

**The Radical Reformation: Hist 348/RS 344/TS 642**  
**Fall 2025**  
**MW 9:00AM-10:20AM, Monday and Wednesday, CGR 1300**

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Troy Osborne  
Office: CGR 2114  
Office Phone: 519-885-0220 x24260  
Office Hours: Monday 2:00-3:30pm, or by appointment and after class  
Email: troy.osborne@uwaterloo.ca  
(Email is the best way to contact me!)

You can find the syllabus and other course links and materials at [The Learn Website](http://learn.uwaterloo.ca)  
<http://learn.uwaterloo.ca>

**Instructor Contact:**

In the fall, my office hours are Monday afternoons from 2:00 – 3:30 pm. However, I am in my office most days. You are welcome to stop by to chat if the door is open. If your question will take longer than a few minutes, we can schedule an appointment to meet. Generally, I try to answer all emails within 48 hours during the week (Monday –Friday).

**Course Description:**

This course surveys the history of the Radical Reformation, a range of political, social, and religious movements that grew out of the religious reforms of sixteenth-century Europe. While we will touch on a variety of radical movements, our focus will be on the Anabaptists and the particular social, cultural, and religious contexts they emerged from. Through studying the Anabaptists, we will explore the religion, politics, and society of common people in the sixteenth century and their toleration, persecution, marginalization and assimilation.

**Objectives:**

1. To discover the context of the Radical Reformers by looking at their late-medieval religious background and the socio-political framework that shaped their lives.
2. To articulate the main theological issues that fueled their reforming initiatives.
3. To describe the social and cultural results of the radical reformers' theology
4. To develop written and oral communication skills through the writing and presentation of course content

This class is not intended to promote a particular belief or criticize the religious traditions of others. The legacy of the sixteenth century reformations is still tangible today, but this course's primary goal is to study the past, not to convince you of the rightness or wrongness of certain theological positions. Nonetheless, one of my scholarly assumptions is that those who study the Reformation

must understand the religious worldview of the past in order to understand why the events of the Reformation unfolded in the way that they did. Therefore, we approach the topic with a certain amount of intellectual detachment, even as we immerse ourselves in the lives of religiously radical men and women.

As we learn about the past, we will also develop the tools of historical thinking. You will learn to analyze primary and secondary sources, critique the arguments of other historians, and present your own argument about the past. History values careful reading, precise writing, and judiciously humble arguments. I'm interested in how *you* think, and the skills you develop in history courses will benefit you no matter where you go. So, *please*, do the reading and writing without the use of GenAI or LLMs.

**Required Texts and Readings:** Come to class prepared to discuss these books on the day that they are assigned.

- Snyder, C. Arnold. *Anabaptist History and Theology: Revised Student Edition*. 2nd ed. Pandora Press (CA), 1997. This book serves as the main text for the course. (“**Snyder**” in the course calendar) \$54.18 on [Amazon](#) or physical copies on course reserves in Grebel’s library.
- Course Readings. This will be accessible through UWaterloo library’s electronic reserves. We will often analyze these together in class, so you will need to make sure that you either print the document out or have access to it on your computer. Access to these items is free through the library course reserve portal.

### Requirements:

1. **Engaged participation:** To become a critical learner, you must enter into an active conversation with the material and the other students in the course. This means that you have to be more than a “warm body” during class and must come prepared to be an **informed participant** (i.e. the quality, not the quantity, of your contributions will be most important). The class schedule indicates which readings you will be discussing. Remember, asking *informed* questions is an important part of active participation. At the graduate level, attendance at all sessions is expected. If you know you will miss class, please let me know in advance so that we do not wait for you to start.
  - a. **Reading quizzes** (20%) on the course content. These will be a combination of some objective material and the writing of shorter essays. The quizzes will be ‘closed book,’ but if you’ve done the reading and attended the lectures, you will do fine. The lowest quiz score will be dropped.
  - b. **In class analyses and engagement** (10%) Throughout the term, we will be discussing the readings and analyzing documents together in class.
2. **Primary Source Analysis:** 20 % You will choose two primary sources that articulate Anabaptist beliefs on a common topic from different regions. I will provide a list of options for you. In your 800-word essay, you will 1) contextualize the sources 2) describe the content 3) analyze the

similarities and differences between the two sources. Snyder Chapter 8 will help in this analysis. **Due October 20**

3. **Secondary Source Analysis:** 20 % You will select two scholarly articles from a list I provide to analyze the concept of 'radicalness.' You will identify the authors' field and academic position, the journal's intended audience, the argument of the article/chapter, and the sources used to make their argument. This analysis will allow you to compare how the scholars define and question the concept of 'radical.' **Due November 24**
4. **Final Examination (30%)** This will be given at some time during the final exam period. It will likely be based on two longer essay questions distributed before the exam date.

**Or, as an alternate to the final exam**

If students wish, they may choose to write a **larger research essay (4,000 to 5,000 words)**, on a topic of the student's choosing instead of a final exam. I will assess the essay on both its style and its content. (Was it written well? Was it analyzed well?) The essays must follow the citation guidelines set forth in the Chicago Manual of Style and use footnotes when citing (not parenthetical referencing).

**Student Assessment:**

Participation and in class work	10%
5 Reading Quizzes:	20%
Primary Source Analysis	20%
Secondary Source Analysis	20%
Exam (final):	30%

**Or**

Research paper:

- ❖ Research Prospectus, **November 18** 5%
- ❖ Complete, Due **December 19** 25%

**General guidelines for assignments:**

- All written assignments should be double-spaced and use 12-point font and one-inch margins.
- When direct citations are used, they **must** be Chicago Style, footnote/bibliography format.
  - [https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html)
- Number your pages.
- Unless otherwise stated, your work must be submitted at the beginning of class.
- In order for you to get prompt feedback on your work, I encourage you to complete all of your assignments on time. In the rare circumstance of a documented family or medical emergency, I will grant an extension. In such a circumstance, you should contact me **as soon as possible** in order to make alternate arrangements. Otherwise, late work will be marked 1/3 grade off for every day that it is late. A mark that would have been a 85 will

become a 82 for a paper that is one day late. Remember...it is *always* better to turn something in late than to get zero points for an assignment.

**NOTE:**

You will need to attend class regularly, take all exams, write all essays, and participate in an informed manner in order to *pass* the course. If you think that you may have difficulties fulfilling some aspects of the course, see me as soon as possible (that is, before it becomes a problem!).

**Grading Scale:**

Courses in the Faculty of Arts are graded according to the following scale:

Letter Grade	Numeric Value	Description
A+	90-100	Exceptional
A	85-89	Excellent
A-	80-84	Excellent
B+	77-79	Very good
B	73-76	Good
B-	70-72	Good
C+	67-69	Competent
C	63-66	Fairly Competent
C-	60-62	Fairly Competent
D+	57-59	Passing
D	53-56	Barely passing
D-	50-52	Barely passing
F+	42-49	Marginally failing
F	35-41	Failing
F-	0-34	Failing

**Late Work**

In order that you get prompt feedback on your work, I encourage you to complete all of your assignments on time. If you have to miss class, please use the university's VIF portal. In such a circumstance, you should contact me as soon as possible in order to make alternate arrangements. Otherwise, late work will be marked 1/3 off for everyday that it is late. A grade that would have been a 85 will become a 82 for a paper that is one day late. Remember...it is always better to turn something in late than to get zero points for an assignment. If they are given, LATE TAKE HOME EXAMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

**Attendance Policy**

Excused absences are those caused by documented illness processed through [vif.uwaterloo.ca](http://vif.uwaterloo.ca) . In the case of documented absences, it will always be possible to make-up exams, quizzes, or papers. Up to two unexcused absences per semester are acceptable. If you will have to miss more than this, see me as soon as possible. Missing more than six classes might result in failing the

entire course. At the graduate level, attendance at all sessions is expected. If you must miss class, please let me know in advance so that we do not wait for you to start.

CALENDAR FOR THE SEMESTER – All readings should be completed by the date that they are assigned.		
September 3	<b>Introduction to the Course and the Late Medieval Church</b>	
September 8	<b>The Late Medieval Inheritance</b>	1. <b>Snyder</b> , Chapter 1
September 10	<b>Calls for Reform</b>	1. <b>Snyder</b> , Chapter 2
September 15	<b>Evangelical reforms</b>	1. <b>Snyder</b> : Chapters 3 2. <b>Reserves</b> : Luther – “Freedom of a Christian” and Eck, “Faith and Good works,” in , Michael W. Bruening, <i>A Reformation Sourcebook</i> , 50-56.
September 17	<b>Radical Reforms</b>	1. <b>Snyder</b> : Chapter 3 2. <b>Reserves</b> : a. Karlstadt – “On the Removal of Images” in Bruening, <i>A Reformation Sourcebook</i> , 71-72 b. Müntzer – <i>Sermon before the Princes</i> , in Bruening , 76-79.
September 22	<b>Peasants’ War</b>	1. <b>Snyder</b> , Chapters 4 2. <b>Reserves</b> , a. “The Twelve Articles of the Peasants, 1525” b. Luther, <i>Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants</i> , 1525, Bruening, 81-86.
September 24	<b>Origins of Swiss/South German Anabaptism</b>	1. <b>Snyder</b> : Chapters 6 and 7 2. <b>Reserves</b> : Conrad Grebel, “Grebel to Müntzer” in Harder, ed., <i>The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism</i> , 284-294.

September 29	<b>Apocalyptic Origins of Northern Anabaptism</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 11, to page 216</li> <li>2. <b>Reserves:</b> Obbe Philips, "A Confession" in Williams, ed. <i>Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers</i>, 204-225.</li> </ol>
September 29	<b>North German / Dutch Anabaptism Consolidation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 11, 216 to end</li> <li>1. <b>Reader;</b> Menno Simons. "Conversion, Call, and Testimony," in J.C. Wenger, ed. <i>The Complete Writings of Menno Simons, C. 1496-1561</i>. 268-274.</li> </ol>
October 1	<b>The development and spread of the movement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 9-10</li> <li>1. <b>Reserves:</b> Nadler, Declaration of the Needle Merchant Hans, in <i>Sources of South German/Austrian Anabaptism</i>, 136-149.</li> </ol>
October 6	<b>Persecution</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Reserves:</b> Geraerts, Jaap. "The Prosecution of Anabaptists in Holland, 1530-1566." <i>The Mennonite Quarterly Review</i> 86, no. 1 (2012): 5-47.</li> </ol>
October 8	<b>Visiting the Mennonite Archives of Ontario</b>	
	<b>READING WEEK</b>	
October 20	<b>A Common Core?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Snyder:</b> Chapters 7 and 8</li> <li><b>Primary source analysis due</b></li> </ol>
October 22	<b>Views of Scripture</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 12</li> <li>2. <b>Reserves:</b> Various authors, in Klaassen, <i>Anabaptism in Outline</i>, 140-151.</li> <li>3. <b>Reserves:</b> Ursula Jost's Visions in C. Arnold Snyder and Linda A. Huebert, eds. <i>Profiles of Anabaptist Women</i>, 280-284.</li> </ol>
October 27	<b>Views of Sword and Oath: Swiss and South German</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 13</li> </ol>

October 29	<b>Views of Sword and Oath: Hoffman and the Melchiorites</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 14</li> <li>2. <b>Reserves</b>: Rothmann “Concerning Revenge.” In Zuck, <i>Christianity and Revolution</i>, 88-100</li> <li>3. <b>Reserves</b>: Menno “A Reply to False Accusations,” in Zuck, <i>Christianity and Revolution</i>, 122-126.</li> </ol>
November 3	<b>Authority for the movement: Inner or outer?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 16.</li> </ol> <b>Reserves</b> , Various, Church Discipline in <i>Anabaptism in Outline</i> , 215-220.
November 5	<b>Socio-Economic hopes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 15</li> <li>2. <b>Reserves</b>: Stadler on Community of Goods, in Klaassen, <i>Anabaptism in Outline</i>, 234-240</li> </ol> <b>Reserves</b> : Menno on Covetousness in Klaassen, <i>Anabaptism in Outline</i> , 241-242.
November 10	<b>NO CLASS</b>	
November 12	<b>Marriage and Sexuality</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Reserves</b>: Riedemann on Marriage, in Riedemann, <i>Peter Riedemann’s Hutterite Confession of Faith</i>, 127-130.</li> <li>2. <b>Reserves</b>: Riedemann on Marriage, <i>Love is like Fire</i>, 57-59.</li> <li>3. <b>Reserves</b>: Soetken van der Houte, <i>Elisabeth’s Manly Courage</i>, 164-169.</li> </ol>
November 17	<b>Ecclesiology: what is the church?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 17</li> </ol>
November 19	<b>Christology – Who is Christ, and what difference does it make?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Snyder</b>, Chapter 18</li> <li>2. <b>Reserves</b>, Menno, “The Incarnation of Christ” in Wenger, ed., <i>The Complete Works of Menno Simons</i>, 427-432</li> </ol>
November 24	<b>Historiography of the Radical Reformation</b>	<b>Snyder</b> , Appendix  <b>Secondary Source analysis Due</b>
November 26	<b>Imagining a common community</b>	Troy Osborne, “The Development of a Transnational ‘Mennonite’ Identity among Swiss Brethren and Dutch Doopsgezinden in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” <i>Mennonite Quarterly Review</i> 88, no. 2 (2014): 195-218

Dec 1.	<b>The Legacy of the Radical Reformation</b> <b>(Exam prep)</b>	<b>Snyder, Chapter 19. (Optional: Chapter 20)</b>
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**Final Exam – In Class – Date to be announced later. (Optional) Final Paper Due December 19**

This course includes the independent development and practice of the specific skills of a historian in analyzing sources, historians' arguments, and writing original work . **Therefore, the use of Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) trained using large language models (LLM) or other methods to produce text, images, music, or code, like Chat GPT, DALL-E, or GitHub CoPilot, is not permitted in this class.** Unauthorized use in this course, such as running course materials through GenAI or using GenAI to complete a course assessment is considered a violation of [Policy 71](#) (plagiarism or unauthorized aids or assistance). Work produced with the assistance of AI tools does not represent the author's original work and is therefore in violation of the fundamental values of academic integrity including honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and courage ([ICAI](#), n.d.).

You should be prepared to show your work. To demonstrate your learning, you should keep your rough notes, including research notes, brainstorming, and drafting notes. You may be asked to submit these notes along with earlier drafts of their work, either through saved drafts or saved versions of a document. If the use of GenAI is suspected where not permitted, you may be asked to meet with your instructor or TA to provide explanations to support the submitted material as being your original work. Through this process, if you have not sufficiently supported your work, academic misconduct allegations may be brought to the Associate Dean.

In addition, you should be aware that the legal/copyright status of generative AI inputs and outputs is unclear. More information is available from the Copyright Advisory Committee:  
<https://uwaterloo.ca/copyright-at-waterloo/teaching/generative-artificial-intelligence>



## Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health support if they are needed.

### On campus supports

For counselling (individual or group) reach out to [Campus Wellness and Counselling Services](#). Counselling Services strives to provide a secure, supportive environment for students of all orientations and backgrounds. They offer confidential counselling for a variety of areas including anxiety, stress management, depression, grief, substance use, sexuality, relationship issues, and much more.

### Other on-campus supports

- [MATES](#): one-to-one peer support program offered by the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) and Counselling Services
- Download the [Regroup Mobile](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information
- [Empower Me](#): to access create an account on the Dialogue mobile app or on the web at [www.studentcare.ca/dialogue](http://www.studentcare.ca/dialogue)
- [Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Centre](#) - supports all members of the University of Waterloo campus community who have experienced or been impacted by sexual violence.

### Off campus supports

- [Good2Talk](#): Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300
- [St. Mary's Hospital](#) - 519-744-3311
- [Here 24/7](#): Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- 988 Suicide Crisis Helpline: a 24/7 urgent mental health care three-digit helpline
- [OK2BME](#): set of support services for Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual (@SLGBTQIA+) and questioning kids, teens, adults, and their families in Waterloo Region. Phone: 519-884-0000 or e-mail [ok2bme@caminowellbeing.ca](mailto:ok2bme@caminowellbeing.ca)
- [Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region](#) - offers individual counselling to people of all genders, 16+ who have been sexually assaulted at any point in their lives. As well as short-term support for family members or friends of sexual assault survivors. Also, information and referrals

More information about resources and supports for students can be found online in on the [Faculty of Arts Student Support](#) page.

## **Statements appearing in all course syllabi**

### **Accommodating religious and spiritual observances**

The University of Waterloo has a duty to accommodate religious, spiritual, and other creed-based beliefs and practices under the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2015) Policy on preventing discrimination based on creed. Students may seek accommodations for missed course components on religious, spiritual, or other creed grounds. In such cases the students should please consult the instructor within two weeks of the announcement of the due date for which the accommodation is being sought. Students also may request accommodations for temporary absences from classes or other course-related activities to engage in prayer or other daily spiritual practices. Instructors are expected to make reasonable arrangements to respectfully accommodate such requests. The University of Waterloo has a number of multi-faith spaces that students can use for faith-based practices.

### **Declaring absences**

Please see the Academic Regulations section of the Undergraduate Calendar for more details. Regardless of the process used to declare an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact their instructor so that the instructor can determine how to accommodate the missed work.

### **Absences due to religious, creed, and spiritual observances**

Beginning Fall 2024, students can submit a Religious Observance Self-Declaration Form in Quest. This form allows the student to register dates of potential conflicts with coursework. Students are expected to record their absence within two weeks of announcement of the due date or scheduled examination date for which academic accommodation is being sought. Submission through Quest will notify your instructors of your absence.

### **Absences due to verified illness**

For absences due to illness that are not pandemic-related, students need to obtain a Verification of Illness or Extenuating Circumstances Process. Submission through the Absence Verification System, once registered, will notify your instructors of your absence. Students should not submit their VIF or any other medical documentation to your instructors, teaching assistants, or other course personnel. To request and arrange accommodations, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor within 48 hours of the date of any missed course component, or as soon as the student is able to give their health condition.

**Absences due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., bereavement)**

For absences due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., bereavement, serious family illness), students submit a request for absence due to extenuating circumstances to the Absence Verification System for processing. Students use the form to submit supporting documentation, which will be considered in a comparable manner to a VIF. Official documentation is necessary before any action can be taken. Examples are plane/train/bus tickets, court documents, police reports, death certificates/obituaries/letters from funeral directors. To request and arrange accommodations, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor within 48 hours of the date of any missed course component, or as soon as the student is able to given their circumstances.

**Self-declared short-term absences for any reason**

Students can self-declare one short-term absence per term on Quest for any reason. A short-term absence covers two calendar days, and no documentation is required. The student has only one self-declared short-term absence per term and this absence can only be used during the formal lecture period. Self-declared absences cannot be applied to Laboratory (LAB), Clinic (CLN), or Studio (STU) course components. Submitting the self-declaration through Quest will notify your instructors of your absence. It is the student's responsibility to contact their instructors within the first 24 hours after submitting their self-declaration to discuss accommodations for missed course components.

**Recording lecture**

Use of recording devices during lectures is only allowed with explicit permission of the instructor of the course. If allowed, video recordings may only include images of the instructor and not fellow classmates. Posting of videos or links to the video to any website, including but not limited to social media sites such as: Facebook, Twitter, etc., is strictly prohibited.

**Cross-listed courses**

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which subject code it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSYCH cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science subject code.

**Held-with courses**

Please note that a held-with course will only count in the average for the subject code under which it has been taken, unless it is cross-listed with the subject code of its' held-with course. For example, if a CLAS/HIST held-with course is taken under the CLAS subject code then it will count only in the CLAS major average, not the HIST major average. A held-with course will also only count towards program and breadth requirements of the subject code under which it is taken, unless it is cross-listed with the subject code of its' held-with course.