PM 607 Forgiveness in the Counseling Process

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A word to the wise – complete as much of the text reading as possible BEFORE the class begins. Chapters from different texts will comprise the reading focus for daily themes. If your time is limited, I suggest starting with *Embodying Forgiveness* as it is one of the “thicker” texts for the course.

**Course Description:**
This course explores the theological, psychological, and clinical components of forgiveness and reconciliation. Interpersonal and intrapersonal elements of forgiveness receive particular emphasis. Procedures for implementing forgiveness in pastoral and clinical counseling settings are reviewed.

**Course Goals**
At the completion of this course you will:
1. Articulate your integration of forgiveness, repentance, and reconciliation from personal experience.
2. Explicate forgiving, repenting, and reconciling processes from biblical contexts and theological perspectives.
3. Describe the psychological foundations of forgiving, repenting, and reconciling.
4. Apply counseling strategies to your own situations and to case studies.
5. Participate in class through discussions, activities, and devotionals.

**Attendance Policy**
Intensive classes are --- well, intensive. Plan your schedule accordingly. If you miss more than 7 hours of class, you will not receive a passing grade.

**Required Course Texts:**

Course Readings Packet and class handout packet—purchase at Cokesbury Bookstore before class starts.

**Course Requirements:**
   When you turn in your last paper, you will also submit a reading report. Your report will document what you read for class. Credit will be proportioned to the amount of reading completed. If you do not submit the report you will not receive credit for your reading. It is your responsibility to remember to turn in your reading report. Late reading reports will **not** be accepted. Total required reading equals 1130 pages (I added up the pages for all required reading on your behalf ☺).

2. *Opening Devotionals and Class Assignments* (30%)
   Devotionals [5 %]. Each day one of our small groups will lead us in a brief worship experience to open class. The worship experience should tie together that day’s content, the designated chapter from Nouwen, and class member’s lives. Devotionals will run no shorter than 10 minutes and no longer than 12 minutes. I invite you to use all of the technological support that ATS has to offer to lead us into the Lord’s presence.
**Pre-Class Assignments [25 %]**. You will complete a variety of pre-class assignments during the course that will prepare you for class discussions. You will use these TYPED assignments in class and then submit them for grading. No late papers will be accepted.

**N.B.:** The two most time-consuming assignments are due on Jan. 11 (Biblical Forgiveness Episode Analysis) & Jan. 16 (Theological Analysis Assignment).

**Class Discussion.** There is nothing neutral about forgiveness conversation. They tend to generate some intensity because we are talking about painful things. Several ground rules will help us become a conversational community of care:

- No one needs to "fix" any one else in class. Everyone needs to be "heard" and feel that they have been "understood."
- We will protect one another's stories by agreeing to keep class conversations confidential.
- We will respect one another's wisdom to refrain from disclosing some personal information that is too sensitive or too painful for class-level discussion.
- We will recognize that stuff about "forgiveness" isn't necessarily set in stone. We will listen respectfully when others have a differing experience or understanding from our own.

3. **Case Study Analysis.** January 24, 2001 by 4:00 p.m. (30%)  
Think of this case study analysis like an open-book, comprehensive, applied exam. You are free to consult with one another but I ask you to write your own case study analysis. You will analyze a forgiveness case study from several perspectives: moral perspective, biblical/theological, psychological, and clinical. Remember - this is your final exam. I will evaluate your exam on the degree to which you demonstrate your understanding of the text and lecture material as they apply to the case.

Submit your TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED case analysis to the Counseling and Pastoral Care Area Office by 4:00 p.m., on Wednesday, January 24, 2001.  
DO NOT SPO YOUR PAPER TO ME. The grade on late papers (4:01 p.m. starts the late period) will be reduced by 1/3 letter grade for every day late.

4. **Final Project**  
Forgiveness Workshop OR Two Book Reports – February 2, 2001 12:00 noon (30%)

You can choose between creating a 4-hour forgiveness workshop portfolio or writing two book reports. Do not SPO your projects to me. Bring them to the Counseling and Pastoral Care Area Office no later than 12 noon. The grade on late papers (12:01 p.m. starts the late period) will be reduced by 1/3 letter grade for every day late, including the weekend days.

I would consider other project ideas that you may have. However, you need to discuss your alternative idea with me no later than the end of class on January 12, 2001.

**Forgiveness Workshop Portfolio**  
Create a 4-hour forgiveness workshop. Specify your target audience (teens, adults in general, single parents, divorce recovery group, etc.). Your portfolio should be detailed enough so that I would not have to do any more work if I were going to present your workshop.

Your workshop portfolio will include:

- A minimum of three learning goals and your rationale for each goal (1 page). Your subsequent content should clearly align with one or more of your goals.
- Schedule for the 4-hour workshop (1 page)
- List of materials that you will need to present this workshop package (1 page)
Text for 2 different 25 minute lectures you would present OR one 25-minute lecture and one Bible study.

**Lecture.** Prepare the lecture text as if you were writing a research paper. Lectures should not be a reformulation of the lectures from class, but an original creation of your own. You will include in-text citations for work quoted or works consulted (journal articles and books) AND a reference list. Ten (10) pages of text (12 point font, double space, 1" margins) = 25 minute presentation. You may use course texts as part of your reference list, but you must also include four additional sources per lecture beyond our texts.

**Bible Study.** Prepare instructions for a 30-40 minute small group Bible Study, including discussion answers for questions.

Interactive ORIGINAL experiences for participants (in other words, you just can't duplicate what we did in class).
- Includes instructions and rationale for activities that you plan to use during the workshop
- Description and rationale for any movie clips you would use
- Words and rationale for any music you would include

**Two Book Reports**


**Theological**


Battle describes Desmond Tutu's theology of reconciliation as set within the South African context.


Crysdale discusses forgiveness within the context of an evangelical and feminist perspective.

Volf, M. *Exclusion and Embrace*

Volf applies the metaphor of exclusion and embrace to unpack forgiveness and reconciliation in the midst of the Serbian/Croatian conflict.

**Psychological**


Flanigan summarizes her findings on forgiveness based on an extensive interview process. Guidelines for implementation are included.


Hargrave describes a family systems treatment approach to forgiveness.


Harvey & Benner present a short-term structured model of forgiveness counseling specifically geared for pastors who also counsel.


Greg Jones takes Smedes to task in *Embodying Forgiveness*. Why not read him for yourself and see whether or not you agree with Jones' evaluation.
Bibliography


Theological Analysis

Directions: Prepare answers to the questions that follow in a 3-4 page, double-spaced, typed paper. Be sure to include a reference list and in-text citations.

1. Read Jones, Part II. {I realize that this is heavy reading, hang in there!} Describe how Jones uses the Trinity as his theological basis for forgiveness?

2. What is the relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation for Jones?

3. What is the relationship between forgiveness, reconciliation, and community for Jones?

4. What implications for our own forgiving and reconciling does Jones draw from his theological reflections?

5. Read Augsburger, Ch. 7. What claims does Augsburger make about the theological foundations of forgiveness?

6. What is the relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation for Augsburger?

7. What is the relationship between forgiveness, reconciliation, and community for Augsburger?

8. Create a list of questions you would like to ask these authors about their theological positions on forgiveness. You can ask for clarification of a point or you can frame a challenge to their position in the form of a question. (i.e., To Jones: Do you think forgiveness belongs to the individual or the relationship?)
Scriptural Forgiveness Analysis

Directions: Each member of your small group will choose one of the focus scriptures for analysis. Use the following questions to unpack the process of forgiveness and reconciliation in your passage. Prepare a three-five page summary of your findings that you will turn in for grading. All papers are to be double-spaced, 12 point font, 1" margins. Include your reference list and in-text citations in your paper.

1. What is the context of this portion of Scripture (i.e., in the Chapter, Book, Testament)?

2. What historical/cultural factors are at play in this biblical forgiveness episode?

3. What word is used for “forgiveness” and what does it mean? What metaphor is implied? How is reconciliation portrayed? What is the link between forgiving, repenting, and reconciling?

4. Describe the offense in terms of “who did what to whom? What were the consequences of the offense to (a) the injured party; (b) the wrong doer; (c) significant others? What role does the larger community play in this episode?

5. Use Brakenhielm's model to analyze the kind of forgiveness the offender sought and the kind of forgiveness the offended was willing to offer [See Augsburger, pg. 18]

6. Where would you locate the episode in terms of Veenstra's conceptualizations?

7. How did their relationship history play a part in this forgiveness event?

8. What issues of justice and mercy are evidenced [refer to yesterday's class].

9. What principles of forgiveness can you imply from this portion of Scripture?

Scripture Passages:

- Genesis 32, 33
  - Jacob & Esau

- Genesis 43-45, 50
  - Joseph, et al. [you may need to read more to fill in]

- Matthew 18
  - Especially parable of unforgiving servant

- Luke 15
  - Prodigal Son parable
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<td>Defining Forgiveness</td>
<td>McCullough, et al., Ch. 1, 3</td>
<td>Toddy</td>
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<td>Toddy</td>
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<td>ST:DS9 Fury to Forgiveness - 1</td>
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<td>McCullough, et al., Ch. 2, 4, Augsburger, Preface, Ch. 5, Jones, Ch. 3: Marty</td>
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<td>Rungs of Blame (Flanigan, pg. 201-202) Consider the Balance (McC. Pg. 34)</td>
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<td>Jan. 10</td>
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<td>Biblical Foundations</td>
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<td>Forgiveness Meditation</td>
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**Jan. 5**  
**Martin Luther King Day - NO CLASS**

**Jan. 16**  
**Theological Foundations**  
Jones Ch. 1, 4, 5, 6; Augsburger 1, 7 Volf article: Moon  
Prodigal, Ch. 6  
Theological Analysis Assign.  
Sandage  
Processing a Letter of Lament  
Touched by Angel

**Jan. 17**  
**Processes that Nurture Forgiveness**  
Augsburger Ch. 2; Holeman 1999  
McCullough, et al., Ch. 8, 9, 10: 12  
Prodigal, Ch. 8  
Reflection Paper - McCullough exercise pg. 135 or 138  
Jones  
Narrative Counseling: Forgiving-ness Exercise  
The Mission Les Miserable

**Jan. 18**  
**Community**  
McCullough 15: Augsburger 7; Battle article: Jones Ch. 7 & article  
Prodigal, Ch. 9  
Practice case study - in class  
Augsburger  
Sister, I'm Sorry

**Jan. 19**  
**Reconciliation**  
McCullough, et al., Ch. 5, 6, 13, 14; Augsburger, Ch. 3; Jones, Ch 8: Holeman Reconciliation article Worthington & Drinkard  
Conclusion  
Practice case study - in class  
Worthington  
BRIDGE model Couple's forgiveness exercise  
Pokaiane (McC. 71) Much Ado About Nothing