Conrad Grebel University College  
University of Waterloo  
PACS 327.001: Cultural Approaches to Conflict Resolution  
Winter 2020

**Class Time:** Tuesday and Thursday 2:30 p.m.-3:50 p.m.  
**Location:** CGR 1302

**Instructor:** Nathan C. Funk  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Wednesday 1 p.m.-2 p.m., and by appointment  
**Office Location:** Room 2103A  
**Phone:** 519-885-0220 x24295  
**Email:** nfunk@uwaterloo.ca

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**Course Description:**

Cultural differences enrich our world, and also provide fault lines for conflict among individuals, social groups, and nations. Though often celebrated as a source of meaning and identity, culture sometimes goes unnoticed until situations of tension prompt the realization that many of our convictions about what is “normal” and “appropriate” – including our assumptions about conflict resolution – are not universally shared. To shed light on major patterns of human difference and their implications for contemporary peacebuilding practice, this course applies a cultural lens to the study of conflict and conflict resolution. A range of topics will be explored, including 1) the impact of cultural norms and worldviews on approaches to conflict management, 2) ways in which cultural difference can become a source of conflict, 3) the development of cross-cultural awareness and competence among peace practitioners, 4) culture-sensitive approaches to conflict resolution training and social change, and 5) contributions of cross-cultural learning to the development of the conflict resolution field.
Learning Objectives:
Upon completing PACS 327 students should be able to:

- describe some major patterns of cultural difference;
- provide informed commentary on how cultural differences can correlate with differences in value priorities, worldviews, and forms of human expression;
- critique common misconceptions about culture that ought to be avoided by peace practitioners;
- offer examples of how aspects of culture (including values, practices, narratives, and worldviews as well as symbolic markers) inform collective identities, shape conflict management practices, and affect relations between members of different groups;
- analyze conflict scenarios to discern ways in which cultural differences (including cultural identities and practices) influence dynamics and outcomes;
- articulate ways in which their own cultural background has shaped their assumptions about conflict and peacemaking;
- describe stages of cross-cultural adjustment and adaptation;
- discuss cultural aspects of conflict and peacemaking in Canada as well as abroad;
- explain differences between “prescriptive” and “elicitive” approaches to conflict resolution training and capacity development;
- explain how culture can be a resource for peacemaking;
- discuss potential benefits and challenges associated with efforts to tap and strengthen traditional, indigenous, and local approaches to peacemaking;
- identify criteria for cross-culturally effective and culturally empowering forms of conflict resolution practice, and evaluate peacebuilding efforts in accordance with these criteria; and
- construct an argument concerning the value of cultural competence and cross-cultural learning/research for peace practitioners.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

1. **15% Participation**: Fifteen percent of your final grade will be based on the quality of your participation in class. Participation presupposes both attendance and preparation. It manifests through thoughtful engagement with discussions of readings and lecture topics, as well as through contributions to small-group activities. Respectful attentiveness to guest lecturers is another measure of participation. Failure to attend at least two thirds of all class sessions (including local field trips held during the normal class slot) may result in a loss of all participation points.

2. **20% Quizzes**: Twenty percent of your final grade will be based on two or more quizzes on readings and lecture material (including videos and guest speakers). Although in most cases quizzes will be announced at least a week in advance (and quizzes are likely on February 4 and March 26), the instructor reserves the right to administer one or more graded pop quizzes if the overall level of preparation for class falls below reasonable expectations.

3. **20% Short Writing Assignments**: Twenty percent of your final grade will be derived from two short (3-4 pp., double-spaced, 12-point font) writing assignments that encourage you to interpret and integrate course material. Topics and more specific instructions will be provided at least one week before the February 13 and April 2 due dates. As with all other written coursework, please note that hard copies are expected (not faxed and e-mailed papers).
4. **5% Application Exercise:** Five percent of your final grade will be based on an assignment that asks you to directly apply major concepts from the readings and lectures. There are four ways of completing this assignment. Please note that due dates vary; it is your responsibility to choose one of the following options and meet the relevant deadline.

- **Option 1:** Prepare a written and oral report on the role of culture in a conflict that is currently in the news. Find a current news story in a daily newspaper or magazine that relates to themes explored in the readings and in class. Write a 2-3 pp. analysis of this story (being sure to provide exact bibliographical details), and then share your most important insights with the class in a crisp, 2-3 minute report. **Due date negotiated with instructor during first three weeks of class; maximum of two different student reports per week.**

- **Option 2:** Review a journal article on culture and conflict/peacemaking. Using a list of journals provided in LEARN, seek out an article that addresses themes related to culture and conflict/peacemaking. Write a 3-4 pp. review that 1) provides exact bibliographical information, 2) briefly summarizes key points and themes, 3) analyzes cultural and conflict-related themes in light of course concepts, and 4) evaluates the quality of the effort and its contribution to knowledge. **Due March 19.**

- **Option 3:** Attend a public lecture, film screening, or workshop on culture and conflict/peacemaking. Write a 3-4 pp. review that 1) provides exact details concerning the timing and nature of the event, 2) briefly summarizes key points and themes, 3) analyzes cultural and conflict-related themes in light of course concepts, and 4) evaluates the quality of the effort and its impact on the audience (including you). **Due March 19.**

- **Option 4:** Interview a conflict resolution practitioner about the role culture plays in his/her practice. Identify an individual who works in conflict resolution or a closely related field, perhaps in development, human services, or law. Request and conduct an interview with the practitioner to explore his/her understanding of culture and its impact on his/her work. **By March 19,** write a 3-4 pp. report that includes the following:
  - The name of the practitioner and organization;
  - An account of the practitioner's understanding of culture (or cultural diversity) and its impact on his/her work;
  - An interpretation of the practitioner’s account in light of course material and concepts; and
  - Your personal assessment of the extent to which the practitioner’s line of work requires special cultural competence or sensitivity.

5. **40% Major Project:** Forty percent of your final grade will be based on a major course project. There are three options for completing this assignment. You are required to commit to one of these options **by the third week** of class:

- **Option 1:** Research Paper. Write a research paper exploring a theme related to culture, conflict, and peace. Many topics are possible – for example, you could examine bases for peacemaking in a particular cultural tradition, analyze a case of intercultural conflict, or study the manner in which a particular non-governmental organization attempts to work cross-culturally. The text of the paper (not including the bibliography) should be between 12 and 15 pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point font, regular margins). **Due by Thursday, April 9; please deliver a hard copy of your paper to the Reception Desk at Conrad Grebel University College (2nd floor, admin. area).**

- **Option 2:** Creative Project. Creative projects may be individualized or collaborative, and should culminate in 1) a presentation that lasts approximately 10-15 minutes, and 2) a 6- to 8-page statement about the intent of the project and its relation to major class themes. There are many possibilities here (skits, simulations, a ritual of reconciliation, multimedia presentations, participatory class exercises), but the goal is to educate both yourself and your classmates about culture and conflict resolution. A first-rate creative project, like a good research paper, requires considerable research and preparation. Presentations should include a short handout for each member of the class, with information about the topic and references for those who want to learn more. **The**
Presentation and written statement must be completed by April 2, the last regular day of class (arrangements for the timing of the presentation will be made through consultation with the instructor).

- **Option 3: Weekly Journal.** Writing a detailed weekly journal provides you with an opportunity to articulate a personal and intellectual response to the course experience that ties together major themes from readings, lectures, discussions, and activities. Be sure to go beyond mere summarization and offer carefully considered insights and reflections. Criteria for evaluation include thoroughness (integration of different readings and themes, responsiveness to the overall class experience), thoughtfulness (depth of analytical insight, critical engagement with multiple perspectives, creativity, ability to connect key concepts with personal experiences or world events), and clarity of expression (language usage, readability, mechanics). Handwritten journals in a single notebook are acceptable, but unless you have especially clear handwriting a typed and printed product would be preferred. If typed, the final installment of your printed journal should be approximately 15-25 pages in length (double-spaced, 1-inch margins, regular font – like 12-point New Times Roman). **Due by Friday, April 3; please deliver a hard copy of your paper to the Reception Desk at Conrad Grebel University College (2nd floor, admin. area).**

### Required Readings

- PACS 327 Electronic Readings. (Marked with a “*” below.)

The Shaules text is available at the Campus bookstore and at Porter Library Reserves. Electronic Readings will be made available in uWaterloo electronic reserves.

### Web Page:

This course will make use of the WATERLOO LEARN website. This site will provide general information for the course as well as electronic readings, course handouts, and grades for term assignments. Important announcements such as the cancellation of class due to illness or inclement weather will also be posted there, so please try to check the site before each class, just in case.

To access LEARN, enter your WatIAM username and password. If you encounter difficulties, you are welcome to contact learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca. After you have successfully logged in, click on the PACS 604 link in the yellow “Courses and Communities” menu. Be sure that the email address listed under your name in LEARN is an address that you check on a regular basis.

### Breakdown of Evaluation Criteria, Key Assignments, and Due Dates:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due Date(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Assessed at end of term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Twice or more during term (likely Feb. 4 and Mar. 26)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Writing Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Feb. 13 and Apr. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Exercise</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>See p. 3 above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Project</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>See pp. 3-4 above</td>
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</tbody>
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Grading Scale:

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<tr>
<th>Assigned Letter Grades</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Average Calculation Values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>68</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>57-59</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>35-41</td>
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<tr>
<td>F-</td>
<td>0-34</td>
<td>32</td>
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Late Policy:
Deadlines matter. They keep us on track, enable us to be productive, and help us to meet our educational goals. There are times, however, when even the most organized and disciplined person faces difficult obstacles and unexpected challenges. If this happens, it is your responsibility to take the initiative and demonstrate commitment to getting the job done in a timely manner. Students who contact Prof. Funk well in advance of a due date to discuss realistic complications that may postpone completion of work often receive favourable consideration.

A penalty will be applied to assignments that arrive late without prior clearance. The standard deductions for late work are as follows:
- One day to one week late: -5%
- Eight days to two weeks late: -10%
- Fifteen days to three weeks late: -15%
- More than three weeks late: -20%

Please do not make the mistake of failing to submit an assignment. The penalties for late work are not insignificant, but up until final exam time late truly is much better than never.

PACS Research Support:
The library has created a subject guide to help you carry out peace-related research. You can access this guide online. If you need more specialized assistance, the Peace and Conflict Studies liaison librarian, Laureen Harder-Gissing, is available for consultation. Laureen works with PACS faculty to order library resources and to create the subject guide. See the guide for research tips and ways to contact Laureen.
Appropriate Use of Laptops, Phones, etc.:
Laptops, iPads, smartphones and related devices are amazing tools, with impressive capabilities that can enhance our educational experience. Among other things, they allow us to maintain a portable work station, access LEARN, download PowerPoint slides, keep neatly typed lecture notes, monitor elapsed time during a presentation, and communicate with classmates. Unfortunately, these devices can also become a significant source of distraction, both for ourselves and others.

During class presentations and discussions, please give others the gift of your full attention and avoid activities that could divert us from the purpose of our meetings together (e.g., text messages, instant messaging, email, prepping for other courses, social media feeds). In all circumstances, consider the impact of extraneous electronic activities not just on your own learning, but also on those who are attempting to listen to presentations, watch class films, participate in discussions, or offer you their well-considered thoughts and opinions. All course participants are expected to comply with a simple principle: if it’s a non-urgent matter that might distract you or someone sitting near you, and does not relate directly to what we are covering in class, save it for later.

Additional Considerations:
As we progress through the course, please remember:
• In academics as in life more generally, what we get from an experience depends on what we put into it. Preparation for class (completing reading and writing assignments on time, tracking world events) is the basis for effective learning.
• When we come to class prepared to participate and pose questions, we transform the classroom environment, making active and collaborative learning possible. We discover that learning is a communal rather than a solitary endeavor, and that each one of us is a resource for everyone else in the learning process.
• The subject matter covered by this course is inevitably open to multiple interpretations. This means that you will not always agree with ideas presented in course readings, lectures, and discussions. In such cases, disagreement is often a good thing, so long as it motivates you to develop an enhanced understanding where you stand in relation to others. What matters most is not whether or not we all agree, but whether or not we are willing to engage one another with respect and integrity.
• Collaborative learning requires not only preparation and self-expression, but also a commitment to active listening. Active listening is a communication skill that we develop as we begin to hear not only words, opinions, and ideas, but also the experiences and the awareness behind them. When we practice active listening, we cease to merely debate and begin to sharpen the focus of our deliberations. We clarify divergent perceptions and develop deeper understanding of contrasting perspectives. We become a clear mirror, reflecting back what we have heard and asking questions to learn rather than to score rhetorical points. In the process, we test and refine our own ideas and those held by others.
• During the term we will be privileged to host at least one guest speaker. Please treat visitors to our classroom with the same respect you would extend to a guest in your home – for example, by maintaining eye contact as much as possible, by asking questions, and by following the basic rules of “electronic etiquette” described above.
Barn raising in Lansing (Now North York City Centre, Toronto)
Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Barn_raising_in_Lansing.jpg
Course Schedule:

**Weeks 1-6: Foundational Concepts**

**WEEK ONE (Jan. 7 and 9): MEETING ONE ANOTHER AND DEFINING OUR GOALS**

*Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going? And what can we learn from one another?*

**Assigned reading for Jan. 9:**

**WEEK TWO (Jan. 14 and 16): Conflict and Conflict Resolution as Cultural Activities**

**Assigned reading for Jan. 14:**

**Assigned reading for Jan. 16:**

**WEEK THREE (Jan. 21 and 23): Engaging Diverse Starting Points and Worldviews**

**Assigned reading for Jan. 21:**

**Assigned reading for Jan. 23:**

*Declaration of intent for final project required by Jan. 23.*
WEEK FOUR (Jan. 28 and 30): Patterns of Cultural Difference – and Cultural Patterns for Engaging Differences

Assigned reading for Jan. 28:

Assigned reading for Jan. 30:

WEEK FIVE (Feb. 4 and 6): Responses to Culture in Conflict and Peacemaking

Assigned reading for Feb. 4:

Quiz likely on Feb. 4.

Guest speaker on Feb. 6

WEEK SIX (Feb. 11 and 13): Personal Journeys through Culture: “There” and Back Again

Assigned reading for Feb. 11:

Assigned reading for Feb. 13:

First short writing assignment due on Feb. 13.

No class Feb. 18 or 20 – Reading Week
Weeks 7-12: Applications

WEEK SEVEN (Feb. 25 and 27): Diversity, Identity, and Integration in North American Contexts

Assigned reading for Feb. 25:

Assigned reading for Feb. 27:

WEEK EIGHT (Mar. 3 and 5): Localizing Peace

Assigned reading for Mar. 3:

Assigned reading for Mar. 5:
WEEK NINE (Mar. 10 and 12): Tapping Cultural Resources in Peacemaking Initiatives

Assigned reading for Mar. 10:


Assigned reading for Mar. 12:


WEEK TEN (Mar. 17 and 19): Confronting Historical Divides and Injustices

Assigned reading for Mar. 17:


Assigned reading for Mar. 19:

WEEK ELEVEN (Mar. 24 and 26): Working Cross-Culturally

Assigned reading for Mar. 24:

Assigned reading for Mar. 26:

*Quiz likely on Mar. 26.*

WEEK TWELVE (Mar. 31 and Apr. 2): Seeking “Best Practices” and Transformative Applications

Assigned reading:

*Second short writing assignment due on Apr. 2.*

Cambodian Peace March
Source: http://members.iinet.net.au/~pictim/peace/flag.html
UWaterloo Policies:

Cross-listed course
Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity and Discipline

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. Check the Office of Academic Integrity website for more information.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information.] 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 instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

Grievances and Appeals

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. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, 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 AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each term.

Academic freedom at the University of Waterloo

Policy 33, Ethical Behaviour states, as one of its general principles (Section 1), “The University supports academic freedom for all members of the University community. Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base teaching and research on an honest and ethical quest for knowledge. In the context of this policy, ‘academic freedom’ refers to academic activities, including teaching and scholarship, as is articulated in the principles set out in the Memorandum of Agreement between the FAUW and the University of Waterloo, 1998 (Article 6). The academic environment which fosters free debate may from time to time include the presentation or discussion of unpopular opinions or controversial material. Such material shall be dealt with as openly, respectfully and sensitively as possible.” This definition is repeated in Policies 70 and 71, and in the Memorandum of Agreement, Section 6.

Additional information for students:

Mental Health Support
All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health support if they are needed.

On Campus

- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 ext. 32655
- MATES: one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek form Student Life Centre
Off campus, 24/7

- **Good2Talk**: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300 ext. 6880
- **Here 24/7**: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- **OK2BME**: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online on the Faculty of Arts website
Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)](Download)
Download the [WatSafe app](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/health-and-safety/watsafe) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

The Writing and Communication Centre (WCC)
The Writing and Communication Centre (WCC) works with students as they develop their ideas, draft, and revise. Writing and communication specialists offer one-on-one support in planning assignments, synthesizing and citing research, organizing papers and reports, designing presentations and e-portfolios, and revising for clarity and coherence.

You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or you can drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 25- or 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit [uwaterloo.ca/wcc](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/wcc). Group appointments for team projects, presentations, and papers are also available. **Please note** that communication specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not change or correct your work for you.

Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River. For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, please see the [CAUT Guide to Acknowledging Traditional Territory (PDF)](http://www.caut.ca/guidance/acknowledging-territory).