

## Sermon on the Mount

NT 3XM3 / NT 5XM5 || Programs: MDiv, MTS, Cert CS, DPT || Specializations: BS, CC, CW, PS  
Online (Asynchronous) | Spring Term (May 29–July 13, 2023)

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*The mission of McMaster Divinity College is to develop effective evangelical Christian leaders for the Church, academy, and society through graduate-level education, spiritual development, and vocational formation.*

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### I. Faculty Information



**Name:** Dr. James D. Dvorak (you can address me as “Dr. D.” or “Jim”)

**Office hours:** via Zoom by appointment

**Email:** [dvorakj@mcmaster.ca](mailto:dvorakj@mcmaster.ca)

**Office Phone:** 905-525-9140 x24518

### II. Dr. Dvorak’s Christian Worldview and Teaching Philosophy

#### *Christian Worldview*

God created human beings with “minds,” i.e., with the capacity for reasoning, thinking, knowing. Furthermore, he expected human beings to use their minds to the glory of God. However, as the result of the fall of humankind (cf. Gen. 3) and the introduction of sin into the world, not all knowledge is valuable and not all things are worth knowing or even contemplating, especially if those things detract from the glory of God or lead a person away from God and his purposes. Thus, an indispensable part of *Christian* education is to teach learners how to think critically about the information with which they are presented, in order that they may discern what is good and what is not, what is valuable/beneficial and what is not, and what is God-glorifying and what is not—that in “test[ing] everything” learners may “hold on to what is good and keep away from every form of evil” (1 Thess. 5:21–22).

#### *Teaching Philosophy*

It’s unclear whether the following quotation is from John Dewey, though it is often attributed to him (cf. C. Crumly, et. al., *Pedagogies for Student-Centered Learning, Online and On-ground*, Seminarium Elements [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014], 149); regardless, it summarizes concisely what I believe to be the purpose of teaching and of education in general:

*The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think—rather to improve our minds, so as to enable us to think for ourselves, than to load the memory with the thoughts of other men.*

Of course, this does not mean I avoid listening to and engaging in dialogue with others or that I will not learn from and present the research of others. Rather, the value position it expresses, to which I subscribe, is that teaching involves not only the delivery of content but also—and perhaps more importantly—frameworks for understanding and evaluating both the ideas of others and my own. In other words, I

believe instruction involves not only the transmission of information about the subject matter but also models/frameworks for making sense of that information and the critical and creative skills necessary for formulating new hermeneutical/interpretive frameworks as needed. As Robert Harris put it, “Education is not about memorization; it is about learning how to think” (Robert A. Harris, *The Integration of Faith and Learning* [Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2004], 12). It is about enabling people to “test everything; hold on to what is good; keep away from every form of evil” (1 Thess. 5:21–22).

In terms of teaching practice, the literature shows that for students to achieve deep learning and to develop mastery, active learning strategies and practices are *vital* (cf., e.g., Ambrose, et. al., *How Learning Works*, Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series [San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010], 91–152; Weimer, “More Evidence That Active learning Trumps Lecture,” <http://bit.ly/1FtcYHT>). For this reason, I try to find high-impact teaching practices and learning activities that create an environment in which students have the potential to think critically and creatively, to “engage knowledge actively, demanding justification for it, looking into the process of its construction to see what underlying assumptions it is built upon, and how reasonable was the process of inference that led to it” (Harris, *The Integration of Faith and Learning*, 12).

### III. Course Description

This course aims to provide an in-depth study of this famous compilation of Jesus’ teachings. Emphasis will be placed upon understanding, as best we can, the Sermon on the Mount as its teachings would have been heard by its original, primarily Judean (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι), audience living in a Greco-Roman context. Special emphasis will be placed on reading the text for the key core values promoted by Jesus by which one ought to live as members of the kingdom of God.

This course is offered to students in the MDiv, MTS, Cert CS, and DPT. It may be used toward specializations in Biblical Studies, Church and Culture, Christian Worldview, and Pastoral Studies.

### IV. Course Delivery Mode

This seven-week course will be delivered entirely online *asynchronously*, which means that there are no “live” class sessions. All weekly activities (readings, assignments, etc.) are assigned at the beginning of the week (of course, you can see the schedule below) and are due at the end of each week. **A “week” in this course runs from 12:00 AM Monday to 11:59 PM on Sunday.** Lessons will be produced and delivered in various ways, largely through video but sometimes through other media/means. All assignments and artifacts must be submitted via A2L. Do not email me assignments unless I instruct you to do so. If you have any issues with A2L or any of the tools that I use, contact me right away.

### V. Course Objectives

#### *Knowing*

- Describe and apply a methodology that enables reading the text for values
- Discover the key values that are promoted or demoted by Jesus in the SOM
- Analyze the basic structure of the SOM based on principled methodological principles

#### *Being*

- Reflect on how the values promoted in the SOM should guide how you and fellow Jesus followers ought to think, do, feel, and believe in relation to one another and in relation to the world (i.e., how it impacts morality [i.e., what is to be considered right/wrong, fair/unfair, noble/ignoble])

- Identify points of challenge/struggle in your own life and in the life of the Church where the values of Jesus promoted in the SOM and consider how those challenges/struggles might be overcome

### **Doing**

- Describe significant contextual features (i.e., context of culture and context of situation) of Jesus' world and of Matthew's world and how these impact the interpretation of the SOM (e.g., honor and positive/negative shame; collectivism; etc.)
- Analyze/exegete pericopes in the SOM with a view to the values that each promotes and/or demotes
- Propose way(s) in which the values promoted in the SOM might apply to the contemporary Church, Western and/or non-Western
- Critique a "popular" point of view on the SOM considering what you learn in this course

## **VI. Course Resource Requirements and Recommendations**

### *Important Note:*

Occasionally, I will assign readings from sources not listed below (e.g., articles, chapters, and the like); these reading assignments will be posted to the A2L course shell. I will do my best to note when resources are available electronically from Mills Library or elsewhere online.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the MDC chapel entrance. To purchase in advance, you may contact READ On Bookstore, International Blvd, Etobicoke, ON, M9A 3C3: phone 416.620.2934; mobile 416.668.3434; email [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

### *Required Technology (see the [MDC Educational Technology Help Page](#))*

- an up-to-date, working laptop or desktop computer
- Google Chrome or Firefox browser – these work the best with some of the tech I will be using; perhaps MS Edge since it is built on Chromium, same tech that Google Chrome is built on—actually, it's probably best to have multiple browsers installed in case you run into any issues with any one of them
- a reliable high speed internet connection
- an app to record screen + webcam videos (with audio, of course) for presentations (if you don't have one, check out [Screencast-o-matic](#) or [OBS](#) for those of you who are more tech savvy)
- Good quality microphone—in most cases, especially with PCs (MacBook mics are generally ok), it's better to use an external USB mic than the built-in mic on your laptop
- High resolution Webcam if one is not already built into your laptop

### *Required Texts*

Bible (preferably NRSV and NET; students with training in biblical Greek are *expected* to use it)

Dvorak, James D. "[Notes on the Sermon on the Mount.](#)"

Malina, Bruce J. "[Social-Scientific Approaches and the Gospel of Matthew.](#)" Pages 154–93 in *Methods for Matthew*. Edited by Mark Allan Powell. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Neyrey, Jerome. *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew*. Louisville: WJK, 1998. [[available in electronic format via Mills Library](#), but I highly recommend purchasing this book, as it serves as a central reader in this course]

Pilch, John J., and Bruce J. Malina, eds. *Handbook of Biblical Social Values*. Matrix 10. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016.

*Recommended Texts (not required but probably worth having in your library)*

### **Select Commentaries**

Betz, Hans Dieter. *The Sermon on the Mount*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.

Blomberg, Craig L. *Matthew*. The New American Commentary 22. Nashville: Broadman, 1992.

Carter, Warren. *Matthew: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2004.

Keener, Craig S. *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

Turner, David L. *Matthew*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.

### **Select Resources on Introduction and Methodology**

Blomberg, Craig L. *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1997.

Crook, Zeba A. (ed.). *The Ancient Mediterranean Social World: A Sourcebook*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020.

deSilva, David A. [Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture](#). Downers Grove: IVP, 2000.

———. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods, and Ministry Formation*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2004.

Duling, Dennis C. *A Marginal Scribe: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew in a Social-Scientific Perspective*. Matrix 7. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012.

Dvorak, James D. [The Interpersonal Metafunction in 1 Corinthians 1–4: The Tenor of Toughness](#). LBS 19. Leiden: Brill, 2020.

———. [“John H. Elliott’s Social-Scientific Criticism.”](#) *TJ* 28 (2007): 251–78.

Esler, Philip F. (ed.). [Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context](#). London: Routledge, 1995.

Green, Joel B., Scot McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall (eds.). *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1992.

Hanson, K. C. “How Honorable! How Shameful! A Cultural Analysis of Matthew’s Makarisms and Reproaches.” *Semeia* 68 (1994): 81–111.

Malina, Bruce J. *Christian Origins and Cultural Anthropology: Practical Models for Biblical Interpretation*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1986. Reprint: Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010.

———. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Malina, Bruce J., and Jerome H. Neyrey. *Calling Jesus Names: The Social Value of Labels in Matthew*. Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1998.

Malina, Bruce J., and Richard L. Rohrbaugh. *Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.

Pilch, John J. (ed.). [\*Social Scientific Models for Interpreting the Bible: Essays by The Context Group in Honor of Bruce J. Malina\*](#). Biblical Interpretation 53. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Porter, Stanley E. (ed). *Reading the Gospels Today*. McMaster New Testament Studies. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

Rohrbaugh, Richard L. *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.

Stegemann, Wolfgang, Bruce J. Malina, and Gerd Theissen (eds.). *The Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002.

## VII. Course Grading Scale and Assignment Weights

Percent Grade	Letter Grade	Grade Point (12pt scale)	Grade Point (4pt scale)	Grading Guidelines
90–100	A+	12	4.0	for work displaying mastery of the subject matter, creativity, and individualized integration of insights and their relationship(s)
85–89	A	11	4.0	
80–84	A-	10	3.7	
77–79	B+	9	3.3	for work displaying a good level of competence and comprehension
73–76	B	8	3.0	
70–72	B-	7	2.7	
67–69	C+	6	2.3	for work which meets basic course requirements but demonstrates a low level of comprehension
63–66	C	5	2.0	
60–62	C-	4	1.7	
57–59	D+	3	1.3	for work that falls below minimum standards
53–56	D	2	1.0	
50–52	D-	1	0.7	
0–49	F	0	0	unsatisfactory work and/or failure to meet course requirements

### Important Notes Regarding the Grading Scale:

- Letter grades are given for all courses. Plus and minus signs indicate work of higher or lower quality within the guidelines for each letter grade. Some courses, such as Ministry Formation, may be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis.
- In the M.Div., M.T.S., Dip. Min. and Cert. C.S., and Occasional programs, any course below C- does not count for credit and must be repeated if it is a required course.
- Students who repeat a course and fail a second time will not be permitted to register in that course again, even in the case of a required course. If the failed course is an elective course, a substitute course may be permitted with the approval of the Academic Dean or designate.
- The absolute deadline for all course assignments is the last day of the examination schedule. Any missing assignments will receive a grade of “0”.

- Once the final grade sheet has been submitted, the course instructor may not change a grade without consultation with the Academic Dean or designate.

## VIII. Course Requirements/Activities

### *Expectations and Requirements for ALL STUDENTS Regardless of Program*

#### *– Presence and Meaningful Participation*

Your presence and participation in this course are expected. You are graduate/doctoral students, so I will not condescendingly try to coax you to attend and participate by attaching a percentage of the overall final grade to this category. I know from many years of experience that your level of presence and participation in the course will impact how well you score in the course. Although there are exceptions to this rule of thumb, low levels of presence and participation tend to translate to low grades; mediocre presence and participation tend to translate to mediocre grades; and high levels of presence and participation tend to translate to higher grades.

A word needs to be said about what constitutes “presence” (attendance) and “participation” in an asynchronous course. You must establish a record of participation in academically related activities to meet the expected level of attendance and meaningful participation. Be aware that merely logging into the online class is *not*, by itself, sufficient as a demonstration of attendance and participation by the student. “Academically related activities” certainly includes participation in and completion of the course requirements that are described below. Additionally, just as students are expected to engage with the course content/materials throughout the week outside of the learning management system (A2L), so also students are expected to engage one another in formative dialogue “outside of class.” This is an important part of belonging to and maintaining a community of learning and is a staple ingredient in what constitutes “presence.”

#### *– Online Etiquette*

It is critical in any MDC class that students show respect for classmates and the instructor. This is even truer in the online environment because many of the non-verbal cues that we use to interpret what a person is communicating to us are not present online (except, perhaps in video posts). Therefore, it is especially critical that we be mindful of how our words will be interpreted by those who are reading them. As the instructor of the course, it is my responsibility to monitor communications to ensure that all students feel comfortable expressing their views in a respectful manner. Much of this course is devoted to the interpretation of Scripture and, more specifically, the teachings of Jesus. Invariably there will be disagreements; these disagreements must be discussed and negotiated in a respectful manner. This applies to individual and group communications involving me and the others enrolled in the course. I will expect that you will give some thought to your postings. Excessive postings are also frowned upon because these amount to dominating the discussion. Please limit your postings to less than 200 words. I reserve the right to ask students to take a step back to allow others discussion time if I feel that an individual is dominating the discussion. In your responses, please try to be clear which point your response refers to. Students who violate guidelines may be dismissed from class.

#### *– Readings & Viewings*

Each week you will be assigned some number of readings (typically more than one) as well as a series of short videos to view that pertain to the week’s topic(s). **Readings and viewings should be completed by Wednesday of each week**, so that you will have time to participate fully in and

contribute meaningfully to the online discussions about the subject matter. You will need to complete these readings and viewings to complete other course activities (e.g., discussions, formative assessments, etc.).

– *Formative Assessments (10% of Final Grade)*

Formative assessments of various kinds (e.g., three-sentence summaries, [minute essays](#), quick-answer quizzes) will be used at various points throughout the course with some built into the course content itself. These are designed to measure at least two things: (1) whether you are reading/viewing the course materials and (2) whether you are comprehending the course materials. That these are called “formative” assessments implies that, when necessary, I will provide further remedial instruction to those who might be struggling with comprehension of the materials—and I am completely fine with doing so as needed.

– *Online Discussions (35% of Final Grade)*

Each week there will be an asynchronous discussion forum that corresponds to the week’s reading assignments and video posts. Within each forum will be a number of topics (typically more than one) and each topic may have one or more discussion prompts/questions. Although written responses are acceptable, it is preferred that a student responds to the prompts and to one another using multimedia, where multimedia is defined as consisting of more than one type of media, including but not limited to text, images, audio, and/or video. **When producing multimedia, please do your very best to produce accessible content.** If you use images, be sure to include ALT tags; if you produce audio or video, it would be beneficial to provide either closed captioning or a document containing a transcript of the recording. Please note that posts are not scored on one’s technological abilities (or lack thereof); they are scored primarily based on the quality of their content using an *analytic rubric* (rubric is posted in A2L course site).

– *Book Review/Critique (published on course blog) (20% of Final Grade)*

Locate a recent book (published within the last 20 years) that is geared toward preaching or teaching from the Sermon on the Mount. **Get that book approved by Dr. Dvorak.** Read the book carefully in light of what you are learning in this course, paying particular attention to the interpretive methodology that the author(s) are using (whether stated or not). Write a critical book review (tips for doing so [here](#)) of the work. Note that “critical” does not necessarily mean “point out how bad it is”; rather, it means that you will engage the book looking to analyze it and to evaluate it based on the claims that it makes and the methodology it uses to interpret texts from the SOM. Your evaluation standards will be based on what you have learned in this class regarding methodology and biblical theology. Please follow the [MDC Style Guide](#) meticulously because doing so factors into the grade on this assignment. Regarding the question “How long should the book review be?” the answer is long enough to complete the necessary components of a good book review. Not sure what those components are, see the website I linked above and read some critical reviews in an academic journal (here’s [an example](#) of a more negative critique; here’s [an example](#) of a more positive critique).

*Requirement Specific to MDiv/MTS/Cert CS/Occasional*

– *10 Minute Sermon/Homily (35% of Final Grade)*

Students will write and produce a 10-minute **expository** sermon/homily on a text of their choice from the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7). Students will alert Dr. Dvorak to the text they have

chosen via an online form that will be available in A2L during Week 1. It is expected that the sermon/homily will be based on what is learned in this course especially as it pertains to methodology and biblical theology, and marks/grades for this assignment will be based primarily on the level of quality in this regard. Although this is not a course in homiletics, one's application of principles of homiletics, esp. regarding expository preaching, will be weighed, but not to the same extent as one's interpretation of the text and ability to support such a reading. Regardless, the sermon must have a clear statement of subject/thesis in which you verbalize the overarching point of your sermon/homily, and this ought to be informed by the text itself. In other words, let the text constrain the message; don't try to shape the text to fit *your* idea, no matter how brilliant an idea it may be.

The sermon/homily is to be video recorded and submitted to Dr. Dvorak via A2L. You may create slides (although slides are not necessary or required) and, using an app such as Screencast-o-matic, record a video of yourself presenting the sermon/homily with the slides. Please be sure that you use a quality microphone when recording, since a video—even if in brilliant 4K resolution—is only as good as the quality of its audio. Upload the video to a streaming service such as YouTube (you can make it “unlisted” and not “public” if you like) or to Microsoft OneDrive (to which you have access with your MDC credentials), and then use the sharing feature of those services to get a link to submit to Dr. Dvorak via A2L.

In addition to submitting a link to your recorded sermon/homily, you are also required to submit:

1. a brief description of the audience you are imagining (this audience may be real if, for example, you are in the pastorate and regularly preach to a congregation; it may also be imagined, based on the church you currently attend or have attended in the past)
2. a collection of your exegetical/interpretive notes, complete with bibliography of works consulted—in this document, you need to demonstrate that you have done the research necessary for completing this assignment
3. your sermon outline (in expanded form, not simply bullet points) or manuscript so that, if there's something wrong with the video (e.g., there is an audio problem), Dr. Dvorak will have a means of scoring the assignment

These, too, will be submitted via A2L. Dr. Dvorak will give further instruction regarding the submission process in a video posted to A2L.

#### *Requirements Specific to DPT Students*

*– 10 Minute Presentation (research, outline/manuscript, and video) (15% of Final Grade)*

Students will write and produce a 10-minute presentation on a text of their choice from the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7). Students will alert Dr. Dvorak to the text they have chosen via an online form that will be available in A2L during Week 1. The imagined audience for this presentation is a small conference of 150 pastors and church leaders who have gathered to discuss preaching and teaching the Sermon on the Mount in the increasingly secular, post-Christian world in which the church finds itself. The session in which you are presenting is concerned primarily with interpreting the text of the SOM in a way that penetrates the depth and richness of the teaching but in a way that will be transferrable to churches. It is expected that the presentation will be based on what is learned in this course especially as it pertains to methodology and biblical theology, and marks/grades for this assignment will be based primarily on the level of quality in this regard. Although this is not a course in public speaking, one's



application of principles of public speaking will be weighed, but not to the same extent as one's interpretation of the text and ability to support such a reading. Regardless, the presentation must have a clear statement of subject/thesis in which you verbalize the overarching point of your presentation, and this ought to be informed both by the text itself and your methodology. In other words, let the text constrain the message; don't try to shape the text to fit *your* idea, no matter how brilliant an idea it may be.

The presentation is to be video recorded and submitted to Dr. Dvorak via A2L. You should create slides and, using an app such as Screencast-o-matic, record a video of yourself presenting the presentation with the slides. Please be sure that you use a quality microphone when recording, since a video—even if in brilliant 4K resolution—is only as good as the quality of its audio. Upload the video to a streaming service such as YouTube (you can make it “unlisted” and not “public” if you like) or to Microsoft OneDrive (to which you have access with your MDC credentials), and then use the sharing feature of those services to get a link to submit to Dr. Dvorak via A2L.

In addition to submitting a link to your recorded presentation, you are also required to submit:

1. a collection of your exegetical/interpretive notes, complete with bibliography of works consulted—in this document, you need to demonstrate that you have done the research necessary for completing this assignment
2. your presentations outline (in expanded form, not simply bullet points) or manuscript so that, if there's something wrong with the video (e.g., there is an audio problem), Dr. Dvorak will have a means of scoring the assignment

These, too, will be submitted via A2L. Dr. Dvorak will give further instruction regarding the submission process in a video posted to A2L.

– *3000-word Interpretive Essay (35%)*

DPT students will write a 3000-word interpretive essay about a text from the SOM (yes, it can be the same text for which you create your presentation, but your paper cannot serve as your research/exegetical/interpretive notes to accompany the presentation assignment). The essay must, at a minimum, contain:

1. an introduction which should include a clear statement of your thesis/claim
2. a section describing your methodology (or pertinent aspect of your methodology)
3. a section containing an analysis of your text using your methodology (note that this should *not* be an exercise in repeating what everyone has already said about the text, but your analysis of the text using a principled methodology—you can cite secondary sources for support, but you should support your thesis from the text using your methodology)
4. a biblical theology section in which you discuss the *biblical* theology of the text (not systematic or historical or philosophical theologies), including how the text might be “applied” in the life of the church and lives of believers
5. a strong conclusion that includes suggestions for further research

You must follow the MDC style guide meticulously; part of your score on this project depends upon doing so. Once completed, the assignment is to be submitted to Dr. Dvorak via A2L

## IX. Tentative Course Schedule

(Week) Date	Topic (see the <a href="#">A2L course site</a> for activity/assignment details and due dates)
(1) May 29, 2023	Introduction to course; Basic Methodology
(2) June 5, 2023	Context of Culture and Context of Situation of Matthew and the SOM
(3) June 12, 2023	Matt 5:1–12; 5:13–16
(4) June 19, 2023	Matt 5:17–48; 6:1–4; 6:5–8; 6:9–15
(5) June 26, 2023	Matt 6:16–18; 6:19–24; 6:25–34
(6) July 3, 2023	Matt 7:1–6; 7:7–12; 7:13–29
(7) July 10, 2023	Biblical Theology of the SOM; Applying the SOM

## X. Course Policies

### *Communication*

- *Email* – the best way to communicate with me, aside from speaking to me directly at class meetings, is by email ([dvoraki@mcmaster.ca](mailto:dvoraki@mcmaster.ca)). My personal policy is to respond to the messages you send to me within 24 hours of receiving them. I am not always able to fulfill this ideal; nevertheless, I do my best to at least let you know that I have received your message(s) and that I will respond as soon as I can.
- *A2L* – I will make extensive use of Avenue to Learn (A2L) in this course; it will be the primary hub for all course content and course communication. **It is *your responsibility* to log into the system regularly to check for announcements, course content, and course activities.**
- *Phone* – You may call my office phone (905-525-9140 x24518) if you need to. If you get my voicemail, please leave a message and I will do my best to return your call.
- *Virtual Meetings* – since this is an asynchronous online course, I will not have standard office hours. However, I will meet with any of you by appointment as needed. Please contact me via email to set up an appointment.

### *Absence Due to Illness*

- If you suspect that you have COVID, please take the Ontario COVID self-assessment (<https://www.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>) and follow their guidelines based on the results of the self-assessment.
- If you must miss class due to an illness, you must contact me (via email) as soon as possible to let me know. Likewise, if I should become ill, I will communicate with you via A2L about how we will make up class sessions.
- Although much of the course content will be made available via A2L, it would still be a good idea to have a friend take notes for you, if possible.

### *Academic Honesty*

- Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that, regardless of the means of its production, is not one's own but is passed off as if it is; or for which previous credit has been obtained; and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students.
- Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty at <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>

### *Gender Inclusive Language*

- McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.
- In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

### *Style*

- All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses, <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

### *AODA Statement*

- In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the content of this course is intended to be accessible to all students who are enrolled in the course, including those with disabilities. If any of the course content does not meet AODA accessibility standards, please contact the instructor as soon as possible so that the issue may be resolved. If a student requires accommodations to participate fully in this course, she or he is to contact the MDC Registrar ([mdcreg@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mdcreg@mcmaster.ca)) to discuss specific needs. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation.

### *Disclaimer*

© 2023–2024 by James D. Dvorak. This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class. Students will be kept apprised of any changes.