

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 patten 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:

- Hoekema/Jecker, eds., *Testing Faith and Tradition* [Europe] (Good Books/Pandora, 2006).
- 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).
- Ojwang, Francis S. *Forward in Faith: History of the Kenya Mennonite Church: A Seventy-Year Journey 1942-2012* Nairobi, 2015.
- Hinojosa, Felipe, *Latino Mennonites: Civil Rights, Faith, and Evangelical Culture* Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press 2014.
- Kanagy, Conrad L. *Winds of the Spirit: A Profile of Anabaptist Churches in the Global South*. Harrisonburg, Va. ; Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 2012.
- Sauder, James. *Surviving, Thriving, & Multiplying: Three Decades of Growth in the Honduras Mennonite Church 1950-1980*. Morgantown, PA: Masthof Press, 2018.
- Yoder, Lawrence M. *The Muria Story: A History of the Chinese Mennonite Churches in Indonesia*. Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2006.
- Moore, Charles E., ed. *Bearing Witness : Stories of Martyrdom and Costly Discipleship*. Walden, New York: Plough Publishing House, 2016.
- MacMaster, Richard K. (Richard Kerwin), and Donald R. Jacobs. *A Gentle Wind of God : The Influence of the East Africa Revival*. Scottsdale, Pa. ; Herald Press, c2006.
- Or another book with the instructor’s approval

Online readings

[E-RESERVE] – Articles or documents available electronically through the library’s website

[learn.uwaterloo.ca]—Web-based documents whose links are available through the course website

It will be important/helpful/necessary for you to have the documents handy to look at in our discussions together.

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
1	January 5	<p>Course Introduction</p> <p>Why should Christians study the past? What are potential pitfalls in doing so?</p>	<p>Williams, Rowan. <i>Why Study the Past?: The Quest for the Historical Church</i>. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 2005. Page 1-31 [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Outler, Albert Cook. "Theodosius' Horse : Reflections on the Predicament of the Church Historian." <i>Church History</i> 57 (1988): 9–19. [E-RESERVES]</p>
	January 12	<p>Europe's Reformations</p> <p>This week we study the origins of the Reformation. We will examine the theological influences that ultimately influenced the Anabaptists movement.</p> <p>To which different authorities do Luther, Karlstadt, and the Peasants appeal as justification for their arguments?</p> <p>Reflection Due</p>	<p>Martin Luther, "Freedom of a Christian" "Preface to the New Testament" in Janz, Denis. <i>A Reformation Reader: Primary Texts With Introductions</i>. 2nd ed. Fortress Press, 2008. pp. 105-116. [E RESERVES]</p> <p>Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt Argues against Images (1522) [External Webpage]</p> <p>Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants [External Webpage]</p> <p>Martin, Dennis D. "Nothing New Under the Sun: Mennonites and History." <i>Conrad Grebel Review</i> 5, no. 1 (Winter 1987): 1–27. [E-RESERVES]</p>

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
3	January 19	<p>Swiss and south German Anabaptism</p> <p>According to the primary sources, what was the nature of early Anabaptism in Switzerland and Germany? (What were the issues that motivated them?)</p> <p>How are Bender and Snyder's descriptions of the Swiss movement similar and different?</p> <p>Reflection Due</p>	<p>Michael Sattler, "Schleitheim Articles and Congregational Order" [Learn.uwaterloo.ca]</p> <p>Conrad Grebel, "Grebel to Müntzer" [learn.uwaterloo.ca]</p> <p>Hubmaier and Denck, "On the Sword," in <i>Anabaptism in Outline</i>, ed. Walter Klaassen (Herald Press, 1981), 271-273. [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Arnold Snyder, "Mysticism and the Shape of Anabaptist Spirituality," in <i>Commoners and Community</i>, ed. C. Arnold Snyder (Pandora Press, 2002) 195-215. [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Bender, Harold S. "Conrad Grebel, the Founder of Swiss Anabaptism." <i>Church History</i> 7, no. 2 (Jun 01, 1938): 157-178. [E-RESERVES]</p> <p>C. Arnold Snyder, "Sattler's View of the Church," <i>The Life and Thought of Michael Sattler</i> (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1984), 184-197. [E-RESERVES]</p>

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
4	January 26	<p>Dutch-North German Anabaptism</p> <p>According to the primary sources, what was the nature of Anabaptism in north west Europe? How did it change and continue after the events of Münster in 1535?</p> <p>Reflection Due</p>	<p>Obbe Philips, "Confession" in <i>Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers</i>, ed. George H. Williams, (Westminster, 1957) 204-225. [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Menno Simons, "The New Birth," <i>Complete Writings of Menno Simons</i>, Verduin tr. and Wenger ed (Herald Press, 1984)" 89-102. [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Dirk Philips, "The Incarnation," <i>The Writings of Dirk Philips</i>, eds. C. J. Dyck, William E. Keeney, Alvin J. Beachy (Herald Press, 1992) 134-151. [E-RESERVES]</p> <p>Alastair Hamilton, "The Development of Dutch Anabaptism in the light of the European Magisterial and Radical Reformation," in <i>Martyr to Muppie</i>, eds. Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, Piet Visser (Amsterdam University Press, 1994), 3-14. [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Sjouke Voolstra, "The Art of Oblivion," in <i>Menno Simons: His Image and Message</i>, (Bethel College, 1997), 18-34. [E-Reserves]</p>

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
5	February 2	<p>Martyrdom as Renewal</p> <p>What was the experience and theology of martyrdom in the seventeenth century? How do you think churches should remember the martyrs' history today?</p> <p>Reflection Due</p>	<p>In <i>The Martyrs Mirror</i>, feel free to browse, but read the stories of</p> <p>+Dirk Willems (741-742)</p> <p>+Maeyken Wens (977-982)</p> <p>Gregory, Brad. <i>Salvation at Stake : Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe</i>. (Cambridge, 1999), 197-249. (E-Reserve) (Read for background context)</p> <p>“Right Remembering in Anabaptist-Lutheran Relations” [learn.uwaterloo.ca]</p> <p>Krehbiel, Stephanie. “Staying Alive: How Martyrdom Made Me a Warrior.” <i>Mennonite Life</i> vol. 61 no. 4, no. December 2006 (February 4, 2015). Link on Learn.uwaterloo.ca.</p> <p>Modern Martyr Stories</p> <p>Read one or two stories from this effort to compile stories of recent Anabaptist martyrs at www.martyrstories.org Come prepared to share your response to the stories (and the project in general) with the rest of the class</p>

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
6	February 9	<p>17th and 18th Century Mennonites: Assimilation and Pietism – Threats or Renewal?</p> <p>Is there a moment when the Anabaptists are no longer “radical”? Is assimilation always a sign of failure of the church? How do the Anabaptists’ descendants adapt to toleration or continued persecution? Did Pietism revive or threaten the identity of Mennonites and other Anabaptists?</p> <p>Reflection Due</p>	<p>Irvin and Ava Horst, trans. “Simplicity Laments Corrupted Manners,” <i>Mennonite Life</i> July, 1955): 129-131. [external webpage]</p> <p>Osborne, Troy. “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 (April 2014): 195–218. [E-Reserves]</p> <p>John D. Roth, “Pietism and the Anabaptist Soul,” in <i>The Dilemma of Anabaptist Piety</i>, ed. Stephen L. Longenecker (Bridgewater: Forum for Religious Studies, 1997): 17-33, 211-14 [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Levi Miller, “I am a Mennonite, not an Anabaptist,” <i>Gospel Herald</i> 80 (7 July 1987): 482-4. [E-Reserves]</p>

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
7	February 16	<p>Old Order as Renewal</p> <p>In North America, the fastest growing Anabaptist group is the Old Order Amish. In what ways do the Amish (and other 'plain' groups) represent the ideals of sixteenth-century Anabaptism? Are they a model for other Anabaptists to emulate?</p> <p>Reflection Due</p>	<p>Kraybill, Johnson-Wiener and Nolt, "European Origins," in <i>The Amish</i>, pp. 24-36 [E-RESERVES]</p> <p>Donald Kraybill, "The Quiltwork of Amish Culture," in: <i>The Riddle of Amish Culture</i>, 27-53. [E-RESERVES]</p> <p>Sources on Discipline in: Hostetler, ed. <i>Amish Roots</i>, pp. 84-93. [E-RESERVES]</p> <p>Royden Loewen, "To the Ends of the Earth: an Introduction to the Conservative Low German Mennonites in the Americas" <i>Mennonite Quarterly Review</i> 82, no. 3 (July 2008), 427-448. [E-RESERVES]</p> <p>Steven Nolt, "Amish Stories, Images, and Identities: Two Windows and a Mirror on Contemporary Conversations" <i>Conrad Grebel Review</i> 33. 1 (Winter 2015) 4-28. [E-RESERVES]</p>
	February 19-27	No Class, Reading Week	

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
9	March 2	<p>Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism as Renewal</p> <p>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?</p> <p>PAPER TOPIC DUE</p> <p>Reflection Due</p>	<p>Schlabach, Theron F. "Reveille for Die Stillen im Lände : a Stir Among Mennonites in the Late Nineteenth Century: Awakening or Quickening, Revival or Acculturation?" <i>Mennonite Quarterly Review</i> 51, no. 3 (July 1, 1977): 213–226. [ERESERVES]</p> <p>Steven M. Nolt. "Activist Impulses across Time: North American Evangelicalism and Anabaptism as Conversation Partners." In <i>The Activist Impulse: Essays on the Intersection of Evangelicalism and Anabaptism</i>, edited by Jared S. Burkholder and David C. Cramer. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012. [E-RESERVES]</p>

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
10	March 9	<p>History as Renewal</p> <p>In the twentieth century, Mennonite historians began shaping a ‘usable past’ from Anabaptist history in order to preserve a certain type of Mennonite identity. What have these historical visions shaped Mennonite identity, and what are the strengths and weakness of this approach to renewal and identity formation?</p> <p>Reflection Due</p>	<p>C. Henry Smith, <i>Mennonites in History</i> (Scottsdale, 1907), 6-41. [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Harold S. Bender, “The Anabaptist Vision,” <i>Church History</i> 13, no. 1 (March 1944), 3-24. Or here.</p> <p>Steve Dintamen, “The Spiritual Poverty of the Anabaptist Vision,” <i>CGR</i> 10.2 (Spring 1992): 205-208 [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Steven Siebert, “Modernity’s Long Shadow: The Banishment of the body and the Suppression of Memory in the <i>Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective</i>,” <i>MQR</i> 81, no. 3 (July 2007): 399-426; [E-Reserves]</p>
11	March 16	<p>Conceiving Anabaptist/Mennonite Identity in the Twenty-First Century</p> <p>This week’s readings represent various ways that contemporary writers have defined Mennonite identity. How do they understand Mennonite identity and what challenges do they see ahead?</p>	<p>Roth, John D. “The Challenge of Church Unity in the Anabaptist Tradition” <i>The Conrad Grebel Review</i> 31, no. 1 (Winter 2013): 5-23. [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Felipe Hinojosa, “Does the Future Church have a History?” Anabaptist Historians.</p> <p>Stuart Murray, “Anabaptism Today” in <i>The Naked Anabaptist</i>, (Scottsdale: 2010). [E-Reserves]</p> <p>Bergen, Jeremy. “Reframing Anabaptism”</p> <p>PROPOSAL FOR FINAL PROJECT DUE</p>

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
		Reflection Due	
12	March 23	<p>Towards a Global Anabaptist History: BOOK REVIEW DUE</p> <p>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?</p>	Choose a history of a global Mennonite or Anabaptist movement and report on it.
	March 30	<p><u>No IN PERSON Class.</u></p> <p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timothy Epp. "Anabaptist-Black Interaction in Upper Canada: An Initial Reconnaissance." <i>Journal of Mennonite Studies</i>, 2013. • Sam Steiner. "Mennonites, Slavery and Black Immigrants to Canada." <i>In Search of Promised Lands</i> (blog), April 20, 2015. • Sam Steiner. "Ontario Mennonites and Aboriginal Residential Schools," <i>In Search of Promised Lands</i> (blog), June 8, 2015.

Week	Synchronous Date	Topic	Readings Due
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REFLECTION DUE ON PRESENTATION AND/OR READINGS 	
			FINAL PROJECT DUE APRIL 15

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.