

# 1 PJCS 350: DYNAMICS AND THEOLOGY OF RECONCILIATION

Goshen College, Spring 2006

## Course information

Instructor	Joseph Liechty
Office	Wyse 302
Office phone	7802
Home phone	534-8109 (please don't ring after 9.30 PM)
Email	joecl (Email is generally the most reliable way to reach me. I check my email not less than every morning and evening.)
Office hours	Monday and Friday—perhaps getting a little more specific later in the term
Class time, location	Tuesday and Thursday, 12.30-1.45 PM, Wyse 319

## Course context and rationale

The great wars of the twentieth century were billed as World Wars. The second one almost justified the title, involving states from west and east, north and south. The conflicts caused or left unresolved by the Second World War metamorphosed into the Cold War, itself bloody enough at times, but always most fearsome for what it might ignite, a nuclear war threatening global annihilation. History did not, however, run in a straight line toward a still more comprehensive and destructive Third World War. Instead the collapse of the Cold War in the 1980s revealed what had long been present but relatively ignored under the nuclear umbrella: a host of regional conflicts between groups marked by clashing ethnic, national, and religious identities. Judged against the standard of the feared nuclear conflagration, these are comparative brush fires, but nonetheless readily combustible, numerous, destructive, and hard to put out. They have become one of the defining features of our age, and political and demographic trends give every reason to believe that such conflicts will be challenging us for the foreseeable future.

All these conflicts, great and small, require reconciliation. Indeed the reintegration of Germany and Japan into the global community of nations is one of the crucial reconciling success stories of the last century. With the smaller regional conflicts, however, the reconciliation theme comes even more to the fore. The World Wars and the Cold War were contested between states and blocs of states, so the necessary reconciliation was largely a matter of statecraft. In contrast, the conflicts characteristic of the international scene today are often fought within states rather than between them, so combatants will be living alongside each other when the conflict ends. In these circumstances, reconciliation will almost always include statecraft, but within the state it will also make demands on both communities and individuals—immediately and for many years after. Unless many can learn the arts of reconciliation, peace will be weak and conflict recurring.

The need for reconciliation is most readily apparent in the aftermath of violent conflict. Violence typically ends for reasons of sheer, grinding weariness and disillusionment as much as for any positive vision of peace, so the end of violence still leaves a society a long way from peace. Reconciliation is crucial to the process of moving a society from the end of violence towards a more stable peace. In South Africa and Northern Ireland, to name two high profile examples, words pertaining to reconciliation are frequently on the lips of politicians and others committed to the peace processes there. The first post-apartheid government in South Africa moved immediately to give this practical effect by establishing a high-profile, powerful Truth and Reconciliation Commission, while in Northern Ireland, the logic of reconciliation is intrinsic to the Belfast Agreement, which has become the standard point of reference for the peace process. In both countries, reconciliation will be a critical concept for many years to come.

If reconciliation is naturally involved in recovering from destructive conflict, that need not be its only role.

Reconciliation can be part of the movement toward peace even before the conflict ends. Again a prime example is Northern Ireland, where the effect of numerous reconciliation projects initiated during the violent conflict is hard to quantify but impossible to ignore. The great global challenge, however, will be to fashion what has been learned about reconciliation from these violent conflicts into tools for anticipating and preventing violence. Reconciliation must be one of the central themes in the pursuit of peace.

### College outcomes

The Goshen College faculty has committed itself to a process of learning outcomes. The following outcomes are relevant for this class. Throughout this course students work toward developing:

1. faith that is active and reflective;
2. intercultural openness with the ability to function effectively with people of other worldviews;
3. the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of sign systems;
4. the ability to think actively and strategically;
5. personal integrity that fosters ability to resolve conflict and to promote justice;
6. a healthy understanding of self and of others that is reflected in social relationships of interdependence and mutual accountability.

### Course textbooks

- Krog, Antjie. *Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow, and the Limits of Forgiveness in the New South Africa*. New York: Times Books, Random House, 1998.
- Minow, Martha. *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1998.
- Verwoerd, Wilhelm. "Equity, Mercy, Forgiveness: Interpreting Amnesty within the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission." Ph.D. thesis, Rand Afrikaans University, 2003.
- Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

### Additional Readings

For readings not out of the DTR required texts, four copies will be on reserve in the library or it will be available online.

### Course requirements and grading

1000 points total

- A. Class attendance and participation
- B. leading a seminar..... 50 points (5%)
- C. reading notes and reflections..... 345 points (34.5%)
  - Krog..... 55 points
  - Minow..... 60 points
  - Volf..... 100 points
  - occasional readings..... ca. 30 points
  - Verwoerd..... 100 points
- D. personal reflection papers..... 150 points (15%)
- E. research paper on reconciliation..... 455 points (45.5%)

grading scale

90-100%.....	A
80-90%.....	B
70-80%.....	C
60-70%.....	D
59% and below.....	F

**A. Class attendance and participation**

Because much of the learning in this class depends on classroom interaction, you will only be allowed one unexcused absence. Beyond that, each unexcused absence will reduce your final grade for the course by 10 points. A pattern of tardiness will also reduce your grade. Participation, as well as attendance, is expected.

When possible, notify me before class, by email or phone, for an absence to be excused. The standard list of excusable absences includes:

- sickness;
- a marriage or funeral in your immediate family;
- participation in a required event for a GC class;
- participation in a GC athletic, drama, or music event, or some other official extracurricular activity.

**B. leading a seminar 5%**

During the course of the term, each student will lead a seminar based on one of the Verwoerd, Minow, or Volf readings or another major text. That student will submit her Blackboard reading notes—which will be twice as long as regular notes—24 hours before the rest of the class and meet with me to talk about how she intends to organize the seminar. The point of the seminar-leading assignment is not to show off your own insight on the topic of the day, but to elicit a high quality discussion from the rest of the class.

**C. reading notes and responses 34.5%**

Because reading notes will be essential to your preparation and mine for class discussion, they are due on the Blackboard Discussion Board at 8.00 PM the night before class. Please read each other's notes when possible, and add your comments when appropriate.

For Krog, notes should be 160-200 words (ca. 1/2 typed, double-spaced page); for Verwoerd 500-700 words (1 1/2 - 2 pages); for Minow, Volf, and all others, 330-500 words (1 - 1 1/2 pages). If a brief paragraph stating as concisely as possible the author's main points is helpful to you, that is acceptable, but the remainder should reflect your engagement with the material, guided by questions such as:

- What point or points did I find especially interesting or helpful?
- What point or points did I disagree with?
- What point or points did I find confusing or muddled?

Notes submitted late but before class will be marked down 10 points; notes submitted after class will be marked down 30 points.

**D. two papers 59.5%**

The two papers should be submitted by 8.00 PM on the due date, both as a paper copy and electronically through Blackboard. 5 points will be deducted for the first 24 hours that an assignment is late and 10 points for 24-120 hours (1-5 days). No work will be accepted more than five days late.

Papers should be submitted as:

- typed, double-spaced documents,
- in Times New Roman 12-pt,
- with 1-inch margins,
- using footnotes rather than endnotes,
- with a bibliography, and
- conforming in style matters to Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers* (if you don't own the book—and you really should—see the library web page for examples).

**personal reflection paper 15%**

Peacemakers can be astonishingly violent people, quick to heal the wounds of the world while spreading hurt and destructive conflict wherever they go. High on the list of GC's Peace Studies priorities, then, is to nurture peaceable peacemakers who are consistently self-aware and, when need be, self-critical; who will be able to recognize in themselves and others the contradictions and gaps exposed in peacemaking processes. This essay gives you an opportunity to reflect on what reconciliation issues have shaped your life and thought and how that may shape your vocation as peacemaker. The issues you discuss may be intellectual, spiritual, emotional, theological, psychological, and more. The best are likely to work at several levels.

This paper should be 1700-2000 words (5-6 pages) and conform to the writing standards above.

**research paper on reconciliation 44.5%**

The purpose of this assignment is for you to write a 3300-4000 word (10-12 page) essay placing a particular view of some aspect of reconciliation into the larger discussion of that topic. This will need to include scholarly literature on that topic, but it might also include popular views, gleaned from the media or elsewhere.

Perhaps the simplest, most straightforward approach to this assignment is to write an extended, comparative book review. The basic steps are:

- choose an important book in your chosen area of research;
- read it closely;
- check what sources it has relied on in order to see where it is place in previous debate on this topic;
- then, in order to place your book into the current debate on its main topic, read reviews of your book and check the way later literature has used the ideas in your book.

But there can be other ways of meeting the basic requirements of the assignment, and I am willing to discuss possible variations you want to propose. You might, for example, write on one aspect of reconciliation and show how it relates to other aspects and to reconciliation as a whole.

Some general strictures.

(1) Summary and explanation of the theme you are covering should not take more than 20% of your paper and could take as little as 10%.

(2) While the basic purpose of the assignment is to place a particular view of a reconciliation-related topic in the context of the larger debate on that topic, you are part of that debate, so you should feel free to insert your judgments, challenges, affirmations, and questions. Don't let your own voice dominate, and make sure your statements are well grounded, but do not hesitate to enter the debate.

**Plagiarism** The Goshen College student handbook borrows—and properly acknowledges!—a definition of plagiarism as “giving the impression that another person’s words, ideas, images, or data are your own.” (*Easy Access*, by Keane and Adams, p. 378, quoted in GC student handbook, p. 1) The simple way to avoid plagiarism is to carefully document your sources with the correct use of footnotes.

Plagiarized work will receive no credit and must, by GC policy, be reported to the Academic Dean. For a fuller statement on GC’s policies on issues of academic integrity, see [http://www.goshen.edu/gcdocs/student\\_life/StudentHandbook.pdf](http://www.goshen.edu/gcdocs/student_life/StudentHandbook.pdf), pp 1-2.

### **College commitment regarding disability accommodations**

Goshen College wants to help all students be as academically successful as possible. If you have a disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor or the Director of the Academic Support Center, Lois Martin, early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. In order to receive accommodations, documentation concerning your disability must be on file with the Academic Support Center, KU004, x7576, [lmartin@goshen.edu](mailto:lmartin@goshen.edu). All information will be held in the strictest confidence. The Academic Support Center offers tutoring and writing assistance for all students. For further information please see [www.goshen.edu/studentlife/asc.php](http://www.goshen.edu/studentlife/asc.php).

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE  
WITH READINGS, OTHER ASSIGNMENTS, AND DUE DATES

<b>date</b>	<b>class themes and topics</b>	<b>readings and other class preparation</b>	<b>additional assignments due</b>
(1) Th, 5 Jan	Introducing the course		
(2) Tu, 10 Jan	South African basics	Krog, 3-33 MCS reading Krog reviews (no notes) Kairos document (no notes)	by Sunday evening, 8 Jan, send a few reconciliation- related questions or issues of concern to you
(3) Th, 12 Jan		Minow, ch. 1, “Introduction”, and ch. 2, “Vengeance and Forgiveness”	
(4) Tu, 17 Jan		Krog, 37-66	
(5) Th, 19 Jan		Minow, ch. 3, “Trials” Krog, 67-102	
(6) Tu, 24 Jan		Verwoerd, preface and ch. 1, “Making Moral Sense of TRC Amnesty” Krog, 103-27	
(7) Th, 26 Jan		Minow, ch. 4, “Truth Commissions” Krog, 131-72	
(8) Tu, 31 Jan		Verwoerd, ch. 2, “Amnesty and Equity” Krog, 175-200	
(9) Th, 2 Feb		Minow, ch. 5, “Reparations” Krog, 201-232	
(10) Tu, 7 Feb	The Crisis of Religion, Ethnicity, and Statehood in France, with Neal and Janie Blough	three <i>New York Times</i> articles	
(11) Th, 9 Feb		Verwoerd, ch. 3, “Amnesty and Mercy” Krog, 233-255	submit draft of outline, thesis, questions, and sources for your research paper
(12) Tu, 14 Feb		Minow, ch. 6, “Facing History” Krog, 259-292	
(13) Th, 16 Feb		Verwoerd, ch. 4, Amnesty and Forgiveness” Krog, 293-317	
(14) Tu, 21 Feb	Wilhelm: “Equity, Mercy, Forgiveness”	Verwoerd, ch. 5, “Conclusion” Krog, 318-365	

(15) Th, 23 Feb	Wilhelm: Thesis Reception, Second Thoughts, Further Thoughts		submit draft of research paper on reconciliation <b>(optional)</b>
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>			
(16) Tu, 7 Mar		Volf, 9-31, "Preface" and "The Cross, The Self, and the Other"	
(17) Th, 9 Mar		Volf, 35-55, "Distance and Belonging"	
(18) Tu, 14 Mar		Volf, 57-79, "Exclusion" (part 1)	
(19) Th, 16 Mar		Volf, 79-98, "Exclusion" (part 2)	
(20) Tu, 21 Mar		Volf, 99-131, "Embrace" (part 1)	
(21) Th, 23 Mar		Volf, 131-65, "Embrace" (part 2)	-submit personal reflection paper Thursday, 23 March;
(22) Tu, 28 Mar			-submit research paper on reconciliation any time between 23 March and 8.00 AM, Friday, 14 April
(23) Th, 30 Mar		Volf, 167-190, "Gender Identity"	
(24) Tu, 4 Apr		Volf, 193-231, "Oppression and Justice"	
(25) Th, 6 Apr		Volf, 233-73, "Deception and Truth"	
(26) Tu, 11 Apr		Volf, 275-306, "Violence and Peace"	
(27) Th, 13 Apr	Conclusions?		