

CH/TH 3XB3 - BAPTIST HISTORY & THOUGHT

McMaster Divinity College

Spring/Summer Semester 2016

Hybrid Course

Instructor: Dr. Gordon L. Heath

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Specializations: Christian History and Thought, Pastoral Studies

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Baptists are one of the world's largest Protestant denominations, numbering close to 100,000,000 adherents. This course is an introduction to the history, doctrine, organization and style of Baptist congregational life and mission. It begins with the birth of the movement in the early 1600s in England, and continues to the present-day development of a global multi-ethnic movement. Special attention will be given to the development of Canadian Baptist churches, and cultural engagement in the twentieth century.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Knowing

- To survey the major ideas, personalities and developments in Baptist life.
- To provide an understanding of how the Baptists have grown and developed in a variety of countries and continents.
- To place the contemporary issues Baptists face within a broader historical context.
- To know how Baptists are similar to, and different from, other expressions of Christianity.

Being

- To gain practical insight into the work of being a leader within a local Baptist church.
- To understand the role of Baptist distinctives and practices in the development of effective ministry within the CBOQ.

Doing

- To develop skills in maintaining and nurturing a healthy, effective and personally satisfying vocation.

TEXTS:

- David Bebbington. *Baptists through the Centuries: A History of a Global People*. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2010.
- Harry Renfree. *Heritage and Horizon: The Baptist Story in Canada*. Mississauga. Canadian Baptist Federation, 1988.
- Norman H. Maring, *A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice*. (Revised Edition) Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1991.
- Gordon L. Heath. *Doing Church History: A User-friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity*. Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2008.
- *A Manual for Worship and Service*, Mississauga: All Canada Baptist Publications, 1998.

All required textbooks for this class and others at the Divinity College are available from READ-ON Books, and should be purchased at the beginning of the semester when READ-ON Books has its book table at the Divinity College (Room 218). Contact can be made by mail: 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9B 6E2; phone: 416-620-2934; fax: 416-622-2308; email: books@readon.ca;

website: www.readon.ca.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Online Engagement**

Students will complete weekly readings and post comments, as well as respond to posted comments by other students and professor. This is an important part of the class that allows for interaction and engagement by all.

- **Biographical Presentation**

Each student will present in class a ten-minute summary of a prominent Baptist's life and contribution. Please keep the following in mind as you prepare for your presentation. Students do not need to pass in their notes to the professor – but they do have to show him the notes before the presentation. Please have a handout for the class that includes a bibliography, outline and key information.

- **Resolving Board Issues**

Students are to prepare papers that resolve “board issues” discussed during the on-campus component to the class. Particular attention is to be paid to Baptist distinctives and context. Students will post their papers online and respond to comments from other students.

- **Research Paper**

This ten page research paper provides an opportunity for students to pursue an area of research that intrigues them. The topic for the paper should relate to the student's specialization. Results of research will be shared with the class at the end of the semester.

- ***Christian Thought and History Specialization***

The research for this specialization should focus on developing critical knowledge of Baptist history, or a deeper awareness of Baptist theology.

- ***Pastoral Studies Specialization***

Research for this specialization can go in one of two directions. First, it can focus on a theological construction of one's theological position in regards to an issue related to Baptist history and polity. Second, it can deal with developing a strategy for dealing with issues related to Baptist history and polity.

GRADING:

- Weekly Online Engagement: 40%
- Biography Class Presentation: 20%
- Resolving Board Issues: 10%
- Research Paper: 30%

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <https://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>.
- McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.
- Assignments must be submitted by 11:59pm on the day they are due. All other assignments will be considered to be late. Students may be exempted from the late penalty of 3% per day (not including weekends) if they attach to their assignment a letter explaining the genuine emergency that delayed them. Late assignments (even ones with an extension) will not receive comments and constructive criticism from the professor.
- Unless noted otherwise, all written work must conform to the MDC styleguide.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Online Component: April - May

This online component is comprised of students completing weekly readings, as well as online posting and responding to other student's posts.

Introduction to Class & Reformation Era

Baptist Origins and Beliefs

How Baptist Churches Work

- Confessions of Faith
- Covenant
- local church autonomy
- role of laity

Baptists in America & Canada

Baptists around the Globe

On Campus Component: May 9-10

This on-campus component is comprised of professor's lectures, student presentations, and group discussions.

Lecture: Common Baptist Practices

Lecture: Baptist Themes (TBD)

Board Discussions

Biographical Presentations

Online Component: May

This online component is comprised of students completing and posting assignments, as well as responding to other posted assignments.

Resolving Board Issues

Looking to the Future

This syllabus is for information only and remains the property of the respective professor. This syllabus is prepared with the best information available, but the professor reserves the right to change the content and format of the course.