PACS 201: Roots of Conflict, Violence and Peace - Course Syllabus

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 – 11:20 a.m.
CGR 1111*

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Office hours via Zoom: Thursdays, 2:30 – 4:00 p.m. (I welcome you to visit me during my office hours when you have questions or want to drop by and chat.)

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples.
The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.

Course Catalog Description: An examination of influential theories about the sources and nature of conflict, violence, and peace. Contributions from the social sciences as well as the humanities will be explored, with attention to connections between interpersonal, intergroup, and international levels of analysis.

Updated Course Description: This course will introduce students from a variety of backgrounds to the study of conflict, violence and peace. It is the first of three introductory core courses in the Peace and Conflict Studies Program at the University of Waterloo. Like peace and conflict studies, this course is interdisciplinary - drawing from academic fields, disciplines, and areas of study in the humanities, social sciences and beyond. It also acknowledges that knowledge is not only produced in and around the halls of academe, but also through direct engagement with conflict, violence and injustice. As such, the materials we will utilize in this course originate from a variety of thinkers and theorists including peace practitioners and social justice activists.

Among the questions we will explore in this course are the following:

1. What is "peace", "conflict", and "violence"? What are different forms of violence? What is the relationship between peace and justice?
2. What do various pathways to peace, justice, and social change imply about the root causes of conflict, violence and injustice? What are some immediate implications of these pathways and perspectives for individuals, groups, and institutions?
3. How do issues of conflict, violence, and peace relate to issues of identity and power?

The second of the three courses, PACS 202 (Conflict Resolution), delves more deeply into practical methods for resolving and controlling interpersonal, intergroup, and international
conflicts. The third course, PACS 203 (History of Peace Movements), explores the role of civic activism in preventing and responding to armed conflicts and social injustices.

This course explores issues of conflict, violence, and injustice through a number of lenses and perspectives. The issues we will study address micro, mezzo and macro-level challenges that are simultaneously personal, social, cultural, and political. Each of us not only thinks about these challenges differently but we also experience them differently. As we engage course content together this term through readings, lectures, course discussions, activities and beyond, it is of utmost importance to keep in mind not only differences of perspective, but also differences in proximity. For example, a particular issue might be, for some, an abstract topic that is interesting to discuss and for others, a challenge that directly impacts the quality of life for self, family and community. Let us together create a learning community characterized by respect, care, compassion, and critical dialogue for the purposes of mutual learning and transformation.

*The Winter 2022 term will begin remotely, per University of Waterloo Covid-19 guidelines. Until in-person classes resume, a weekly lecture will be released via VoiceThread with required asynchronous engagement, and optional class discussions will be held on Thursdays from 10 –11:20 a.m. (Refer to the University of Waterloo COVID-19 INFORMATION page for the most up-to-date information on procedures and guidelines pertaining to Covid-19.)*

Learning Outcomes:

- Articulate different perspectives on the root causes of conflict, violence and injustice.
- Identify and describe diverse approaches to the promotion of peace and justice.
- Compare and contrast theories, perspectives and methods of transforming conflict and building peace.
- Apply foundational concepts and theories from peace and conflict studies to contemporary situations and challenges.
- Communicate well-informed theories and proposals about issues of concern to Peace and Conflict Studies scholars and practitioners, as well as broader communities.

Introduction to the Course Content:

The Strategic Peacebuilding Wheel developed by Dr. John Paul Lederach and Katie Mansfield serves an organizing framework for PACS 201. The wheel is divided into three inner circles: 1) Violence Prevention, Conflict Response and Transformation; 2) Justice and Healing, and 3) Structural and Institutional Change. During this course, We will examine each of these three dimensions, or pathways, of work to address violence and build peace.

The course was carefully curated to align with the curriculum of the Peace and Conflict Studies program at UWaterloo, introducing students to the subjects explored in depth within advanced courses. When a topic peaks your interest, make a note of courses you might take in the future.
PACS 201 addresses a number of issues and topics that are challenging to read about and discuss. Please let me know if a particular topic may be especially difficult for you so that we can collaboratively and proactively develop a plan to support healthy engagement and learning.

**Required Course Texts:**


Course texts are available through the library in ecourse Reserves. If you have trouble accessing the required materials, please let me know well in advance so that I may assist you.

**Student Assessment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Questions and Activities</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict Styles Reflection Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Comprehension Paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal Topic and Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
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The following are brief descriptions of the assignments. Additional guidance will be provided to students enrolled in the course via LEARN.

All papers are to be double-spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins, in Word or rich text format. Be sure to include your first and last name on your paper in addition to the name of the instructor (Dr. McCants-Turner), the course title, and the date of the assignment.

**In-Class Questions and Activities: 20%**

During class, you will participate in answer questions and participate in a variety of classroom-based activities. I will sometimes ask that you hand in your responses and/or other artifacts from class activities. Be sure to include your name. Responses and other evidence will be graded pass/fail. If you are must miss class due to mandatory isolation or illness, submit a brief 1 - 2 paragraph response to the essential question of the week and submit it via the designated dropbox. Include a brief explanatory note about your absence from class in the message box.

**Conflict Styles Reflection Paper: 10% (3 - 5 pages, double-spaced)**

Due Friday, January 21 by 11:59 pm.

How do you approach conflict? Take a conflict styles assessment to learn more about your conflict style. One assessment can be found at: https://www.usip.org/public-education-new/conflict-styles-assessment Additional options will be provided to students via LEARN.
Write a paper discussing what you have learned about your perspectives and primary approaches to conflict from your conflict styles assessment and the course content from Week 2. What does conflict mean to you? What kinds of conflict do you regularly encounter, and how do you tend to respond? How has the course content encountered thus far impacted your perspectives? What are key insights and implications for how you might approach conflict in the future? Papers will be assessed for completion, clarity, depth of reflection, integration of course materials, and writing.

**Critical Comprehension Paper:** 15% (3-4 pages, double-spaced)

**Due Friday February 11 by 11:59 p.m.**

Write a paper that demonstrates your understanding of one of the topics covered in ‘Part I: Transforming Conflict; Responding to Violence.’ Respond to an essential question listed for weeks one, two, three, OR four using a contemporary example of conflict, violence, or war as a case study. Your paper should clearly define and explain key concepts, theories, and approaches studied in your chosen week, and how they can be applied in your chosen case. For example, you might choose to respond to the essential question in week four, “why and how might individuals and groups confront violence and injustice without resorting to violence?” by writing about contemporary uses of nonviolence to challenge environmental destruction in Canada, or elsewhere. Your paper would explain key terms, theories, and frameworks from week 4 and apply them to your case: How do they shed light on what is taking place? What do they suggest or reveal about the roots of conflict, violence, and peace?

**Proposal Topic and Annotated Bibliography:** 30% (Maximum of 7 pages, double-spaced).

**Due Friday March 11 by 11:59 p.m.**

For your final paper, you will apply one or more pathways, or approaches, to peace and conflict studies, to a specific area of conflict, violence, or injustice (for e.g. hate crimes). What understandings, or analysis, does this approach foreground? What is revealed by applying relevant theories, concepts and frameworks? How should the conflict, violence or injustice be addressed? The task of this assignment is to develop a proposal for your final paper, and an annotated bibliography of articles that you can use to supplement course resources.

This assignment includes three components:

**Introduction (15 pts):** What is your question? What is your topic? How did you arrive at this question? What aspects of it most interest you and why?

**Annotated Bibliography (50 pts):** Identify and review five to seven scholarly journal articles that you can use to explore your question and deepen understanding of your chosen topic. Provide the citation of each article in Chicago style, in bold type. Below the citation, include an annotation of each article that includes its thesis/argument, a synopsis, or summary, of the article, and a brief reflection on its relevance and usefulness in answering your question. What did you learn from reading it in relation to your question/topic? What was clarified, challenged, or deepened?

**Conclusion (25 pts):** Explain how, as a whole, the articles you reviewed have shifted your understanding of your question. How have they helped you to refine your question and impacted
your understanding of your topic? What is a preliminary thesis statement for your paper? How is your thesis supported (and challenged) by the articles you read? What additional questions do you have related to your topic and thesis statement?

Your paper will also be evaluated for writing style, conventions and structure (10 pts).

**Final Essay:** 25% (1200 - 1500 words; 4 - 6 pages, double-spaced.)

Due Tuesday April 5 at 11:59 p.m.

For this final essay, you will apply one or more peacebuilding pathways, or approaches, to a specific area of conflict, violence, or injustice. What understandings, or analysis, does the approach foreground? What is revealed by applying this pathway’s key theories, concepts and frameworks? What strategies and options for response are emphasized by the approach, and what does, or might, it look like to apply them to your chosen area or case? For example, you might be interested in examining nonviolence and nonviolent social change in relation to the ongoing war in Palestine-Israel, how restorative justice can be applied to understanding and challenging the removal of children from their homes due to neglect and child abuse, or the relevance of trauma healing to understanding and responding to race-based hate crimes. (See week 11 for an example of the latter). Essays must respond to a well-formulated question that is explicitly articulated in the paper, and include a clear, cogent and well-written thesis statement. Papers are to substantively engage and reference at least three texts from the course, and seven additional sources, including five scholarly journal articles.

Course Outline:

**Key:** Available on LEARN - (L). Required course texts - (Textbook). Click on hyperlinks for online texts.

**Online Transition:**

**JANUARY 6 – Online Preparation due to remote start of the term.**

Getting Started with VoiceThread.

**WEEK ONE: Introduction**

**JANUARY 6 and 11 – Typologies of Violence; Pathways to Peace**

What does the practice of peace and conflict studies entail? What are key definitions of “violence” and “peace”?

Lederach, John Paul and Katie Mansfield, “Strategic Peacebuilding Pathways.” Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies. University of Notre Dame. Available at: [https://kroc.nd.edu/alumni/strategic-peacebuilding-pathways/](https://kroc.nd.edu/alumni/strategic-peacebuilding-pathways/) Read an overview of the wheel,
then click on each word or phrase in the outer circle (e.g. restorative justice) to read a description of the subcategory.


Related courses include:

PACS 316/PHIL 329: Violence, Nonviolence and War
PACS 314: Conflict Resolution in Schools

PART 1: Transforming Conflict; Responding to Violence.

In the first section of the course, we examine three building blocks of peace and conflict studies: conflict transformation; moral arguments on war, and nonviolent social change.

WEEK TWO: Conflict Analysis, Resolution and Transformation

JANUARY 18 and 20

What is conflict? What are basic theories and approaches for understanding and responding to conflict?

Lederach, John Paul. The Little Book of Conflict Transformation. (Textbook)


Related courses include:

PACS 202/LS 271 Conflict Resolution
PACS 323: Negotiation Theories and Strategies
PACS 391: Conflict Resolution Skills workshop

WEEK THREE: The Nature of War and Peace

JANUARY 25 and 27

What is war? Is war inevitable? What are dominant theories and arguments about the morality of war?


**Related courses include:**
PACS 316/PHIL 329: Violence, Nonviolence and War
PACS 326/RS 380: Religion and Peacebuilding
PACS 330/RS 353: War and Peace in Christian Theology

**WEEK FOUR: Nonviolent Social Change**

**Feb 1 and 3**

*Why and how might individuals and groups confront violence and injustice without resorting to violence?*


**Related courses include:**
PACS 203/HIST 232: History of Peace Movements
PACS 316/PHIL 329: Violence, Nonviolence and War

**PART 2: PURSUEING JUSTICE & HEALING**

In this part of the course, we study theories and approaches that emphasize justice and healing: social justice, restorative justice, trauma healing, and transformative justice.

**WEEK FIVE: Social Justice**

**FEBRUARY 8 and 10**

*What is social justice? What is intersectionality? How are systems of oppression and experiences of violence interconnected?*


Related courses include:
PACS 302: Special Topics in Peace and Conflict Studies 2 – Advocacy for Justice and Peace
PACS 321: Gender in War and Peace

WEEK SIX: Environmental Justice and Peace Ecology

FEBRUARY 15 and 17

How might justice and healing for individuals, groups and the environment be pursued simultaneously?


Read the excerpt found here: https://www.commondreams.org/sites/default/files/peaceecologyexcerpt.docx.pdf

Related courses include:
PACS 302: Special Topics in Peace and Conflict Studies 2 - Environmental Racism in Canada and Beyond

PACS 310: Peace and the Environment

READING WEEK – FEBRUARY 19-27, 2022

WEEK SEVEN: Restorative Justice and Trauma Healing

March 1 and 3

What does it look like to center accountability, healing, and healthy connection when responding to harm?


Related courses include:

PACS 329/LS 344: Restorative Justice

PACS 331: Trauma, Healing and Conflict Resolution

WEEK EIGHT: Transformative Justice

March 8 and 10

How and why are some communities responding to interpersonal violence without involving State institutions?


Related courses include:

- PACS 329/LS 344: Restorative Justice
- PACS 331: Trauma, Healing and Conflict Resolution

**PART 3: CHANGING STRUCTURES & INSTITUTIONS**

In this last section, we address dimensions of structural and institutional change: development, settler colonialism as a global threat, and the role of legal reforms.

**WEEK NINE: Development and Aid: The Role of Conflict Sensitivity**

**MARCH 15 and 17**

What are development and aid? How can development and aid exacerbate or help to diminish violent conflict?

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Available at: https://sdgs.un.org/goals


Related courses include:

- PACS 311: Doing Development - Issues of Justice and Peace
- PACS 332: Ethics of Peacebuilding
WEEK TEN: Settler Colonial Violence

MARCH 22 and 24

What is settler colonialism and settler colonial violence? What are strategies of resistance and reclamation?


*Additional sections from the report TBD.*

Related courses include:

PACS 301: Special Topics in Peace and Conflict Studies I – Settler Colonial Violence.

WEEK ELEVEN: Law: Advocacy and Solidarity Case Study – Hate Crimes Legislation

March 29 and 31

To what extent is legislation an effective response to violence? What are alternative approaches to legislation?


Related courses include:

PACS 329/LS 344: Restorative Justice

WEEK TWELVE: Strategic Peacebuilding

April 5

What is strategic peacebuilding? What dimensions of conflict and violence must be addressed to build peace?


Related courses include:
PACS 318: Peacebuilding in Divided Societies

Changes may be made to the course readings and topics schedule for various circumstances, including the availability of guest speakers. These changes will be announced via LEARN.

Course & Administrative Policies:

**Class Engagement:** Respectful class engagement is imperative to a healthy classroom where everyone can focus and learn. Students who negatively impact the learning environment (for example, through distracting use of cellphone, laptop or other tech devices; verbal disruptions, or side chatter) may be required to meet with the instructor outside of class to discuss the challenges, and develop a plan for response and prevention.

**Inclusive Language:** PACS 201 is a classroom space in which participants are asked practice inclusive language as a harm reduction practice. Inclusive language practices include but are not limited to using desired names and pronouns and avoiding microaggressions (subtle insults that communicate assumptions rooted in stereotypes about specific social groups.) As a learning community, we also acknowledge the possibilities of error and unintentional harm, and place a high value on efforts to acknowledge mistakes when they are made and work to repair harmful impacts.

**AccessAbility Services:** AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with a known or unknown disability/condition/illness, or who are experiencing impacts from trauma. If you require academic accommodations for any of these reasons, register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term. To schedule an appointment, call: 519-888-4567 ext. 35082 and leave a voicemail. Alternatively, you can email your appointment availability to access@uwaterloo.ca. For individualized support with learning strategies and/or assistive technology, attend Accessability Service’s online Student Support Drop-in Centre which runs Monday–Friday between 1-3pm.

**Late Assignments:** Submitting an assignment on time is one component of the assignment. Therefore, late papers will have points deducted, unless an extension requested in advance by the student has been approved by the instructor in writing or exceptional circumstances apply. Students are strongly encouraged to contact the instructor to request an extension when presenting circumstances may necessitate delayed submission of an assignment. The standard deductions for late work are as follows: **One day late:** - 5%. **Each additional day:** - 3%. While standard deductions will not be exceeded, the instructor retains the discretion to deduct fewer points from a given assignment if there is a valid reason to do so.

**Writing and Communication Centre (WCC):** The instructor strongly encourages regular student use of the Writing and Communication Centre. Visit https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/services-0/services-undergraduate-students to book an appointment.
**Academic integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their 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.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their 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.

**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 they have a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals.

**Turnitin.com:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students’ submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.

**Remote Teaching and Learning: STUDENT NOTICE OF RECORDING**

The following section will apply in the case of classes conducted via Zoom and VoiceThread. Activities for this course involve recording, in partial fulfillment of the course learning outcomes. You will receive notification of recording via at least one of the following mechanisms: within the Learning Management System (LEARN), a message from your course instructor, course syllabus/website, or other means. Some technologies may also provide a recording indicator. Images, audio, text/chat messaging that have been recorded may be used and/or made available by the University to students in PACS 331 for the purpose of accessing content from guest speakers or instructor presentations not limited to lectures. Recordings will be managed according to the University records classification scheme, WatClass, and will be...
securely destroyed when no longer needed by the University. Your personal information is protected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, as well as University policies and guidelines and may be subject to disclosure where required by law.

The University will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of the recorded information, but cannot provide a guarantee of such due to factors beyond the University’s control, such as recordings being forwarded, copied, intercepted, circulated, disclosed, or stored without the University’s knowledge or permission or the introduction of malware into computer system which could potentially damage or disrupt the computer, networks, and security settings. The University is not responsible for connectivity/technical difficulties or loss of data associated with your hardware, software or Internet connection.

By engaging in course activities that involve recording, you are consenting to the use of your appearance, image, text/chat messaging, and voice and/or likeness in the manner and under the conditions specified herein. (In the case of a live stream event, if you choose not to have your image or audio recorded, you may disable the audio and video functionality. Instructions to participate using a pseudonym instead of your real name are included where the feature exists; however, you must disclose the pseudonym to your instructor in advance in order to facilitate class participation.) If you choose not to be recorded, this notice serves as confirmation of your understanding that you may let the instructor know if your preference before the class session commences, and turn off your camera and video, if recording takes place.

You are not permitted to disclose the link to/URL of an event or an event session recording or copies of recording to anyone, for any reason. Recordings are available only to authorized individuals who have been directly provided the above instructions/link for their use. Recordings for personal use, required to facilitate your learning and preparation of personal course/lecture notes, should not be shared with others without the permission of the instructor or event coordinator. Review the University’s guidelines for faculty, staff and students entering relationships with external organizations offering access to course materials for more information on your obligations with respect to keeping copies of course materials. For more information about accessibility, connect with AccessAbility Services.