Syllabus

PACS 610: Contemporary Nonviolent Movements
Fall 2015

Time and Meet:
Wednesday, 6:30-9:20 pm, Room 4224 at Conrad Grebel University College

Instructor:
Dr. Marlene Epp, Professor of History and Peace & Conflict Studies
Contact: mgepp@uwaterloo.ca, 519-885-0220 x24257
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:30-3:00 p.m. or by appointment

Calendar description:
Through comparative case studies, this course examines contemporary nonviolent movements that illustrate pacifist and other nonviolent strategies for advancing social justice and other high-value political goals. Local, national and transnational campaigns that seek to shape the agenda for global change are examined alongside movements of more limited scope and ambition (e.g., national liberation movements, civil rights campaigns, struggles for democracy). Throughout, attention will be given to trends in practice and to debates concerning the effectiveness, ethical significance, and current relevance of nonviolent change methods.

Texts:


One copy of each book will be on reserve in the Milton Good Library at Conrad Grebel. Other readings are noted in schedule. Weekly readings will amount to 50-100 pages.

Learning Objectives:
- To understand the past and present meaning of nonviolence as a concept, philosophy, and strategy.
- To be able to evaluate the relative merits and effectiveness of nonviolence as a practice and strategy.
- To intentionally reflect on your personal stance of nonviolence.
- To develop skills in reading, analyzing, and summarizing academic literature.
- To develop skills in media research.
- To develop skills in oral presentation in terms of articulating ideas in class discussion and in formal presentation of research.
Course Method:
In this class, we will aim to be fully present together as we explore past and present day examples of nonviolent thinking, practice, and movements in the world. We will begin classes with an invitation to the Mindfulness Bell and breathing in the tradition of Buddhist monk and nonviolence teacher Thich Nhat Hanh. We will aim to practice ‘loving speech and deep listening’ in order to generate compassion towards each other and the subject matter. The classes will have limited lectures from me, the instructor. Rather, learning will emerge through our collective discussions of readings, news of the day, and your individual projects. What you take away from this course will relate directly to what you bring to the group (this includes me, the instructor). Class discussions will be augmented with occasional guests, film clips, and news items as they arise.

Summary of course requirements:

Attendance and participation:
15%

Discussion Leader:
Formulating questions and leading the discussion of readings in a designated week of class.
15%
Due Date: as per sign-up

Nonviolent Conflict News report:
20%
Summarize and report on a week’s news regarding nonviolent movements/direct action in response to contemporary conflict. Provide a brief oral presentation and short summary paper. See details below.
Due Date: as per sign-up

Research Paper and Presentation:
50%
   Proposal and outline: 10%
   Final paper and presentation: 40% (30% + 10%)

Due Date: Proposal and outline, October 14
Due Date: Class presentation, as per sign-up in class
Due Date: December 2
Schedule:

**Week 1, September 16:**
Introduction to each other, course content, and requirements.

*Readings:*
“General Introduction” to Holmes and Gan, *Nonviolence In Theory and Practice*  
Oprah interview with Thich Nhat Hanh. See link in News in Learn.

**Week 2: September 23:**
Nonviolence in religious traditions  
Thich Nhat Hanh and personal nonviolence

*Readings:*
Holmes and Gan, *Nonviolence in Theory and Practice* (hereafter NTP):  
Part One – Preview, Chapters 1-8, 28-31


**Week 3: September 30:**
Modern theorists and advocates of Nonviolence and Pacifism

*Readings:*
*NTP*: Part One – Chapter 10; Part Two – Chapter 11; all of Part Four – Preview, Chapters 21-27

**Week 4: October 7:**
Mohandes K. Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.

*Readings:*
*NTP*: Part Two – Preview, Chapters 12-15


Week 5: October 14:
Gene Sharp: Nonviolence as pragmatic, political practice

Readings:
NTP: Part Five – Preview, Chapters 32-37


DUE: Research paper proposal, in hard copy and in Dropbox

Week 6: October 21:
Women, Gender, and Nonviolence
Readings:
NTP: Part Three – Preview, Chapters 16-20


Week 7: October 28:
Nonviolence and Nature
Readings:
NTP: Part Five – Chapters 38-42


**Week 8: November 4:**
The Tools of Nonviolent Action
Readings:

**Week 9: November 11:**
Case Studies: Europe and the Americas
Readings:
   - NTP: Part Six – Chapters 47-49

Presentations

**Week 10: November 18:**
Case Studies: Asia and Africa
Readings:
   - NTP: Part Six – Chapters 44-46

Presentations

**Week 11: November 25:**
Case Studies: The Middle East

Readings:
* NTP: Part Six – Chapters 50-54


Presentations

**Week 12: December 2:**

Presentations and Summary

**DUE: Final research paper**

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Details regarding course requirements:

**Attendance and participation:**
15%
You will be expected to attend all classes and participate actively in class discussions. A sign-in sheet will be circulated during each class. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have signed in. If serious personal issues (illness and other) prevent you from attending class, please let me know by email or phone message before class. You are expected to demonstrate your familiarity with the weekly readings by participating in class discussion. I will not count your contributions, but you should speak up with your knowledge and perspective at least once in class. Those who speak a lot are not necessarily those who know the most. Try to draw each other into conversation.

**Discussion Leader:**
Formulating questions and leading the discussion of readings in a designated week of class: 15%
Each of you will be required to lead the class discussion on the required readings in a week that you will sign up for at the outset of the course. In order to help your classmates prepare ahead of time, you will post at least 4 questions (can be more) on the Desire2Learn course webpage at least 24 hours before class-time. These questions should not be just informational in nature, but should be provocative and crafted so as to stimulate deep comprehension and analysis of the readings, as well as the development of personal opinion and response to the subject matter. You are encouraged to insert your own ideas into the questions but they should relate directly to the readings. While some of your questions might focus on one reading, others should deliberately demand a comparison of the readings. The questions needn’t be long paragraphs; a couple of sentences should suffice. In the class itself, you will begin the discussion with a brief summary of the readings and some overall impressions, before drawing your classmates into discussion based on your posted questions.
Sign-up instructions for a week of your choice will be given in the first week of classes.

**Nonviolent Conflict news digest report:**
20%
Summarize and report on a week’s news regarding a present-day nonviolent movement in response to conflict. In this assignment you will search media for a present-day story of nonviolent action and report briefly on it in class, followed by a short summary paper. There are a variety of media sources to search for this.
An important source for obtaining information and analyses of nonviolent movements is the media, both mainstream and alternative. The ICNC offers a wide-ranging compilation of international news stories that in some way involve nonviolent responses to conflict. Many different types of media sources are used. Once you have subscribed to the News Digest, you will receive weekly emails with up to 50 news stories. I encourage everyone to scan the Digest weekly (this might also provide ideas for case study research papers).
Or, an alternate news-based site on nonviolence can be used:  
*Waging Nonviolence: People-Powered News and Analysis* (you can also subscribe here to regular news by email): [http://wagingnonviolence.org/](http://wagingnonviolence.org/)


Or, you might find a news story in a mainstream or alternative news source.

In your designated week, you will choose at least 3 (can be more) news stories about which you will report and summarize to the class. As time allows in class, we will discuss these news stories, and so everyone is encouraged to look at the News Digest each week. You will then submit a short essay (approx. 5 pages, 1250 words) following your oral report. The report is due in class the following week. Choose stories that interest you, and that have an obvious nonviolent component or opportunity for analysis. Your class report (approximately 10 minutes) and short essay should include:

- a brief summary of the events/conflict
- analysis of how nonviolence is being used (or not used)
- your own thoughts about the potential for nonviolence in this situation; I recognize that this will be somewhat speculative
- your written essay should include Chicago style citations and bibliography for the sources used

Sign-up instructions for a week of your choice will be given in the first week of classes.

**Research Paper and Presentation:**

50%
Proposal and outline, due Oct. 14: 10%
Final paper and presentation, due Dec. 2: 40%

You will choose and write a research paper about a contemporary or historical ‘case study’ of nonviolent response/action in response to conflict. The paper will be based on secondary source research (books, journal articles etc.) and media reporting and analysis (newspapers, magazines, online news sources). You will do a 20-minute presentation in class about your case study.

Here are criteria for your paper:

- Proposal (1 page) due on October 14 should include the following: tentative title; one paragraph description of the proposed topic that defines the locale and time period if relevant; and 5 sources that you have found (can be books or articles or web or combination).
- The final paper should be approximately 20 pages (c.5000 words), excluding notes and bibliography, using Chicago style for citing sources.
- You will offer a creative and engaging 20-minute presentation for the class, utilizing some form of visual aids – powerpoint, prezi, props, etc. One purpose of this project is to develop your skills in visual and oral presentations.
• Both the paper and the presentation should accomplish the following:
  o provide some basic information and context for your case study, ie. who, what, when, where
  o summarize the nature of the conflict
  o analyze how nonviolence was used as a principle and/or strategy in response to the conflict
  o evaluate the effectiveness of nonviolence in this case
  o summarize the perspective of media reporting and analysis of the events
• You should utilize a combination of books, journal articles and media sources for the paper. You may use websites if they are applicable. Your bibliography must have at least twenty (20) distinct items. Ten (10) of these should be sources from mainstream or alternative media, such as newspapers, magazines, online news sources. If your topic doesn’t lend itself well to this distribution of sources, talk to me. We will spend time in class learning how to find these sources.

Here is a sample listing of possible case studies to research. An ongoing list will be posted in Learn. You may certainly propose your own idea. All topics must be approved by me.

Danish resistance, World War Two
Student civil rights movement, 1960s US
Otpor, student movement in Serbia
Czechoslovakia, Velvet Revolution, 1960s
Idle No More, 21st century
Occupy, 21st century
Palestinian Intifada
Philippines ‘bloodless revolution’, 1986
Ukraine’s Orange Revolution, 1990s
Poland’s Solidarity movement, 1980s
Iranian revolution, 1979
Cesar Chavez, California labour movement, 1960s
Aboriginal movements in Canada and elsewhere
Present-day Turkey
Arab Spring, recent
Tianamen square, China, 1989
Anti-Pinochet movement in Chile, 1970s
Anti-Apartheid in South Africa
Anti-nuclear protest – ie. Greenham Common Peace Camp
Sex Strikes, throughout history
Dosta! movement in Bosna and Herzegovina
Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Argentina, 1970s
Women of Liberia
Greenpeace or another environmental movement
Animal rights movements arising from nonviolent principles
Organizational Websites:
International Center for Nonviolence Conflict: http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/
Waging Nonviolence: http://wagingnonviolence.org/
Albert Einstein Institution: http://www.aeinstein.org/
Global Nonviolent Action Database: http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/
Nonviolence International: http://nonviolenceinternational.net/
M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence: http://www.gandhiinstitute.org/
Metta Center for Nonviolence: http://mettacenter.org/

Additional course guidelines:

1. Attend class regularly. Grades will be assigned to your attendance and participation in class. An attendance sheet will be circulated at each class, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have signed in. You will not lose marks for absences for illness or emergency but you must let me know by email before class.

2. Be attentive and participate in classroom discussions. Ask questions about things you don’t understand or are not clear. Be respectful of other students and their opinions. Practise ‘loving speech’ and ‘deep listening’ as a mindful practice. All opinions and perspectives on nonviolent theory and practice are welcome, if they are expressed in a spirit of compassion and respect for the content and all participants in the class.

3. The use of laptops or other electronic note-taking gadgets for the purpose of taking notes and accessing relevant material in class is acceptable. I do not believe that multi-tasking in the classroom is possible if we are to be listening to each other and engaging in the topic effectively. So please turn off your phones during class.

4. Understand course requirements. Please ask questions if these are not clear. Complete assignments on time. I will do my best to grade and return them in a timely manner. I will not accept assignments by email except in exceptional circumstances. Please plan your academic work carefully, keeping in mind the deadlines for assignments in all your courses. I am generally amenable to requests for extensions in situations of illness, emergencies, or family/personal crises. I do expect that you consult me about an extension BEFORE the assignment is due. Assignments that are handed in past the due date without any prior consultation with me will be subject to a grading penalty of 5% per day.

5. LEARN. This course will have a Desire2Learn (Learn) page. It is your responsibility to ensure you can receive email through Learn, as this is how I will communicate with students and you with each other. Please check the course site regularly for announcements, suggestions, etc.

6. Communication. If you wish to talk with me about any course related or other matters, you may do so after class briefly, during my office hours, by appointment, or through email. I will do my best to respond to your emails within 48 hours. Before you make an inquiry about assignments etc., please do check the syllabus first to confirm whether the information you need is there. All requests for assignment extensions or other special arrangements must be confirmed with me by email, so that we have an agreement in writing (and so that I do not forget!).

7. Be aware of UW’s guidelines on academic offenses, particularly cheating, plagiarism and borrowing. If you do not cite the sources used in your research, you are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism is an academic offence at University of Waterloo that can result in disciplinary action towards a student. When I receive an assignment in which plagiarism can be clearly identified, I assign a mark of 0%. This is the official UW statement:

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4.

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

Other sources of information for students:
- Academic Integrity website (Arts)
- Academic Integrity Office (UWaterloo)

8. Note for students with disabilities. The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.