A. GE component for which course is being proposed:

B. Submitted by Bruce Fisk

C. Ideally, submissions should be discussed by the entire department prior to submittal.
   Chair has reviewed and approved the course.

D. Course being proposed (please attach syllabus):
   RS 104 Topics in Biblical Studies: Jesus in the Gospels and the Land

E. This course
   Has not been modified, but is being submitted to check its suitability
   Has had its syllabus rewritten to communicate the course’s contribution to GE
   X Has had its contents modified to address the relevant GE issues
   Is a new course designed to fulfill the GE requirement

F. This course is being submitted as
   A Template. Applicable to courses with multiple sections which require only general training in the discipline. The submission should come with the approval of the department chair and should clearly identify what course content and what elements of the syllabus the department has agreed will common to all sections. Upon approval by the GE Committee, any course whose syllabus is determined by the department to meet the specifications of the template is approved to satisfy this area requirement. A copy of each syllabus should be forwarded to the G.E. committee for record keeping purposes.
   X An Individual Course. Applicable to courses requiring specialized training in the discipline or are typically offered by a particular instructor. The course should be resubmitted and reassessed in the event of a change in staffing or syllabus.

G. Brief statement of rationale:
   I believe this course meets the stated criteria for GE Thinking Historically. Please see the accompanying syllabus for a fuller GE statement, assignments, readings, etc.
   a. It introduces students to historiographic methods, research tools, and critical approaches required to join the so-called “quest for the historical Jesus.” This will be accomplished through student research (see syllabus 2.1 – 2.18), lectures, and assigned readings. The list of readings is still tentative but it will include the manuscript of a near-finished book on the historical Jesus that Baker Academic has contracted me to write. Note, please, the six criteria for evaluation under assignment #2 in the syllabus.
   b. It includes readings and discussion of a range of primary (e.g., Gospels, Josephus, Dead Sea Scrolls, Pliny) and secondary historical texts (see syllabus). Students will purchase a course reader of selected primary sources to be used during site visits.
c. It requires students to construct a historical narrative, specifically the history of 1st c. Roman Judea and, more broadly, 2nd Temple Judaism between the Maccabean revolt (167 BCE) and the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 CE. This narrative will be crucial for answering a range of historical questions that will unite and animate the course. (These are taken from the syllabus.)

i. Who did Jesus think he was? How did he see himself in relation to the nation of Israel? The Jewish Law? The Jerusalem Temple? The Kingdom of God?

ii. What did Jesus mean when he announced the arrival of God’s rule?

iii. Did Jesus begin as a disciple of John the Baptist?

iv. Why did people follow Jesus? What role did women play in the early Jesus movement?

v. With what contemporary Jewish and Hellenistic figures (preachers, magicians, messianic claimants, exorcists, rebels, etc.) might Jesus be compared?

vi. Did Jesus foresee his own death? What significance did he attach to it?

vii. Why was Jesus opposed by the Jewish elite and executed by the Romans?

viii. What was the connection between Jesus’ message, his deeds and his death?

ix. Why weren’t his followers arrested and executed with him?

x. Are the Gospels reliable as historical documents? What does “reliable” mean in this context?

xi. Is the Jesus “quest” important for Christian discipleship?

xii. How should our study of Jesus inform and shape our response to the present conflict between the state of Israel and the Palestinians?

d. It focuses on a specific time and place (1st century Palestine) with attention to continuity and change within emerging early Judaism, and in relation to 20th/21st century Israel/Palestine.