

CTH/PTS 7701: DOCTRINE OF THE BRETHREN CHURCH

ASHLAND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Summer Session, June 19-23, Ashland Campus

8:30 AM – 4:00 PM, June 19-22; 8:30 AM – Noon, June 23

Dr. Dale R. Stoffer

Email: dstoffer@ashland.edu; Office Phone: 419-289-5985

I. Course Description

This course considers the background and development of Brethren doctrine in the Brethren movement generally and the Brethren Church specifically. Attention is given to the beginnings in Anabaptism and Pietism and to how Brethren doctrine has developed from the eighteenth century to the present.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

1. Not assessed in this course
2. Not assessed in this course
3. Not assessed in this course
- 4a. Identify the major themes of Brethren doctrine
- 4b. Reflect theologically on one of the key Brethren doctrines
- 4c. Articulate the key doctrines of Brethren thought
5. Not assessed in this course
6. Not assessed in this course

III. Course Requirements

A. Textbooks and other required resources

The following textbooks are required for the course:

Barnhart, Jason and Bill Ludwig, eds. *A Brethren Witness for the 21st Century*. N.p. [Ashland], n.d. [2014]. Available only from the Brethren National Office.

Stoffer, Dale R. *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines*. Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1989. ISBN: 0-936693-22-3. This book is currently out of print, but copies will be available in the seminary library and from other sources. Let me know if you have any difficulties obtaining a copy to use for the course.

Please also obtain the following documents from the Brethren National Office or from the Brethren Church website: www.brethrenchurch.org, then go to “About Us” and click on “Brethren Beliefs Booklet.”

A Centennial Statement. Ashland: Brethren Publishing Company, 1984.

How Brethren Understand God's Word. Ashland: The Brethren Church, Inc., 1993.

B. Attendance

According to the *Student Handbook*, attendance at all class sessions is expected, unless the professor has been notified in advance and has approved the absence. Students should be on time and should stay through the duration of all classes. Any student missing more than six class hours will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade, audit or withdraw from the class, or be penalized otherwise at the discretion of the professor.

C. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

1. Additional readings and class participation (10 points)

From the titles in the bibliography (it will be made available via email from the professor), the student will select and read at least 600 pages, keeping a log of this reading for submission by July 31 (the reading log is at the end of the syllabus). The readings should cover materials that are primarily doctrinal in nature (rather than historical).

The student is also to come to class each day prepared to share one question, one insight, and one observation from that day's readings and from any additional readings. The grade for the extra readings and class participation will be based on the reading log and the student's preparation and engagement with the material and with other students in the class.

2. Reflection on *A Brethren Witness for the 21st Century* (30 points)

Each student will write a 5-7 page study paper due July 31. The paper will be an expansion of one of the chapters in *A Brethren Witness for the 21st Century*, developing more fully the particular doctrinal concept from a biblical and Brethren perspective. It should incorporate insights from class lectures and course readings. The paper will follow Turabian format.

3. Paper on "The Uniqueness of the Brethren Church" (60 points)

The student will write a research paper on the topic "The Uniqueness of The Brethren Church." The purpose of the assignment is to demonstrate the student's skill in using course materials and outside reading (at least ten scholarly sources to be cited in the text). It should demonstrate the student's understanding of the relevant theological concepts in their historical/cultural contexts. It must include some reflection on how the topics make the Brethren

unique in relation to other theological traditions/perspectives. The 12-15 page, double-spaced paper will be due no later than July 31. The paper should follow Turabian format.

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Percent of Final Grade</i>
Additional readings and class participation	4a	10%
Reflection on <i>A Brethren Witness for the 21st Century</i>	4b	30%
Paper on “The Uniqueness of the Brethren Church”	4a, 4c	60%

IV. Course Schedule

<i>Day #</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Lecture/Topic</i>	<i>Readings/Assignments</i>
1	June 19	Introduction Hermeneutical Considerations Discussion of <i>How Brethren Understand God’s Word</i> and <i>A Centennial Statement</i>	Read: <i>How Brethren Understand God’s Word</i> and <i>A Centennial Statement</i> ; Barnhart and Ludwig, <i>A Brethren Witness</i> , pp. 13-69
2	June 20	Overview of Anabaptism and Pietism	Stoffer, pp. 1-63
3	June 21	Doctrine of God Doctrines of Creation, Humanity, and Sin	Stoffer, pp. 65-131
4	June 22	Christology and the Atonement Salvation	Read: Stoffer, pp. 133-194 Barnhart and Ludwig, <i>A Brethren Witness</i> , pp. 115-173
5	June 23	The Church Eschatology	Read: Stoffer, pp. 195-248 Barnhart and Ludwig, <i>A Brethren Witness</i> , pp. 72-114

V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning

Some of the basic resources for Brethren studies are *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, from Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., and the research journal of the Church of the Brethren, *Brethren Life and Thought*. For online ordering, go to www.brethrenencyclopedia.org and to www.bethanyseminary.edu/node/43. Additional resources are available on the Brethren Encyclopedia website.

VI. Seminary Guidelines

A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy

Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary's core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and to respect ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one's own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity requires that each student will use one's own capabilities to achieve one's fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the *Student Handbook*.

B. Seminary Writing Consultation Service

The Seminary Writing Consultation Service can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing assignments in your graduate Seminary classes. Masters-qualified Consultants can advise you online or in person. E-mail your request for assistance to swc_group@ashland.edu

Include the following information: Your name, the course number and professor's name, a brief description of the assignment, and your timeline.

For more information, visit: <http://seminary.ashland.edu/services/student-services/seminary-writing-consultation-services>

C. Students with Disabilities

It is Ashland University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please contact Disability Services at [419-289-5904](tel:419-289-5904), or send an email to dservices@ashland.edu. The Disability Services office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

D. ATS Grading Scale

Grade	Percent	Description
A	97-100	Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and completing assignments, positive contributions verbalized in class.
A-	92-96	
B+	89-91	
B	86-88	Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.

B-	83-85	
C+	80-82	
C	77-79	Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.
C-	74-76	
D+	71-73	
D	68-70	Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.
D-	65-67	
F	Below 65	Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

VII. Bibliography (available via email)

READING LOG

NAME _____

<u>Author's Name</u>	<u>Book Title</u>	<u>Pages Read</u>	<u>Cumulative Total</u>
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