5. Each student will be required to write a 15 page research paper (10 pages + 5 pages of appendices) on a passage of his or her choice from chapters 11-16, which should show evidence of sound text criticism, lexicography, logical analysis, gospel criticisms, and use of relevant "background" material (see my "Exegetical Checklist"). The paper includes additional appendices on textual criticism, diagrams, D.A., and the Synopsis. THE PAPER IS DUE MARCH 31st!

Late work will only be accepted with penalty. The success of this course depends on your preparation before class. I will presuppose that you are coming to class not to listen to me, but to wrestle with the text together with others who have invested time and energy in the hard work of understanding an author's original intention. There is no final exam in this class.

V. Grading

Your grade will be determined on the basis of your daily assignments, synopsis, the study guides, and research paper. Specifically, the three study guides will be worth 30 points together, the synopsis 15 points, the study guide on Ladd will count 10 points; the textual work (i.e. diagrams and D.A./SSA) will count 20 points together, and the research paper will count 25 points.

The emphasis of this course thus falls on your daily preparation for our class time together. One does not ultimately learn exegetical method best by listening to others expound the text, though good role models play an important part in the process. Rather, the more you try to exegete texts yourself, the more you will learn, if guided by sound principles and monitored along the way. The structure of this course is designed to enable you to do just that.
VI. Proposed Daily Schedule and Assignments


   Read Marcus, pp. 17-69.


   Study Guide 1, Questions 1-6, with Marcus, due on 2/5.

3. Feb. 10, 12: The Early Galilean Ministry of Jesus (Mk 1:16-3:35)

   Study Guide 1, Questions 7-8 due on 2/12.
   Ladd S.G., Chapter One Due.

Reading Week WORK on PAPER!

4. Feb 24, 26: The Parables of the Kingdom (Mk 4:1-34)

   Study Guide 1, Questions 9-12. There is no D.A. work this week so that you can continue to make progress on your paper!!!


   Complete Study Guide 1 (Questions 13-14)
   Ladd S.G. Chapter Two Due.


   Study Guide 2, Questions 1-2, with Marcus.


   Study Guide 2, Questions 3-8.
   Ladd S.G., Chapters Three and Four Due

Reading Week WORK on PAPER!

8. March 31: "Bread from Heaven" and the Galileans (Mk 4:35-6:56) (Part 2)

   PAPER DUE!!!!

   Study Guide 2, Questions 9-12
   Ladd S.G., Chapters Five, Six, Seven Due

10. April 14, 16: **Rejection from Jerusalem, Acceptance from the Gentiles: “Bread from Heaven” and the Decapolis (Mk 7:1-8:21) (Part Two)**

   Study Guide Three, Questions 1-4.

11. April 21: **The Call to the Cross (8:22-10:25) and the Triumphal Entry (Mk 11:1-25)**

   Complete Study Guide Three.
   Ladd S.G., Chapters Eight and Nine Due.

VII. **The Course and the Master of Divinity Goals**

   NT 640 is designed to meet the goals of the M.Div. degree in the following ways:

1. To gain competency with the biblical languages in order to develop exegetical and hermeneutical skills using the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek text of the New Testament (1): Every assignment is intended to meet this goal as its primary objective.

2. To understand the basic content and themes of the Old and New Testaments in their historical and cultural settings, (1) as well as the historical and theological dimensions of the Christian faith (2): A serious study of Mark will further a student's understanding of the basic themes of the OT and NT in their original context, especially in view of the thorough use of the OT in the NT throughout Mark.

3. To expound and proclaim effectively the biblical message of redemption (3): An understanding of Mark will provide much need material for this proclamation.

4. To develop skills appropriate for church leadership as a pastor, teacher, counselor, evangelist, chaplain, church planter, missionary or other role as a leader (3): The centrality of the Bible for ministry is underscored and strengthened by this course.

5. To foster love for God and his word and therefore to cultivate the practices of spiritual maturity and Christ-like character, and to understand the Christian’s ethical responsibility in church and society (4, 5): The theme of discipleship to Christ as this works out in the life of Jesus, which is central to Mark's gospel, serves to meet this goal by forcing students to confront the realities of faith in a fallen world.

6. To acquire a biblical perspective and Christian worldview on the forces in our culture and to learn to engage those as they are at work both outside and inside the life of the church (5): Class lectures will repeatedly raise the implications of Mark's presentation of Jesus for contemporary culture.

7. To develop a global vision for the Christian faith so as to foster an appreciation and commitment to the worldwide proclamation of the gospel (6): Mark's mandate for witness will be stressed.

8. To cultivate an appreciation for and a commitment to the personal and community sharing of the gospel (6): Mark's emphasis on the "school of faith" in 4:35-8:21 will be stressed.