Conrad Grebel University College  
University of Waterloo

PACS 401.001: Senior Research Seminar  
Winter 2019

Class Time: Mondays 2:30-5:20pm  
Location: CGR 4224

Instructor: Dr. Narendran Kumarakulasingam  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:30-2:00 p.m.; by appointment  
Office Location: CGR 1302  
Phone: TBA in class.  
Email: n3kumara@uwaterloo.ca

Course Description
This seminar is designed to facilitate a fourth-year integration process for PACS majors. Working together with the guidance of an instructor, students will reflect on the history, aspirations and philosophical foundations of the peace and conflict studies field, while exploring the relationship between theory, research and practice in key areas of peacemaking activity. Importantly, each student will conduct a research project that relates to their academic and/or professional development within the PACS field.

Important Note
The title of this course designates it as a seminar. In lecture classes, primary responsibility for the presentation of course material rests with the professor. A seminar, however, is organized differently, as the following definitions attest:

- “a select group of advanced students associated for special study and original research under the guidance of a professor” (The Oxford English Dictionary)
- “a group of advanced students studying under a professor with each doing original research and all exchanging results through reports and discussions” (Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary)

Because this class is a seminar, responsibility for a successful learning journey is shared by all of us – students and faculty alike. Faculty responsibilities for the seminar include: 1) providing an overall structure and a core set of readings; 2) offering academic assistance, guidance, and commentary; 3) evaluating student work; and 4) supporting seminar participants in their pursuit of learning and professional development. Student responsibilities include: 1) Being well
prepared to discuss the required readings; 2) completing the requisite formal and informal assignments on time; 3) being actively engaged in class discussion and activities during the entire class time.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon successfully completing this course, you should be able to:

- Understand the historical background of current discussions in the PACS field and the core values that inform peace research and action
- Produce a research paper on a substantive topic of your choosing
- Present your research to an academic or professional audience
- Discuss some of the vocational and professional pathways of PACS graduates
- Successfully participate in collaborative and collegial learning communities

**Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria**

1. **Seminar Participation (10%)**: Ten percent of your grade is based on the quality of your active, “live body” participation in class, as expressed through thoughtful engagement with class discussions and exercises. Participation presupposes attendance and preparation (especially active reading!). It manifests through: making substantive contributions to discussions of key topics and readings; sharing “big ideas” from your responses and assignments; engaging constructively with other students in small groups organized to support research projects; completing various in-class assignments; providing written feedback for students on their presentations; and giving undivided attention to the course experience. Please note well that because the success of this seminar depends on consistent participation from everyone, missing three or more sessions will likely result in the loss of all participation points. Processing email and other electronic messages during class discussions is a form of divided attention and will be taken into account when formulating marks for this part of the final grade.

2. **Discussion Leading (5%)**: Teams of students will be responsible for leading our discussion for weeks 2 – 7. Co-leaders will each provide five-minute responses to the assigned material. Discussion leaders are expected to consult with one another before class in order to divide up responsibility for all of the readings that need to be covered during the same class session. The presentation should aim to generate a productive and engaged discussion of a specific reading by focusing on one aspect that you find to be particularly important, insightful, ambiguous or challenging. Please do not summarize a reading – summaries will be heavily penalized.

3. **Practice Assignments (10%)**: You will be required to complete five assignments throughout the semester. These will be based on the assigned readings and will require you to apply one or more of the skills covered by the requisite readings. These are meant to help you practice important research skills necessary for the drafting of the capstone project. Each assignment must be uploaded to LEARN by 2.15 p.m. on the due date to receive credit. Late assignments will not receive any points.
4. **Peer Review Assignment (10%)**: Two hard copies are due in class on Monday, **April 1**. Generating high-quality, well-considered commentary on the work of others is every bit as important as learning to clearly express one’s own ideas. To encourage active engagement with the work of other students, each student is required to review another student’s semi-final draft paper and prepare a three-four (3-4) page critique that shall be given to both the author and the instructor. A template with specific guidelines for this activity will be provided in class. Note, however, that the written commentary should go beyond mere summarization of general themes or reaction to the author’s writing style. The purpose of the review is to help your peers improve their research by engaging their key claims and conceptual arguments. Focus on key claims and conceptual arguments, with relevant page numbers included. Propose ideas for the author to consider. Be specific (include page numbers). Try to balance affirmation and critique in a manner that will help your colleague refine arguments, support analysis, and hone writing skills.

5. **Capstone Project (65%)**: Sixty-five percent of your final grade is derived from a capstone project on a topic that is closely related to your academic and/or professional interests. This project will include the following components: a research proposal, an annotated bibliography, a semi-final draft, a class presentation, a final draft, and a response to peer review. Each component is weighted differently, as described below:

   a. **Research Proposal (5%)**: A three-page research proposal should be uploaded to LEARN by 11:59 PM on Friday, **February 1**. This assignment is designed to support your project development process. The proposal should be three pages in length, and include: a) an account of the problem or issue area you would like to investigate, b) a statement about why it is important, c) one or more guiding research questions, d) a thesis or hunch you would like to explore, and d) a preliminary bibliography for your research project, with references to both books and journal articles.

   b. **Annotated Bibliography (5%)**: Due via LEARN by 11:59 PM on Friday, **March 1**. This will be a three-four (3-4) page annotated list of sources you regard as most critical for the development of your paper, complete with annotations for each item. Further details about this assignment will be provided in class.

   c. **Semi-final Draft (5%)**: This “semi-final” draft of your paper needs to be uploaded to LEARN by 11:59 PM on Friday, **March 15**. It should be at least 22 pages in length. Timing is critical, as this draft is the basis for the peer-review assignment. Please note the late penalty is -10% per day. Grading for the semi-final draft will be based on the overall completeness, development, and readability of the submission. Grading on finer points (e.g., “How convincing is the analysis?” “How reliable are the sources?” “Could this thing be sent to the printers?”) will be reserved for the final draft.
d. **Class presentation (5%)**: As an integral part of the capstone project, each seminar participant is required to give a 10-15 minute presentation during one of our last three class sessions. This presentation will center on your topic, and depending on when you present, you may discuss your research as a work in progress (March 18 & 25) or as a finished project (April 1). The purpose of this presentation is to share your perspective, findings and knowledge at that point, while referring to a short, assigned reading of your choice. Select the **reading** (fewer than 20 pages) and post it to LEARN at least one week in advance of the week in which you present, for other students to read. The presentation may be accompanied by a handout or PowerPoint presentation to help communicate key ideas and insights.

e. **Final Draft of your Paper (40%)**: Due in hard copy at the Conrad Grebel front desk on Thursday, **April 11** by 5 pm. This is a 25-page research paper that explores a significant peace-related issue and responds to your key interests. The paper should include insight into the scale, scope, significance, and dynamics of an issue of importance to you, as well as commentary on the implications of your analysis. Taking comments from the peer review into account, draft a paper of very high quality that can be considered for presentation at conferences or for an undergraduate publication. Details will be discussed in class. Include a **signed ethics statement** on your final capstone paper: “I am familiar with the UW Academic Policy on academic ethics and affirm that this paper meets the university’s standards of academic integrity” (add your signature).

f. **Response to Peer Review (5%)**: Also due Thursday, **April 11** by 5pm, attached to the final draft of your paper. The purpose of this one-two page writing assignment is to reflect on the value of the peer review comments that you received. Highlight the helpful aspects of the review, aspects you may have disagreed with, and discuss what you learned from the peer review process.

**Note**: With the exception of work submitted through LEARN, marked assignments will be returned in class. Unclaimed assignments as well as final papers will be left at the Grebel Reception Desk for you to pick up at your own convenience.

**Required Reading Materials:**


- Additional readings that are available online and through Course Reserves. These readings are preceded by an asterisk (“**”) in the course schedule.

**LEARN**

Important course announcements (such as the cancellation of class for inclement weather) and course materials will be posted on LEARN. If you encounter difficulties in accessing our course
website, contact learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca. Also, please be sure that the email address listed under your name in LEARN is an address you check regularly.

**Evaluations**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Assessed continuously</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Leading</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Assignments</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Five (5) times throughout term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>February 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>March 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semi-Final Draft of Research Paper</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>March 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Review Assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>April 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Paper &amp; Response to Peer Review</td>
<td>40% &amp; 5% respectively</td>
<td>April 11</td>
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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>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>0-34</td>
<td>32</td>
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PACS Research Support
The library has created a subject guide to help you carry out peace-related research. You can access this guide at Subject Guides. 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. If you are interested in knowing what some other PACS students have researched, check out the abstracts posted on the PACS 401 abstracts webpage.

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 course materials, 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 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.

Late Assignment Policy
Please note that late assignments will be automatically assessed a penalty of 5% (same penalty for the first 24-hour period) with an additional 1% penalty assessed for every additional day the assignment is late. A valid medical document is required for illness. If you are concerned about an assignment, please do come and talk to me in advance of the deadline. Please do not make the mistake of failing to submit an assignment. Deadlines are important, but I am willing to work with those who take the initiative in their communications and demonstrate commitment to getting the job done.

Additional Considerations
As we progress through the course, please remember:

- What we get from an experience depends on what we put into it. Preparation for class (completing reading and writing assignments on time) 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. Learning becomes a communal rather than a solitary endeavor.

• The subject matter covered by Peace and Conflict Studies courses is often viewed from multiple perspectives. Disagreement, tension and ambiguity are beneficial when they enable you to develop an enhanced understanding of material and perspectives. What matters most is our willingness to engage one another with respect and integrity.

• Collaborative learning requires preparation, self-expression, and a commitment to active listening. 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.

Course Schedule

Please note that this schedule will likely change to reflect the rhythm, pace and needs of our class. I will announce any such changes both in class and via LEARN. This means that as we progress, I will add to, or change some of the readings.

Week 1 (Jan. 7): Beginnings
What brings you here? What do we hope to accomplish, both individually and as a collective? What is the promise of this course? Why do you want to do research? What do we each need to contribute towards creating a successful learning community?

Week 2 (Jan. 14): Mapping and Provisionally Locating Ourselves in Peace and Conflict Studies
Why is it important to understand the roots of the field? Why do you need to have a map of the field? How would you describe the field to a non-PACS professor or a potential employer? How does your map draw on and (and if applicable) extend the readings? How has the field changed over time? What questions, issues, and concepts does it seem to typically address?

Required Reading:


• *Méndez, María José. “‘The river told me’: rethinking intersectionality from the world of Berta Cáceres.” Capitalism Nature Socialism, Vol 29, No. 1 (2018) 7-24
Written Work:

- Upload Assignment #1 to LEARN by 2:15 p.m.
- Bring a list of three possible research topics to class (hard copy)
- Bring a hard copy of Assignment #1 to class.

Week 3 (Jan. 21): Developing Research Questions and Articulating Problems
What problem or issue would you like to research? Why? What conversations or conceptual/practical problems do you find interesting or powerful? Alternatively, what concrete event, occurrence, situation or scene do you find compelling? Why? What skills and techniques do you want to learn? What are your big questions about the world? What class papers or projects do you wish to develop further?

Required Reading:

  o Part II, pp. 27-84.
- *Joli Jensen, “Struggling to find a project that excites you? Follow the lil.” Available at

Written Work:

- Upload Assignment #2 to LEARN by 2:15 p.m.
- Bring a copy of Assignment #2 with you and be prepared to describe two potential research projects.

Week 4 (Jan. 28): Conversing with Sources
What conversation is your project a part of? Who are your main interlocutors? What are your plans for finding, exploring and engaging sources? How are you going to organize your notes on sources?

Required Reading:

- Readings for Assignment to be added after Week 2

Written Work:

- Upload Assignment #3 to LEARN by 2:15 p.m.
- Bring a copy of your notes on a key source (hard copy)
- Research Proposal due via LEARN by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, February 1.
Week 5 (Feb. 4): Constructing Arguments and Making Claims
What is the field of conversation in which your project intervenes? What arguments and positions constitute this field? What is the (tentative) main argument of your project? What positions and viewpoints or conditions does it contradict or problematize? What arguments and claims are you building on, extending, or refining? What counts as evidence for your claims? What evidence will the project draw on? What is the strongest counter-argument to what you are proposing?

Required Reading:
  - Part III, pp. 105-154.
- Reading for Assignment to be added after Week 2

Written Work:
- Upload Assignment #4 to LEARN by 2. 15 p.m.

Week 6 (Feb. 11): Integrating Biography, Research and Practice
What experiences and values have shaped your interest and work in peace and conflict studies? What important transformations have you undergone as a result of your undergraduate learning? What kinds of contributions would you like to make in the next five years?

Required Reading:
- *Lederach, John Paul. Online Interview at Mediate.com
- * Either selections from Autobiographical IR or another article TBA.

No Class on Feb. 18 – Family Day Holiday

Week 7 (Feb. 25): Drafting, Writing and Communicating
What goes into good academic writing? What are the nuts and bolts of academic writing? How do we write in a clear and effective way?

Required Reading:
  - Part V, pp. 271-274

**Written Work:**

- Upload Assignment #5 to LEARN by 2.15 p.m.
- **Annotated Bibliography** due via LEARN by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, March 1.

**Week 8 (Mar. 4): Research Coaching Meetings**

10-minute meetings.

**Week 9 (Mar. 11): Professional Pathways**

What are some of the professional pathways that exist for PACS students? How do research and practice shape each other? What resources will you explore as you seek to begin your professional life? How do we communicate our knowledge of and passion for a subject?

**Required Reading:**

- **PCDN Website.**

**Recommended Reading:**


**Written Work:**

- Upload **Semi-Final Draft** of research paper by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, March 15.

**Week 10 (Mar. 18): Presentations I**

**Required Reading:**

- TBA by presenters
Written Work:

- During class, complete *feedback forms* responding to each presentation.

**Note on Feedback Forms:** During the last three class meetings, you will be required to provide written feedback for your colleagues. This is intended to provide constructive feedback on the content and delivery of the presentation, and on the accompanying handout. Attending class, assisting with tasks where asked (e.g. timing presentations or tracking feedback) and handing in intelligible feedback forms covering all presentations will earn you full credit for this part of your participation grade.

**Week 11 (Mar. 25): Presentations II**

*Required Reading:*

- TBA by presenters

*Written Work:*

- During class, complete *feedback forms* responding to each presentation.

**Week 12 (Apr. 1) Presentations III & Wrap-up**

*Required Reading:*

- TBA by presenters

*Written Work:*

- During class, complete *feedback forms* responding to each presentation.
- Two hard copies of **Peer Review Assignment** due at beginning of class (2:30 p.m.)
- **Final Research Paper** and **Response to Peer Review** due at Conrad Grebel front desk by 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 11.

**University of Waterloo Policies**

*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. See the following for more information:

Arts: [Academic Integrity website](#)  University of Waterloo: [Academic Integrity Office](#)

**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.

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.

**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.

Note for Students with Learning Differences

The AccessAbility Services (AAS) office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, 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 AAS office at the beginning of each academic 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.

Other Sources of 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 supports 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 from 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: 519-749-433 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 at the Faculty of ARTS [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)](#)

Download the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

**Counselling Services**

Counselling Services provides free confidential counselling, in both individual and group sessions, with qualified professionals to help registered students, faculty and staff with personal concerns, educational career decisions, and strategies to studies and exams: [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocs](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocs), ext. 33528, NH Room 2080.

**Accommodation for Illness**

A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the “University of Waterloo Verification of Illness” form or it will not be accepted. More information can be obtained from Health Services and the form is available in pdf: [https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/student-medical-clinic/services/verification-illness](https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/student-medical-clinic/services/verification-illness)

**The Writing and Communication Centre**

Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. Make an appointment or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit [https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/](https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/)

**The Land on Which We Meet**

PACS as a discipline is committed to the pursuit of peace based on a foundation of justice. In Canada, we are coming to terms with the legacy as well as continuation of settler colonialism—an important PACS issue, which also involves the land on which we meet. The University of Waterloo and Conrad Grebel University College are located on the traditional territory of the
Neutral, the Anishinaabeg and the Haudenosaunee peoples. Most of us live and work on what is known as the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers (six miles) on either side of the Grand River. If you’re interested in learning more about the history and potentially doing some research on this topic, there are helpful links at the University of Waterloo Faculty of Arts website. Or, check out the Waterloo Indigenous Student Centre resources and events.