FORGIVENESS and RECONCILIATION
Course Syllabus - Graduate

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COURSE PURPOSE DESCRIPTION and OBJECTIVES

This course is a review of the recent psychological literature and theological understandings regarding forgiveness and reconciliation. Students who complete the course will be able to

1. define forgiveness from multiple perspectives, including psychological, theological, and cultural,
2. identify the needs and motivations for forgiveness, non-forgiveness, and the consequences of each,
3. differentiate between forgiveness and reconciliation and discuss reconciliation options,
4. discuss the forgiveness process as defined by the research programs of Enright and Worthington,
5. define a process for self-forgiveness,
6. discuss postmodern & phenomenological forgiveness models,
7. identify and discuss the unique factors involved in forgiveness and reconciliation in diverse populations,
8. discuss the strategies and outcomes of multiple reconciliation projects, and
9. develop and present a plan for forgiveness and reconciliation for a problem of their choice.

REQUIREMENTS

The course will involve readings, teachings, discussions, videos, and project presentations. Consistent class attendance and participation is required.

TEXTS:

7. Additional readings list will be available online. Details will be provided during the first evening of class.

PAPERS:

Three papers are required (in addition to the final project). Each paper will require the students’ reflection and consideration of specific material discussed in class as well as readings and/or other materials that are part of class. In your reflection, you may consider and comment on the following:

- Thoughts or insights that are new to you or strike you as significant – discuss why
- Questions that arise from the material
- Observation on how the material and/or insights pertain to ministry in the church and/or world
- Observations on how the material and/or insights pertain to your personal life
- What is God saying to you through the material and/or insights?

Papers are to be submitted as an attachment by email to the following email address: drgreen@tiu.edu in the following form: Last-name First-name paper x.docx (or .doc). For example, for the second paper, I would name the file with my paper as follows: Green Dan paper 2.docx.

**Paper 1:** The events of October, 2006 at West Nickel Mines School, Lancaster County, PA grabbed the world’s attention. The murder of 5 Amish girls and suicide of the assailant was shocking; the response of the Amish community was equally shocking. Your paper will explore the nature of the forgiveness offered and your reactions to this.

**Paper 2:** Dr. Enright and Dr. Worthington both offer models of the forgiveness process. Each model is well supported by research and each model was developed with reference to both psychological and theological understandings. This paper will compare and contrast these two models, including your insights into the theological and spiritual elements of each model.

**Paper 3:** Wiesenthal, in his book The Sunflower, has written a story of his experiences in a death camp in World War II and a request for forgiveness that he encountered. He concluded that story with the following: “You, who have just read this sad and tragic episode in my life, can mentally change places with me and ask yourself the crucial question, ‘What would I have done?’” The paper will be your response to this question. In your response, identify what you hypothesize you would have done and how you came to that decision.

FINAL PROJECT:

Develop a comprehensive plan for forgiveness and reconciliation.

- Define the people involved, including their relationships with each other, the nature of the wrongs, damages, and wounds. Your people group may include any of the following: family, company, church, ethnic group, community, nation, or some other organization of people.
- Outline a forgiveness process.
- Define a process for reconciliation
- Address the issues of justice, grace, and mercy.
- Identify resources needed for the implementation of your plan
- Identify potential problems in the forgiveness and reconciliation process and recommended responses to these problems.
- This information will be communicated in both a paper due on the last day of class and a class presentation (approximately 20 minutes). Presentations will occur during the final class sessions.
GRADING

The final course grade will be determined by the sum total of scores earned on the three papers (each paper worth a maximum of 20 points) and the Final Project (possible 40 points).

Schedule:

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<tr>
<th>Date/2014</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08.31</td>
<td>Introduction: What is Forgiveness?</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.07</td>
<td>Forgiveness Defined</td>
<td>(6) Intro; (1) 1-3; R1; R2</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.14</td>
<td>Just Forgiveness</td>
<td>(5) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.21</td>
<td>Forgiveness in Religious Traditions</td>
<td>R3; R4; R5; R6; R7</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Amish Forgiveness</td>
<td>R8; R9; R10 Video in Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.28</td>
<td>Enright Model of Forgiveness</td>
<td>(1) 3-19 Paper 1 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.05</td>
<td>Enright Model of Forgiveness</td>
<td>(6) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.12</td>
<td>Worthington Model of Forgiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.19</td>
<td>Reconciliation</td>
<td>(6) 7, 8, 9, 10 Paper 2 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.26</td>
<td>Forgiveness of Self</td>
<td>(4)</td>
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<td>11.02</td>
<td>Postmodern &amp; Phenomenological Models</td>
<td>(2) 1-7</td>
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<td>11.09</td>
<td>Discussion of the Sunflower</td>
<td>(3) Paper 3 Due</td>
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<td>(3) Book One; Book Two</td>
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<td>11.16</td>
<td>Application: Family, Children, Community</td>
<td>(1) 18; (4) 6, 7, 8, 9</td>
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<td>11.23</td>
<td>NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.30</td>
<td>Application: Truth and Reconciliation Process</td>
<td>Video in Class</td>
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<td>12.07</td>
<td>Project Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.14</td>
<td>Project Presentations</td>
<td>Project Paper Due</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

READINGS:

ADDITIONAL READINGS:


SELECTED REFERENCES


Enright, R. D. (2004). *Rising above the storm clouds.* Washington, DC: Magination Press (an imprint of the American Psychological Association; this is a children’s picture book on forgiveness with notes for parents). Book has also been translated into Arabic.


**Websites**

A Campaign for Forgiveness Research (Robert Enright): [www.forgiving.org](http://www.forgiving.org)


Moving Forward (Everett Worthington) [www.forgiveself.com](http://www.forgiveself.com)

John Templeton Foundation: [www.templeton.org/grantopp/forgivebiblindex.asp](http://www.templeton.org/grantopp/forgivebiblindex.asp)

Heartland Forgiveness Project: [www.raven.cc.ukans.edu/~forgive/index.html](http://www.raven.cc.ukans.edu/~forgive/index.html)


New Life Resources, Inc.: [www.newliferesourcesinc.com](http://www.newliferesourcesinc.com)


Stanford Forgiveness Project: [www.stanford.edu/~alexsox/forgiveness_article.htm](http://www.stanford.edu/~alexsox/forgiveness_article.htm)
Tutu Global Forgiveness Challenge: http://forgivenesschallenge.com/