

Conrad Grebel University College  
University of Waterloo  
HISTORY 247: Mennonite History: A Survey  
Winter 2018

**Class Time:** Mondays 6:00 - 8:50 pm

**Location:** Conrad Grebel University College, Room 1300

**Instructors:** Dr. Marlene Epp & Dr. Aileen Friesen

Office Location: CGUC Room 2118 (Marlene) & CGUC Room 1300 (Aileen)

Office Hours: Often you can find us before class. As Dean at Conrad Grebel, Marlene does not hold regular office hours, but you are welcome to drop by and see if she is available or make an appointment. Aileen's hours are on Monday 5:00-5:45 (on the days when Aileen teaches). She is also available to meet in Room 1301 on T/Thur, 12:00-12:45; 2:30-3:30.

**Telephone:** 519-885-0220 x24257 (Marlene)

**Email:** [mgepp@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:mgepp@uwaterloo.ca); [a5fries@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:a5fries@uwaterloo.ca)

**Team Teaching:** This course will be 'team-taught' by Dr. Epp and Dr. Friesen. They have developed the syllabus together and will be sharing content delivery and course assignments. They will each lead about half of the classes (see schedule); sometimes both will be in class but not always. They will share the course grading as specified in assignment descriptions. Marlene can be your main contact for course concerns and questions; but contact Aileen with questions regarding the main archives-based assignment.

**Description:** This course offers a general survey of Mennonite history from the 16th century to the present. Themes to be covered include: Anabaptist origins, basic beliefs, migrations, encounters with their neighbours, divisions and diversity, religious and social practices, family and community life, and the globalization of Mennonites. Mennonites around the world will be studied with an emphasis placed on Mennonites in Canada (and Ontario) in the 20th century to the present, as well as the Russian Mennonite story. Class time will include lectures, films, field trips, and conversation.

**Course Objectives:**

- To gain a basic knowledge of the Mennonites, from their beginnings in 16th Century Europe to their contemporary presence across the globe, including the history of their beliefs, migrations, divisions, culture and customs, and current identities.
- To gain an understanding of the place of ethnic and religious minorities in Canadian history and their contribution to the creation of multicultural identities in this country.

- To gain an understanding of and be able to describe the variety of Mennonites that live in southwestern Ontario and particularly in the vicinity of Waterloo region.
- To foster an appreciation for the dynamic interaction between religious belief and cultural practice, through a case study of the Mennonites.
- To develop skills in using primary sources in an archive to create a public exhibit.

### Required Readings:

The readings for the course are available electronically by week in Learn, unless otherwise indicated.

*The Plain People*, by John Peters, is available for purchase at the UW Bookstore, and is on Reserve in the Milton Good Library (Conrad Grebel).

### Other Reference Texts on reserve in the Milton Good Library:

Epp, Frank H. *Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920: The History of a Separate People*. 1974. (Volume 1)

Epp, Frank H. *Mennonites in Canada, 1920-1940: A People's Struggle for Survival*. 1982. (Volume 2)

Regehr, T.D. *Mennonites in Canada, 1939-1970: A People Transformed*. 1996. (Volume 3)

## Course Schedule:

### 8 January (*Marlene and Aileen*)

Introduction and Overview

### 15 January (*Marlene*)

**Topic:** 16th Century Anabaptist Origins & Basic Mennonite Beliefs

**Readings:** Frank Epp, *Mennonites in Canada, Volume 1, 1786-1920*, Chapter 1, "The Most Separated Brethren." In Learn.

Second half of class: Visit Milton Good Library and Mennonite Archives of Ontario with Archivist-Librarian Laureen Harder-Gissing

### 22 January (*Marlene*)

**Topic:** Mennonite Migrations and Encounters with Indigenous Peoples

**Readings:** E. Reginald Good, "Colonizing a People: Mennonite Settlement in Waterloo Township," in *Earth, water, air and fire: studies in Canadian Ethnohistory*, ed. David McNab and Nin.Da.Waab.Jig (Waterloo: WLU Press, 1998). In Learn.

**Film:** *Reserve 107* (2016)

January 25: Lecture, Aileen Friesen, "Muslim-Mennonite Encounters in the Russian Empire"

7:30 p.m. Great Hall (room 1111), Conrad Grebel

### **29 January (Aileen)**

**Topic:** Russian Mennonite Migration and Settlement

**Readings:** Lawrence Klippenstein, "The Mennonite Migration to Russia, 1786-1806" in *Mennonites in Russia*, ed. John Friesen (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1989). In Learn.

Second half of class: Talk about Russlaender Assignment. If you want to choose a specific Russlaender to profile, you must let Aileen know by Feb. 4 through email. Otherwise you will be assigned one from the list that is posted in Learn.

### **5 February (Aileen)**

**Topic:** War and Revolution in the Experience of Russian Mennonites

**Readings:** Mennonites in Ukraine amid Civil War and anarchy (1917-1920): a documentary collection, pp.171-78. David Rempel, *A Mennonite Family in Russia* (selections)

**Film:** *And When They Shall Ask* (1983)

You should have identified a Russlaender to profile, and should have visited the Milton Good Library to access/download your interview.

### **12 February (Aileen)**

**Topic:** The Russian Mennonite Story: Stalinism & WWII

**Readings:** Colin P. Neufeldt, "Separating the Sheep from the Goats: The Role of Mennonites and Non-Mennonites in the Dekulakization of Khortitsa Ukraine (1928-1930)," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*. In Learn.

### **19 February NO CLASSES, READING WEEK**

### **26 February (Aileen)**

**Topic:** Mennonites in War & Peace

**Readings:** T.D. Regehr, *Mennonites in Canada 3, 1939-1970*, Chap. 2. In Learn.

**Film:** *The Last Objectors* (2016)

**DUE:** 200 word Transcription from Russlaender interview. Submit to Dropbox in Learn by 11:30 pm.

March 1 & 2, Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies, Dr. David Weaver-Zercher, *Bloody Theatre, Bloodless Theatre: Representing Mennonites, Past and Present*

March 1, "One Generation Away: Martyrs Mirror and the Survival of Anabaptist Christianity"

March 2, Panel Discussion: "Mennonites and the Media: Telling Mennonite Stories Today"

Both events at 7:30 p.m., Great Hall (room 1111), Conrad Grebel

### **5 March (Marlene)**

**Topic:** Visit Brubacher House visit – Households and Families

**Readings:** Marlene Epp, Chapter 2, *Mennonite Women in Canada: A History* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2008). In Learn.

### **12 March (Marlene)**

**Topic:** Divisions and Diversity amongst Mennonites

**Readings:** Marlene Epp, "Carrying the Banner of Nonconformity: Ontario Mennonite Women and the Dress Question," *The Conrad Grebel Review* 8, 3 (Fall 1990): 237-57. In Learn.

### **19 March (Marlene)**

**Topic:** Field trip visit to Amsey Martin and Old Order Mennonite school (tentative)

**Readings:** *The Plain People*, John Peters (on reserve in Milton Good library, or by purchase in UW bookstore)

**DUE:** 200 word story from Russlaender interview, first draft. Submit to Dropbox in Learn by 11:30 pm.

### **26 March (Marlene)**

**Topic:** Globalization of Mennonites

**Readings:** T.D. Regehr, *Mennonites in Canada Volume 3, 1939-1970*, Chap. 15. In Learn.

### **2 April (Marlene & Aileen)**

#### **Exhibit Presentations & End of course summary**

**DUE:** Russlaender Profile must be submitted to Dropbox in Learn by 11:30 pm on Monday, April 2

## Course Requirements:

*Attendance:* 10%

A sign-up sheet will be circulated at each class, beginning Week 1. It will be your responsibility to ensure that your name is on the list. You will not lose marks for absences for illness or emergency but you must let Marlene know by email or phone message before class.

(Marlene will grade)

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*Archives Assignment: Russlaender Profile:* 32%

Details below.

(Aileen will grade)

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*Take Home Final Exam:* 20 %

A take home exam will be distributed on the last day of class and must be submitted to the Dropbox in Learn by **Wednesday, April 18 at 11:30 pm**. It will be a combination of short answer and essay questions.

(Marlene and Aileen will grade)

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*Lecture Report:* 10%

Attend **one** of the 3 Mennonite Studies lectures held during the Winter 2018 term.

(Marlene will grade)

**January 25:** Lecture, Aileen Friesen, "Muslim-Mennonite Encounters in the Russian Empire"

7:30 p.m. Great Hall (room 1111), Conrad Grebel

**March 1 & 2,** Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies, Dr. David Weaver-Zercher, *Bloody Theatre, Bloodless Theatre: Representing Mennonites, Past and Present*

**March 1,** "One Generation Away: Martyrs Mirror and the Survival of Anabaptist Christianity"

**March 2,** Panel Discussion: "Mennonites and the Media: Telling Mennonite Stories Today"

Both events at 7:30 p.m., Great Hall (room 1111), Conrad Grebel

Write a 500-word summary of the lecture, summarizing the content (be sure to name the presenter and the lecture title), suggesting why you think this topic is important for the present-day understanding of Mennonites, and reflecting on how the lecture connects to and supplements what you have learned in the course.

Submit to the Dropbox in Learn one week after the lecture, as follows:

January 25 report is due **February 1, 11:30 pm**

March 1 report is due **March 8, 11:30 pm**

March 2 report is due **March 9, 11:30 pm**

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*Weekly class Summary-Reflection: 7 x 4% = 28%*

(Marlene and Aileen will grade for our own classes)

You are required to write a short Summary-Reflection after 7 of the classes in the semester. (Except for the first or last class.)

**The Summary-Reflection is due in a Dropbox in Learn by 11:30 p.m. on the following day.**

The Dropbox will remain open two days after the due date, however a late penalty will be assigned if no extension was requested. We will not accept weekly summary-reflections after the Dropbox closes, except by special arrangement ahead of time.

After each class, write a roughly 250-word summary/reflection that responds to the following questions:

What was the main theme of the class content, in one or two sentences?

What is your response to the reading question assigned each week?

What new information or perspective on Mennonites did you gain in this class?

You will be graded on: submission by due date; originality and depth of thought; specific ideas as opposed to vagueness and generalities; clear evidence of having done the reading; attention to clear and correct writing style.

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## Your responsibilities as a student in History 247

*1) Look after yourself.* As I'm sure you know, an important part of academic success is personal well-being. Eat well, sleep sufficiently, get some exercise and spend time outdoors, and don't abuse your body. If you are struggling with more-than-normal (debilitating) stress, anxiety, lack of motivation and/or depression, please talk to friends, family, or relevant professionals. There are many supports here at Conrad Grebel / UW. If you need help sourcing these, come and talk to me. Take responsibility for yourself and look out for others. Be kind and compassionate with each other.

*2) Attend class regularly and take notes.* Attending class regularly will help you maintain interest in the topic of the course, keep up with course requirements and guidelines for assignments, and obtain course content that isn't available in readings or on Learn. Taking notes in class is important as a practice of knowledge retention, a technique for attentiveness, and also to help you gather information that you will need for the take home exam. Attendance is graded: a sheet will be circulated in each class and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have signed-in.

*3) You are responsible for catching up on material that you have missed.* You can do this by asking us for any handouts, borrowing notes from a classmate, and asking us how you might view films that you missed. Be sure to review content on Learn thoroughly and regularly.

*4) Be attentive and participate in classroom discussions.* Ask questions about things you don't understand or are not clear. Be respectful of other students and their opinions.

*5) Electronics:* The use of laptops or other electronic note-taking gadgets for the purpose of taking notes in class is acceptable. If other activity such as facebook-ing, texting, etc. becomes distracting to other students or to us or a guest speaker, students will be asked to cease such activity, or their devices might be requisitioned for the duration of the class. Phones should be turned off during class. If you need your phone available for an emergency in a specific class, let us know.

*6) Understand course requirements.* Please ask questions if these are not clear. Complete assignments on time. We will do our best to grade and return them in a timely manner. All assignments in this class for Winter 2018 will be submitted to the Dropbox in Learn. If Learn is not functioning, we will communicate alternate submission instructions to you by email. Please plan your academic work carefully, keeping in mind the deadlines for assignments in all your courses. We are generally amenable to requests for extensions in situations of illness, emergencies, or family/personal crises. We do expect that you consult one of us about an extension **BEFORE** the assignment is due. Assignments that are handed in past the due date without any prior consultation with Marlene or Aileen will be subject to a grading penalty of 2% per day.

**7) Communication.** If you wish to talk with us about any course related or other matters, you may do so after class briefly, during our office hours, by appointment, or through email. We will do our best to respond to your emails within 48 hours. Before you make an inquiry about assignments etc., please do check the syllabus first to confirm whether the information you need is there. All requests for assignment extensions or other special arrangements must be confirmed by email, so that we have an agreement in writing (and so that we do not forget!). Ensure that your uwaterloo email address is forwarded to your personal email address (if you prefer to only check the latter).

**8) LEARN.** This course will have a Desire2Learn (Learn) page. It is your responsibility to ensure you can receive email through Learn, as this is how we will communicate with students and you with each other. Please check the course site regularly for announcements, handouts, suggestions, etc. You will be submitting most of your assignments to a Dropbox in Learn.

**9) Be aware of UW's guidelines on academic offenses, particularly cheating, plagiarism and borrowing.** If you do not cite the sources used in your research, you are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism is an academic offence at University of Waterloo that can result in disciplinary action towards a student. This is the official UW statement:

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4.

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

Other sources of information for students:

[Academic Integrity website \(Arts\)](#)

[Academic Integrity Office \(UWaterloo\)](#)



**10) Accommodation for Students with Disabilities.** The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

**11) Mental Health Support.** All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health supports if they are needed.

### **On Campus**

- Counselling Services: [counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca) / 519-888-4567 xt 32655
- MATES: one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

### **Off campus, 24/7**

- Good2Talk: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-433 ext. 6880
- Here 24/7: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- OK2BME: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

Download the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

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## Russlaender Profile Assignment:

Creating an Archives Exhibit on Russian Mennonite experience in the early twentieth century for the Mennonite Archives of Ontario – part of the Milton Good Library at Conrad Grebel

Worth 32%,

200 word Transcription due **Feb 26**. Submit to Dropbox in Learn. 5%

200 word 'Story' First Draft due **March 19** Submit to Dropbox in Learn. 5%

5-minute presentation of profile to class on **April 2**.

All materials completed in full (uploaded to Dropbox in Learn) due **April 2**. 22%

This course in Mennonite History, located at Conrad Grebel University College (a Mennonite church-affiliated college) is fortunate to be connected to the Mennonite Archives of Ontario (MAO), which houses a significant collection of historical material on Mennonites, especially in Ontario. Because of this relationship, you have the opportunity to experience Mennonite History first hand, so to speak. In this assignment, you will work with a variety of primary sources from the archives collection and will get a glimpse into 'what historians do'. Aileen Friesen will be assisting you on this assignment.

The MAO is developing an exhibit on Russian Mennonite experience in the early twentieth century. Each of you will develop a written and visual profile of one 1920s Mennonite immigrant from the Soviet Union (also known as a Russlaender) and present your profile to the class. This information will be collected for a future archives exhibition. You will develop this profile by: doing some background reading on the topic; listening to an oral interview with a Russlaender; choosing a short audio clip from their narrative; searching for relevant photos; transcribing a 200 word section of the interview; writing up a 200 word 'story' based on the transcription; integrating the biographical and interview summaries (which have already been done for each interview).

This is an assignment that requires initiative, creative thinking, and good writing skills. In order to do this assignment, you must be willing to spend some time in the Conrad Grebel library because archive materials cannot be signed out. Some class time will be devoted to this assignment. More explanation will follow. You will get lots of help.

Here are the main steps in this assignment:

- 29 January: Aileen will introduce the assignment. For background on the experiences of Russian Mennonites during the early twentieth century, read Frank Epp, *Mennonites in Canada, Volume 2, 1920-1940, Chapter 4* (on Reserve in Milton Good Library). **Review the 'Russlaender Profile Outline**

**Example' in Learn before you get started.** This will help you determine what to 'listen' for in your interview.

- 5 Feb: If you want to choose your own Russlaender interview from the list on Learn, you must do so by this date. You can let me know your choice by email and I will put your name on the list. If you don't make a choice, I will assign an interview to you. The interviews will be available in the Milton Good Library on Reserve (ask at circulation desk); they will be on a drive in MP3 format that you can download to your own device.
- Schedule time to listen to the oral interview **up to the interviewee's arrival in Canada** and make notes on the main aspects of their story. Write down the information required in the 'Russlaender Profile Outline' document that is in Learn. You will need to listen to the interview more than once. While you are doing so, identify 30-60 seconds of audio that you find particularly interesting and that could be used in the exhibit (see the Outline for ideas of what to look for). You should also identify a quote – 1-2 sentences – from your interview that you think would be good to see written out in an exhibit, and that will serve as a heading for your profile (see the Outline for an example).
- 26 Feb: By this date you must submit to the Dropbox in Learn a first draft of your 200-word transcription. A transcription is writing down what you hear word for word. While listening to the interview, you should identify a section that tells an interesting story (see the Outline for ideas of what to look for). You will then transcribe that section and write a story based on the transcription and other details about the individual's story. You will have the opportunity to make corrections before you submit the final version.
- 19 March: By this date you must submit to the Dropbox in Learn a first draft of your 200-word story. The story is a narrative of the transcribed section in your own words, with a few direct quotes for illustration. For examples, see the 'Russlaender Profile Outline' that is available in Learn.
- Anytime between Feb. 5 and March 26: You should find a photo to use with your profile. You can find a photo in the MAID (Mennonite Archival Image Database) (there are some thumbnails online); or in another collection within MAO that Lauren directs you to. Write a caption for the photo and identify its location/source (archival number).
- Anytime between Feb.5 and March 26: Develop one question that you would have liked to ask your interviewee. No more than 1-2 sentences.
- 2 April: Give a 5-minute presentation of your profile in class. Submit all your work in the Russlaender Profile Outline in Learn. Be sure to double-check and proofread all your information.

Be sure to stay on schedule with this assignment. Don't leave it all until the end of semester.

Ask Aileen if you have any questions!