TS 640: The Mennonite Tradition in Historical Context
Winter 2022
@ 10:30am -11:50am (remote)  9:00 am to 11:50 (in person)

Instructor Information
Instructor: Troy Osborne
Office: CGR 2118
Office Hours: In this term, I will not have set office hours, but I will happily make an appointment.
Email: troy.osborne@uwaterloo.ca
(Email is the best way to contact me!)
Our virtual classroom will meet at my WebEx office Click here for my virtual office.

This is a survey of the development of the Anabaptist tradition (Mennonites, Amish, and Hutterites) from its medieval origins through its transformation into a global movement. Through the study of history, students will understand the forces and tensions that have shaped the Mennonites and other Anabaptists as they related to the changing contexts in the world around them. Throughout the course, students will attend to the advantages and weakness of using Anabaptist history to define its identity.

Course Objectives
Students will:
1. Develop an understanding of the Christian tradition, including history, theology, conflicts, and contexts. By studying the past, students will become aware of current issues in the global church (MTS Objectives 2, 3, 5, 6)
2. Develop a specialized knowledge of the of Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition within the broader history of Christianity (MTS Objectives 2, 3)
3. Develop the ability to identify themes of Mennonite identity as seen in its history and in the contemporary tradition (MTS Objectives 2, 3)
4. Acquire the methodology to write an analytical paper on a topic of their choosing (MTS Objectives 1, 3)
5. (a) Articulate judgments about the role of historical memory as a source of theological understanding
   (b) Integrate these judgments in their writing, teaching and preaching. (MTS Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4)

MTS Program Common Objectives
1. Demonstrate skills in effective communication.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of Christianity from a variety of disciplinary, theological, contextual, and experiential perspectives.
3. Engage scholarship in the relevant fields of theological studies through research and critical analysis of primary sources and contemporary scholarly debates.
4. Interpret Christian texts and traditions in light of present contexts.
5. Engage issues of justice and peace, and attend to voices of the marginalized.
6. Increase the capacity for intercultural competence.
7. Nurture personal formation through practices such as self-reflection, openness to others, leadership training, faith development, and participation in a diverse community of learning.
8. Enhance the capacity for life-long learning.
REQUIREMENTS:

a) **ACTIVE PARTICIPATION:** Students are expected to come to class prepared to actively discuss the readings. This means prepared to discuss the materials, raise interesting questions, and engage your colleagues about the topic. At the graduate level, attendance is expected at every session. While there is no participation mark for each session, I reserve the right to subtract up to 5% of the final mark for students who miss multiple sessions or do not engage in course material or class discussion at the expected level. (MTS Objective 7)

b) **READING JOURNAL/DISCUSSION SESSION** To encourage students to find time for regular reflection on their reading, students should prepare reading journals for each week’s readings. These will be submitted to dropbox before each synchronous session. The writing should be completed prose (more than bullet points), but the thinking can be exploratory. You could make connections between the different readings; raise questions that need clarity; discuss personal experiences with the themes; or identify major themes. Students will also take leadership for one reading and lead the discussion around the paper. Journal entries or discussion posts will be about 600-800 words (2-3 double-spaced pages) in length each. The lowest mark will be dropped. (25%) (MTS Objectives 3,4)

Note: I'm working at diversifying the background of the authors we read in this course. The good news is that this becomes easier every time I teach the course, but it remains a challenge for the history of the first 400 years of Mennonite history.

c) **GLOBAL MENNONITE BOOK REVIEW:** Students will write a brief 4-6 page essay analyzing one of the books in the Global Anabaptist History series in light of the themes discussed in this course. – (25%) (MTS Objectives 3,4,5)

d) **FINAL PROJECT**

a. **OPTION A** Students will prepare a concluding 15-20 page (4500-6000 word) essay on a particular theme of the course. The essay must have a thesis that makes an argument or takes a strong position on a topic. The essay will be evaluated for the content of the research and the quality of the writing. The paper will have a minimum of 8 sources, including articles from academic journals. A statement of the thesis and your plan for researching the topic will be due on March 17. Research papers must cite their works following the Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes. (MTS Objectives 1,2,3,4)

b. **OPTION B** Imagine a situation in your home church or another congregation in which you have been tasked with leading a six-week adult education class on the history of your congregation, but you’ve been asked to place it in the context of the larger sweep of Christian history. How would you design a course? Describe the setting in some detail. (Who is taking part? What background information do they bring?) What are your learning objectives for those six weeks? Given the nature of your students, how would you achieve those goals? What books would you read and why? What would you ask your members to read? You can write in a straightforward prose description of how you would design the course, but you can also include powerpoints, handouts, syllabi, etc.... My hope is that this exercise is something that you might use in the future. (MTS Objectives 1,2,3,4,8)

c. **OPTION C: SUMMATIVE PAPER** For this option, students will write a 12-17 page essay that examines in more depth a theme or topic related to this course. Note: While this isn’t a “research” paper, you must integrate the readings and topics from the term.

FORM:

i. Option 1: In the first week of this course, we discussed two articles (Williams and Outler) that argued that history is an important source for Christian Reflection. In this
final paper, agree or disagree with the following, “Christian history is an important source for theological reflection in the twenty-first century.”

ii. Option 2: Choose a theme from Anabaptist/Mennonite history, (separation, discipline, scripture) and trace the way that it has changed during the last 500 years.

iii. Option 3: What have you learned about Anabaptists and Mennonites over the last 500 years that you have valued, and what parts would you critique?

1. AUDIENCE: Write the paper for an educated reader with a broad understanding of the main narrative of Christian history. The paper must be written in a formal or semi-formal academic style. In other words, strive towards an academic style, but you may also interject first person observations.

Due during exam period: 50%

Covid-19 contingencies

If you are unwell or need to isolate when we are in person, please let the instructor know ahead of time. Remember, that you can drop one of the reading reflections with no penalty. If we are in person, you can be provided with videos of ‘lectures' from remote iterations of the course.

If the instructor needs to isolate, but is otherwise well, we will meet remotely for the class session following the patter that we did in the beginning of the term.

POLICIES:

Attendance: Excused absences are those caused by documented illness, family/personal emergencies, or participation in college-sponsored activities. (The supervisor of the activities must provide a letter stating the dates, times, and details of the absences.) In the case of excused absences, it will always be possible to make-up exams, quizzes, or papers. Up to three excused absences per semester are acceptable. If you will have to miss more than this, see me as soon as possible. If you are unable to make one of our scheduled synchronous meetings, you will still be able (and required) to fulfil the learning goals through an alternate means.

Read the course materials: The literature and background material we read will provide you with the common ground upon which we base our conversations. Without that common ground, our conversations will lose some of their richness. You are have read the materials before our synchronous time together.

Late Work: In order that you receive prompt feedback on your work, I encourage you to complete all 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 everyday that it is late. A grade that would have been a B will become a B- 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.

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. Check the Office of Academic Integrity website for more information.

DISCIPLINE

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity for
[more information.] 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 instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

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. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

APPEALS
A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals.

ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Note for students with disabilities: AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, 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 AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

The following texts are suggested for the book review due the last week of term:
Students should purchase or check out one of the following:

- Lapp/Snyder, eds., Anabaptist Songs in African Hearts [Africa] (Good Books/Pandora, 2006).
- Prieto, Mission and Migration [Latin America] (Good Books/Pandora, 2010).
- Asheervadam et al., Churches engage Asian Traditions [Asia] (Good Books/Pandora, 2011).
- Or another book with the instructor’s approval

Online readings
[E-RESERVE] – Articles or documents available electronically through the library’s website
It will be important/helpful/necessary for you to have the documents handy to look at in our discussions together.

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| 3    | January 19       | Swiss and south German Anabaptism | Michael Sattler, “Schleitheim Articles and Congregational Order [Learn.uwaterloo.ca]  
Conrad Grebel, “Grebel to Müntzer” [learn.uwaterloo.ca]  
Bender, Harold S. "Conrad Grebel, the Founder of Swiss Anabaptism." *Church History* 7, no. 2 (Jun 01, 1938): 157-178. [E-RESERVES]  
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<td>January 26</td>
<td>Dutch-North German Anabaptism</td>
<td>Obbe Philips, “Confession” in <em>Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers</em>, ed. George H. Williams, (Westminster, 1957) 204-225. <a href="#">E-Reserves</a></td>
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| 5    | February 2       | Martyrdom as Renewal | In *The Martyrs Mirror*, feel free to browse, but read the stories of  
|      |                  |       | + Dirk Willems (741-742)  
|      |                  |       | + Maeyken Wens (977-982)  
|      |                  |       | Gregory, Brad. *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe*. (Cambridge, 1999), 197-249. (E-Reserve) (Read for background context)  
|      |                  |       | “Right Remembering in Anabaptist-Lutheran Relations” [learn.uwaterloo.ca]  
|      |                  |       | Modern Martyr Stories  
<p>|      |                  |       | Read one or two stories from this effort to compile stories of recent Anabaptist martyrs at <a href="http://www.martyrstories.org">www.martyrstories.org</a> Come prepared to share your response to the stories (and the project in general) with the rest of the class |</p>
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| 7    | February 16      | Old Order as Renewal | Kraybill, Johnson-Wiener and Nolt, “European Origins,” in *The Amish*, pp. 24-36 [E-Reserves]
<p>|      |                   |       | Donald Kraybill, “The Quiltwork of Amish Culture,” in: <em>The Riddle of Amish Culture</em>, 27-53. [E-RESERVES] |
|      |                   |       | Sources on Discipline in: Hostetler, ed. <em>Amish Roots</em>, pp. 84-93. [E-RESERVES] |
|      |                   |       | Royden Loewen, &quot;To the Ends of the Earth: an Introduction to the Conservative Low German Mennonites in the Americas&quot; <em>Mennonite Quarterly Review</em> 82, no. 3 (July 2008), 427-448. [E-RESERVES] |
|      | February 19-27    | No Class, Reading Week | No information provided |</p>
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| 9    | March 2         | **Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism as Renewal**  
Mennonite scholars have seen Evangelicalism as either an outside infiltration of or an ally with Anabaptist/Mennonite values. What has been the relationship of Mennonites with Evangelicals and how has it changed over time?  
PAPER TOPIC DUE Reflection Due | Schlabach, Theron F. “Reveille for Die Stillen im Lände: a Stir Among Mennonites in the Late Nineteenth Century: Awakening or Quickening, Revival or Acculturation?” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 51, no. 3 (July 1, 1977): 213–226. [ERESERVES](#)  
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| 10   | March 9          | History as Renewal | C. Henry Smith, *Mennonites in History* (Scottdale, 1907), 6-41. [E-Reserves]  
Harold S. Bender, “The Anabaptist Vision”; *Church History* 13, no. 1 (March 1944), 3-24. Or [here](#).  
Steven Siebert, “Modernity’s Long Shadow: The Banishment of the body and the Suppression of Memory in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective,” *MQR* 81, no. 3 (July 2007): 399-426; [E-Reserves] |
Felipe Hinojosa, “Does the Future Church have a History?” Anabaptist Historians.  
Bergen, Jeremy. “Reframing Anabaptism” |

**PROPOSAL FOR FINAL PROJECT DUE**
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<td>Reflection Due</td>
<td>Choose a history of a global Mennonite or Anabaptist movement and report on it.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>Towards a Global Anabaptist History: BOOK REVIEW DUE</td>
<td>What have been the critical issues of Mennonites from across the globe? How does an awareness of their history shape our understanding of Mennonite identity?</td>
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|      |                  | **No IN PERSON Class.** | **Timothy Epp. "Anabaptist-Black Interaction in Upper Canada: An Initial Reconnaissance." *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 2013.**  
**Sam Steiner. “Mennonites, Slavery and Black Immigrants to Canada.” *In Search of Promised Lands* (blog), April 20, 2015.**  
**Sam Steiner. “Ontario Mennonites and Aboriginal Residential Schools,” *In Search of Promised Lands* (blog), June 8, 2015.** |
|      | March 30         |                  | |

I need to be at a conference this week, so I've decided to treat the occasion as a 'guest lecturer' opportunity. I'm asking you to watch the 2022 Sawatsky lecture and Q&A at 7:00 pm on Thursday evening of **March 24**. If you have evening commitments already, the event will be recorded and livestreamed.
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<td>• REFLECTION DUE ON PRESENTATION AND/OR READINGS</td>
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**FINAL PROJECT DUE, APRIL 15: 4:00 pm**

**Territorial Acknowledgement**
Conrad Grebel University College and the University of Waterloo acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.