

Department: International Relations

Faculty: Social Sciences

Course Title: Peace and Conflict Studies: Theory and Practice (MPhil/PhD, Optional)

Number of Credits: Four

Course objectives: Given the growing complexity of contemporary armed conflict in South Asia there is need to push the confines of the discipline of International Relations beyond conventional/or 'given' analytical template both in theory and practice. This course will provide a dialogic space to review theories, models and skills for theorizing causes of conflict and developing peace initiatives that can respond to deep-rooted contemporary conflicts particularly in South Asia. The attempt will be to build a healthy synergy between research, theory and perspectives 'from the field'. The multi and interdisciplinary nature of the field of peace and conflict studies compels for a need to draw from the fields of sociology, psychology and other social sciences. The attempt is to facilitate firstly, an understanding of social theories that may prove useful in conflict analysis, secondly evaluate the usefulness of these social theories from the standpoint of practice, thirdly to assist students to develop critical acumen to construct useful theories for conflict analysis and transformation. The pedagogy for the course would be elicitive, participatory and would draw on multiple formats for the teaching -learning process.

Minimum prerequisites for taking this course, if any:

Course structure:

Unit 1: Understanding the Field (What?)

The central aim is to facilitate an understanding of 'given', 'evolving' and 'possible' agenda's for peace and conflict research.

Unit 2: Re-Interrogating Theoretical Frames/Conflict Analysis (Why?)

The central aim of this unit is to facilitate firstly, an understanding of social theories that may prove useful in conflict analysis, secondly evaluate the usefulness of these social theories from the standpoint of practice, thirdly to assist students to develop critical acumen to construct useful theories for conflict analysis and transformation

UNIT 3: Critical Approaches to Peacemaking (How?):

The objective of this unit is to provide a dialogic space to review theories, models and skills for theorizing and developing peace initiatives that can respond to deep-rooted contemporary conflicts in South Asia and beyond. The attempt will be to build a healthy synergy between research, theory and perspectives 'from the field'. It will attempt to initiate a dialogical process of enquiry and creativity in thinking about complex problems.

UNIT 4: Open House, Peace and Conflict Research in South Asia

Reading suggestions:

Pim, Joam Evans, Herbert C Kelman, Chadwick F. Alger, Nigel J. Young and Zahid Shahab Ahmed (2010). "Peace research" in Nigel Young (ed.), *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace*. Oxford University Press: Oxford

Bercovitch, Jacob and Richard Jackson (2009), *Conflict Resolution in the Twenty-first Century: Principles, Methods and Approaches*, Ann Arbor (MI): University of Michigan Press

Boulding, Kenneth (1989) *Three Faces of Power*. Sage: London

Zizek, Slavoj (2008) *Violence Six Sideways Reflections*, Picador.

Kakar Sudhir (1996) *The Colors of Violence: Cultural Identities, Religion, and Conflict*, University of Chicago Press

Burton, John (1990) *Conflict: Basic Human Needs*, St. Martins Press: New York pp. 301-335.

Azar, E., (1990) *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict: Theory & Cases*, Aldershot: Dartmouth