

Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies

PEAC-1000 (3 credits)

Serbia and Croatia: Peace and Conflict Studies

This syllabus represents a tentative The Experiment summer internship program. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from program to program.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of peace, peacebuilding, and post-conflict transformation. Students learn about the role of mechanisms such as transitional justice and memory politics in conflict management and peacebuilding. Through the educational excursion to Croatia, a member of the European Union, students develop a comparative perspective of post-conflict social dynamics and learn about the role of the European Union in peacebuilding and post-conflict transformation. Throughout, students develop a general understanding of culture and society in Southeastern Europe, European Union politics after Brexit and the economic and cultural influence of Russia, China and Turkey in the region. Students have opportunities to learn outside the classroom through field visits to civil society groups, museums, sites of memory, and round-table discussions with their Serbian peers.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Show a general understanding of the field of peace and conflict studies;
- Explain in basic terms the role of transitional justice and memory politics in conflict management and peacebuilding;
- Summarize the role of the European Union in supporting peacebuilding in Croatia;
- Describe the economic and cultural influence of China, Russia, and Turkey as observed and seen on the streets of Belgrade;
- Synthesize information learnt through academic lectures, field visits, round-table discussions, and educational excursions into short reflection papers, small group projects, podcasts or other creative projects.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English; during the sessions students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content.

Course Schedule

*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

The course is delivered using classroom sessions, field activities, workshops as well as a weekly three-hour group synthesis or activities. Some sessions will include short videos and class discussion.

Module 1: Introduction to the Field of Peace and Conflict Studies

This module provides students with a general overview of the field of peace and conflict studies. Students learn about the importance of the field, causes of conflict both at the individual and group levels, civil violence, and why states fight. The module also introduces students to methods of conflict resolution, the role of conflict mediation, the relationship between peace and justice, and the role of democratic institutions in preempting violence and maintaining peace.

Sessions and activities in this module may include:

- What is peace studies and peace research? What is the relevance of peace and conflict studies in understanding the causes of conflict and the foundations of peace?
- Conflict Analysis and international conflicts: Causes of conflict
- Peace agreements vs. Everyday Peace
- The foundations of peacebuilding and conflict transformation
- Field visit to the Museum of History of Yugoslavia

Required Reading:

Galtung, J. (2015). "Conflict Theory and Practice." In *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader* edited by Tom Woodhouse, Oliver Ramsbotham and Christopher Mitchell, pp. 35-41.

Mitchell, C. (2015). "The Structure of International Conflict." In *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader* edited by Tom Woodhouse, Oliver Ramsbotham and Christopher Mitchell, pp. 77-81.

Module 2: Peacebuilding and Reconciliation

In this module, students are introduced to the general notions of peacebuilding and reconciliation as well ways of dealing with the past in post-conflict transformation environments. The module offers the group the basic terminology and conceptual notions to examine peacebuilding and post-conflict transformation.

Sessions and activities in this module may include:

- Conflict, peacebuilding, and post-conflict transformation

- What is memory politics? What role does it play in conflict transformation?
- Field visit: Humanitarian Law Center

Required Reading:

Lederach, J.P. (2015). "Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies." In *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader* edited by Tom Woodhouse, Oliver Ramsbotham and Christopher Mitchell, pp. 120-124.

Module 3: Activism, Youth and Legacies of Conflict and Peace in Serbia

In this module, students learn about the role of civil society actors and particularly youth activism in engaging with peacebuilding and memory politics. The module also includes discussion about impacts of negotiations leading to European Union membership on democratic transitions in the region.

Sessions and activities in this module may include:

- Youth activism and peacebuilding
- New social movements and social justice activism
- The road to the European Union
- Field visit: Youth Initiative for Human Right in Serbia
- Field visit: Regional Youth Cooperation Office

Required Reading:

Berents, H and Mollica, C. (2020). Youth and Peacebuilding, In: Richmond O., Visoka G. (eds). *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Fridman, O. (2020). Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts. In: Richmond O., Visoka G. (eds) *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Listen to Ivan Djuric, Serbian activist, speak to the Human Rights Defenders podcast, June 2020

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/0kbGdQficxodGtvmjUy3r6>

Module 4: European Politics, Peacebuilding and Legacies of Conflict and Peace in Croatia

This module takes place during the excursion to Croatia. Since becoming a member-state of the EU, Croatia has featured culture and cultural entrepreneurship in various sectors as a strategic approach for reconciliation and sustainable peace. At the same time, processes of memory politics have taken a shift towards rising nationalism and even revisionism. Students meet with Croatian academics and civil society activists to learn about the social and political dynamics of the rapprochement between Croatia and Serbia, the role of civil society in combatting discrimination and hate speech against minority groups, and impacts of cultural

diversity in the protection of minority rights. During this excursion, students also learn about the rich cultural history of Croatia, the jewel of the Adriatic and the crossroad for many ancient civilizations. Students will have the option to visit Jasenovac, one of Europe's largest concentration and extermination camps which was established by the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) in occupied Yugoslavia in 1941. Croatia is also known for its extraordinary food, centuries-old art and architecture, and natural environment. Students visit the coastal city of Rijeka – the 2021 European capital of culture. Students may visit the island of Krk, historically known as “the Golden Island,” “the cradle of Croatian culture,” and more recently as the “sixth continent.” In Cres Town on Cres Island, students visit Cres Old town and see the Venetian Tower, Municipal Loggia, Remnants of the city walls, Old Roman Bridge, and the Beli Olive mill.

Required Reading:

Listen to conversation with Mario Mazic, Croatian activists, [International Institute for Peace \(IIP\) event](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JicOaA7Mud4&t=188s), Reconciliation: 30 years since the breakup of Yugoslavia, 2021.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JicOaA7Mud4&t=188s>

Pavlaković, V. (2019). “Dignity for the Defeated: Recognizing the ‘Other’ in Post-Yugoslav Commemorative Practices.” In *New Critical Spaces in Transitional Justice: Gender, Art and Memory*, edited by Arnaud Kurze and Christopher Lamont, pp. 223-249.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1) Group projects (20%)

Students conduct small group projects and are asked to observe and explore efforts at peacebuilding and reconciliation in Belgrade. Students are encouraged to talk to their local peers and understand impacts of the past and the outlook for the future of Serbian youth. Students write a small reflection paper of 300 words about their group projects and learning experiences as students of peace and post-conflict transformation in Serbia.

2) Reading Analysis (20%)

Students choose one assigned text from the list of their course readings from Modules 1, 2 or 3 and engage with the main argument the text. The text analysis should integrate information collected through class lectures and field visits. The paper should be 300 words long.

Peace and Conflict Studies Paper/Video/Podcast Project (40%)

For this assignment, students conduct a small fieldwork project on an aspect related to global health, humanitarian aid or development. Students can do observation or conduct informal interviews/conversations and synthesize the information in a 600-word paper/10-minute video, podcast or another creative project of their choice.

4) Weekly Synthesis Sessions (10%)

All Students are required to lead one weekly synthesis session along with a small group. Leading a synthesis session requires that the student prepare a summary of the week's sessions and field visit and prepare questions for discussion.

5) Participation (10%)

This includes active involvement in lectures, readings, discussions and excursions using the following criteria:

- Attendance - promptness to class and positive presence in class.
- Active Listening - paying attention in class and during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm (this includes body language), entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes.
- Involvement in Discussions - either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge. This means challenging yourself to speak up if you usually don't, and also means allowing others to speak if you are a person who tends to dominate class discussions.
- Group Accountability – positive participation in the group during field excursions and classes; not keeping others waiting.
- Displaying Respect – culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, program staff, speakers and communities.

Assessment

Group Projects – 20%

Reading Analysis – 20%

Peace and Conflict Studies Paper/Video/Podcast – 40%

Weekly Synthesis Session – 10%

Participation – 10%

Attendance and Participation

Due to the nature of The Experiment programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in each and every class session, attendance at all classes and for all program excursions is required. Criteria for evaluation of student performance include attendance and participation in program activities. Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed with the program director or other designated staff person.

Late Assignments

The Experiment programs integrate traditional classroom lectures and discussion with field-based experiences, site visits and debriefs. It is critical that students complete assignments in a timely manner to continue to benefit from the sequences in assignments, reflections and experiences throughout the program.

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+

84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64%	F

Program Expectations

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.
- Storing Your Work: Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will always be available to despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not excuses for late, missing work.
- Personal Technology Use: Cell phones and other personal electronics can be used for taking notes and other class activities. Off-task usage is not acceptable. You may be marked as absent for habitually using them for something other than classroom activities.
- Classroom recording policy: To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

The Experiment Policies and Resources

Please refer to The Experiment handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.