

PACS 3850: International Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding

University of Colorado Boulder

Spring 2025

3.00 credits

Meeting time & location: Tuesday & Thursdays 11:00 AM- 12:15 PM, Ketchum Arts & Sciences (KTCH), Room 1B71

Instructor Information

Jamie Pratt | Jamie.pratt@colorado.edu | Center for Community (C4C), S485

Please address me as Professor Pratt or Ms. Pratt.

Office hours: Wednesdays 12pm-2pm or by appointment (email to schedule)

Course Information

Prerequisites: It is strongly recommended that you have taken PACS 2500 prior to this course.

Course materials: This course does not require you to purchase any textbooks or other materials. All readings are available through Canvas as pdfs, webpages, or videos in the modules. The following textbook is recommended but not required.

Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall, [*Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts*](#), 4th ed. (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2016).

Course description: This course introduces the interdisciplinary field of international conflict resolution and peacebuilding, an area of knowledge and practice that provides tools for analyzing and intervening in contemporary manifestations of violent social conflict. Arising in direct response to the limitations of Realist international relations theory, conflict resolution argues for an approach to international affairs rooted in more nuanced understandings of the nature of violent conflict and its dynamics. It bases the quest to build sustainable peace not on military supremacy or coercive diplomacy, but rather the ability of states and peoples to work collaboratively to develop mutually beneficial solutions aimed at the satisfaction of basic needs, collective security, political representation, and respect for human dignity. In this course,

students will learn the foundations for analyzing social conflicts, their causes and dynamics, as well as the various means by which conflicts are mitigated, contained, and resolved. We will also explore the ways governments, international organizations, and communities build peace in post-conflict contexts, engaging in processes such as DDR (disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration), citizen diplomacy, and reconciliation. We will focus on a variety of different contemporary and historical cases.

Together, we will examine the development of the field through the writings of foundational thinkers and innovators, moving from the Cold War to contemporary episodes of violence. Students will be presented with foundational theories, analytical techniques, models, and modes of practice essential to grounding them in the field. This course aims to nurture students' abilities to think both critically and systematically about the manifestation of violent social conflict and responses to it.

Format: This course will be taught as a combination of lecture and seminar. Students and the instructor will embark on a collaborative learning experience, partaking in a range of activities and discussions designed to deepen our understanding of the assigned materials. This includes working in small groups, role plays, possible guest speakers, and other experiential activities that might take place inside or outside of the classroom. Student participation and preparedness are crucial to making the class a successful learning experience. Congratulations! You have found a hidden surprise. The first 3 people who send me an email with the phrase "PACS 3850 syllabus treasure hunt" in the subject line will receive 5 bonus points to use on any individual assignment of their choosing. The bonus points may not be used on the group project.

Learning Objectives: After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Identify key terminology, concepts, and theories, associated with conflict resolution and peacebuilding;
- Compare the strengths and limitations of core theories used to analyze contemporary conflicts;
- Relate theories, concepts, and frameworks of conflict analysis to past situations, as well as those episodes of violence occurring in the world today;
- Evaluate the relationship between the analysis of a conflict and the methods of intervention;
- Illustrate the ethical challenges and dilemmas involved with intervening in conflicts;
- Differentiate between various modes of conflict intervention and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote, or online. Failure to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, marital status, political affiliation, or political philosophy.

For more information, see the [classroom behavior policy](#), the [Student Code of Conduct](#), and the [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#).

Accommodation for Disabilities, Temporary Medical Conditions, and Medical Isolation

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or DSinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

If you have a temporary illness, injury or required medical isolation for which you require adjustment, please let me know via email as soon as possible.

Preferred Student Names and Pronouns

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the [Honor Code](#). Violations of the Honor Code may include but are not limited to: plagiarism (including use of paper writing services or technology [such as essay bots]), cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. Understanding the course's syllabus is a vital part in adhering to the Honor Code.

All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution: StudentConduct@colorado.edu. Students found responsible for violating the [Honor Code](#) will be assigned resolution outcomes from the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution as

well as be subject to academic sanctions from the faculty member. Visit [Honor Code](#) for more information on the academic integrity policy.

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

CU Boulder is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. University policy prohibits [protected-class](#) discrimination and harassment, sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking, and related retaliation by or against members of our community on- and off-campus. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) addresses these concerns, and individuals who have been subjected to misconduct can contact OIEC at 303-492-2127 or email CUreport@colorado.edu. Information about university policies, [reporting options](#), and [support resources](#) including confidential services can be found on the [OIEC website](#).

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors must inform OIEC when they are made aware of incidents related to these policies regardless of when or where something occurred. This is to ensure that individuals impacted receive outreach from OIEC about resolution options and support resources. To learn more about reporting and support for a variety of concerns, visit the [Don't Ignore It](#) page.

Religious Accommodations

Campus policy requires faculty to provide reasonable accommodations for students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please communicate the need for a religious accommodation in a timely manner. In this class, please email me if you are seeking this accommodation as soon as possible. I am happy to discuss any needed adjustments or requests.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

Mental Health and Wellness

The University of Colorado Boulder is committed to the well-being of all students. If you are struggling with personal stressors, mental health or substance use concerns that are impacting academic or daily life, please contact [Counseling and Psychiatric Services \(CAPS\)](#) located in C4C or call (303) 492-2277, 24/7.

Free and unlimited telehealth is also available through [Academic Live Care](#). The [Academic Live Care](#) site also provides information about additional wellness services on campus that are available to students.

Assignments

Further instructions and grading rubrics for all assignments are provided in the course Canvas page.

Comprehension Quizzes:

The quizzes will be open-note, multiple-choice assessments designed to evaluate students' understanding of key course concepts. There will be three quizzes throughout the semester, each corresponding to different sections of the course material. These quizzes will be posted on Canvas and are intended to encourage students to engage actively with the readings and lectures. Each quiz will be available for a set period, and students are expected to complete them independently, by the posted deadline.

Conflict Mapping Assignment:

For this assignment, you will apply conflict mapping techniques to analyze a real-world conflict. You can choose one of the following three options:

- Stakeholder Analysis
- Stakeholder Mapping
- Conflict Tree

Conflict mapping helps break down the complex elements of a conflict by visualizing key stakeholders, relationships, underlying causes, and consequences. This assignment is designed to develop your ability to analyze a conflict from multiple perspectives, helping you understand how conflicts evolve and how resolution might be approached.

Core Theory Short Paper:

For this assignment, you will write a 4-5 page paper in which you will choose one of the core theories discussed in class and explore its relevance and application to conflict and peacebuilding. This paper will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the selected theory and its practical implications, as well as critically engage with the concepts covered in the course.

The core theories you may choose from are:

- Basic Human Needs Theory
- Social Identity Theory
- Collective Memory Theory
- Horizontal Inequalities Theory
- Gender, Conflict, and Peacebuilding

Modes of Diplomacy Short Paper:

For this assignment, you will write a 4-5 page paper that explores one of the three primary modes of diplomacy: Track I, Track II, or Track III Diplomacy. Your task is to analyze and compare the chosen diplomacy track, discussing its characteristics, applications, and real-world examples. You will also evaluate the effectiveness of the selected mode in resolving conflicts or advancing peacebuilding efforts. This paper will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of how these modes are utilized in contemporary diplomacy and international conflict resolution.

Pop Culture & Peacebuilding Assignment:

For this pass/fail assignment, you will analyze how international peacebuilding or conflict resolution is portrayed in pop culture (films, TV shows, documentaries, or video games). Choose one pop culture example that involves international peacebuilding and reflect on how it portrays these themes. You will submit a brief response on Canvas (1-2 paragraphs) discussing your analysis and answering the provided questions.

Group Project:

The final group project for this course will require students to collaborate in teams of 5 to analyze a modern real-world conflict using various conflict resolution and peacebuilding frameworks. The group will deliver a 30-minute presentation, which must include a comprehensive conflict analysis (e.g., stakeholder mapping, conflict tree), the application of core theories (such as basic needs, social identity, gender, etc.), a discussion of each mode of diplomacy (Track I, II, III), and an examination of ethical considerations. The presentation should also propose potential resolutions and discuss post-conflict strategies. Each member will contribute equally to the presentation, and the group's analysis should demonstrate a deep understanding of the conflict and the peacebuilding process. On the presentation days at the end of the semester, each student will complete a peer rubric for the presentation that will be factored into the final grade. *All group members will receive the same grade for the presentation.*

Final Paper:

In addition to the group project, each student will submit an individual paper (8-10 pages) that expands on the work presented by the group. The paper should include a more detailed exploration of the conflict, incorporating the same elements addressed in the group project. It must also include a section on a peacebuilder or peacebuilding organization involved in the conflict, discussing their work and involvement in the peace process. The paper will allow students to conduct individual research, develop a more comprehensive understanding of the conflict, and critically engage with the theories and solutions discussed in the group presentation.

Attendance & Participation:

Active participation and consistent attendance are essential components of this course. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and engage thoughtfully in class discussions, activities, and group work. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class, and any absence must be communicated to the instructor in advance, except in cases of emergency. Participation will be graded based on the quality and frequency of contributions to discussions, as well as engagement with course materials and peers. Absences will negatively impact participation grades unless there are extenuating circumstances, in which case documentation may be required. Active participation includes asking questions, offering insights, and responding to others' points of view in a respectful and constructive manner. **More than 3 unexcused absences will result in 5 points being taken off your final grade for each absence (over 3). Excused absences mean letting the professor know ahead of class time via email. If this expectation is not followed, the absence will be considered unexcused.**

Late Work Policy:

Everyday an assignment is turned in late will result in a 10% deduction to the grade, for the first 3 days. On the 4th day, there will be zero credit. I am flexible and understanding, please reach out to me if you have concerns about meeting a deadline. I will work with you! If you do not communicate with me about deadlines, then I have no way of giving you extra time.

Grading:

Assignment	Points
Comprehension Quiz 1	5
Comprehension Quiz 2	5
Comprehension Quiz 3	5
Conflict Mapping Assignment	10
Core Theory Short Paper	15
Modes of Diplomacy Short Paper	15
Pop Culture & Peacebuilding Discussion	5
Group Project	25
Final Paper	20
Attendance & Participation	15
TOTAL	120

Course Schedule:

Class	Topic	Required readings	Assignments
Tuesday, January 14 Class 1	Welcome and Introduction	Read the syllabus for this course in its entirety.	
Thursday, January 16 Class 2	Conceptualizing peacebuilding	Reimer, L. E., Schmitz, C. L., Janke, E. M., Askerov, A., Strahl, B. T., & Matyok, T. G. (2015). Chapter 1: Introduction to the field of peace and conflict studies. In <i>Transformative change</i> (pp. 1-18). Lexington Books.	
Tuesday, January 21 Class 3	Key concepts	Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H., & Woodhouse, T. (2016). Introduction to conflict resolution: Concepts and definitions. In <i>Contemporary conflict resolution: The prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts</i> (4th ed., pp. 1-11). Polity. Hancock, L. E., & Solomon, J. (2020). Chapter 1: Meanings of peace. In F. O. Hampson, A. Özerdem, & J. Kent (Eds.), <i>Routledge handbook of peace, security and development</i> (pp. 9–20). Taylor & Francis Group.	
Thursday, January 23 Class 4	Dynamics of conflict & stages of peacebuilding	Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H., & Woodhouse, T. (2016). Introduction to conflict resolution: Concepts and definitions. In <i>Contemporary conflict resolution: The prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts</i> (4th ed., pp. 12-37). Polity.	

		Kriesberg, L. (2010). Phases. In N. J. Young (Ed.), <i>The Oxford international encyclopedia of peace</i> . Oxford University Press.	
Tuesday, January 28 Class 5	Understanding contemporary conflict	Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H., & Woodhouse, T. (2016). Understanding contemporary conflict. In <i>Contemporary conflict resolution: The prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts</i> (4th ed., pp. 110–143). Polity.	
Thursday, January 30 Class 6	Core theory: Basic Human Needs	Sandole, D. (2013). Extending the reach of basic human needs. In K. Avruch & C. R. Mitchell (Eds.), <i>Conflict resolution and human needs: Linking theory and practice</i> (pp. 21–39). Taylor & Francis.	Comprehension quiz 1 due by 11:59 PM
Tuesday, February 4 Class 7	Core theory: Social Identity & Collective Memory	Demmers, J. (2017). Identity, boundaries and violence. In <i>Theories of violent conflict: An introduction</i> (2nd ed.). Routledge. Fitzduff, M. (2021). Us and others. In <i>Our brains at war: The neuroscience of conflict and peacebuilding</i> (pp. 36–54). Oxford University Press.	
Thursday, February 6 Class 8	Core theory: Horizontal inequalities	Stewart, F. (2008). Horizontal inequalities and conflict: An introduction and some hypotheses. In <i>Horizontal inequalities and conflict: Understanding group violence in multiethnic societies</i> (pp. 3-24). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.	
Tuesday, February 11 Class 9	Core theory: Gender, Conflict, & Peacebuilding	Cockburn, C. (2013). War and security, women and gender: an overview of the issues. <i>Gender & development</i> , 21(3), 433-452. Women at the negotiating table - the missing piece in peacebuilding Manal Omar TEDxSanDiego	

Thursday, February 13 Class 10	Conflict intervention & intervenor roles	<p>Lederach, J. P. (1997). Structure. In <i>Building peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies</i> (pp. 37–61). Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.</p> <p>Coy, P. G., Hancock, L. E., & Gurung, A. (2019). Peace studies and conflict resolution. In B. Byrne et al. (Eds.), <i>Routledge companion to peace and conflict studies</i> (pp. 68-75). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.</p> <p>Ury, William. "Third Side Roles Everyone Plays."</p>	Comprehension quiz 2 due by 11:59 PM
Tuesday, February 18 Class 11	Ethics of intervention	<p>Autesserre, S. (2021). Chapter 6: Recasting roles. In <i>The frontlines of peace: An insider's guide to changing the world</i> (pp. 151-175). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Fast, L., Neufeldt, R., & Schirch, L. (2002). Toward ethically grounded conflict interventions: Reevaluating challenges in the 21st century. <i>International Negotiation</i>, 7(2), 185–207.</p>	Core theory short paper due by 11:59 PM
Thursday, February 20 Class 12	Conflicting mapping & assessment	CDA Associates. (2018). <i>Conflict analysis framework</i> (Chapters 1, 6.1, 6.2, & 6.3).	
Tuesday, February 25 Class 13	Track I Diplomacy: Negotiation	<p>Pruitt, D. G. (2015). The evolution of readiness theory. In M. Galluccio (Ed.), <i>Handbook of international negotiation</i> (pp. 123–138). Springer, Cham.</p> <p>Bercovitch, J. (2008). Mediation and negotiation techniques. In L. Kurtz (Ed.), <i>Encyclopedia of violence, peace, & conflict</i></p>	Conflict mapping assignment due by 11:59 PM

		(2nd ed., pp. 1202-1210). Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012373985-8.00102-1	
Thursday, February 27	Track I Diplomacy: Mediation	Peace Mediation Germany. (2017). <i>Basics of mediation: Concepts and definitions</i> . Federal Foreign Office.	
Class 14			
Tuesday, March 4	Peacekeeping	Hultman, L., Kathman, J. D., & Shannon, M. (2019). Peacekeeping and the problem of civil war. In <i>Peacekeeping in the midst of war</i> (pp. 1–24). Oxford: Oxford University Press.	
Class 15		Is The Future Of Peacekeeping Peaceful? Shannon Zimmerman TEDxUQ	
Thursday, March 6	Disarmament, Demobilizing, & Reintegration (DDR)	Özerdem, A. (2013). Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. In R. Mac Ginty (Ed.), <i>Routledge handbook of peacebuilding</i> (pp. 225–236). Taylor & Francis Group.	
Class 16			
Tuesday, March 11	Environmental peacebuilding	Conca, K. (2024). Environmental Peacebuilding: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow. <i>Journal of Social Encounters</i> , 8(1), 4–12. https://doi.org/10.69755/2995-2212.1236	
Class 17		Chatter: Water, Security, and Conflict with Peter Gleick podcast	
Thursday, March 13	State building & nation building	Van Brabant, K. (2010). <i>What is peacebuilding? Statebuilding and peacebuilding</i> . Interpeace.	Project groups announced in class
Class 18		Shinoda, H. (2018). Peace-building and state-building from the perspective of the historical development of international society. <i>International Relations of the Asia-Pacific</i> , 18(1), 25–43. https://doi.org/10.1093/irap/lcx025	

Tuesday, March 18 Class 19	Track II Diplomacy: problem solving	<p>Jones, P. (2015). What is Track II diplomacy? In <i>Track two diplomacy in theory and practice</i> (pp. 7–31). Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.</p> <p>Broome, B. J. (1997). Designing a collective approach to peace: Interactive design and problem-solving workshops with Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities in Cyprus. <i>International Negotiation</i>, 2(3), 381–407.</p>	Group project conflict selection due in class
Thursday, March 20 Class 20	Track III Diplomacy: grassroots peacebuilding	<p>Lederach, J. P. (2008). Cultivating peace: A practitioner’s view of deadly conflict and negotiation. In J. Darby & R. Mac Ginty (Eds.), <i>Contemporary peacemaking: Conflict, peace processes and post-war reconstruction</i> (pp. 30–37). Palgrave Macmillan.</p> <p>Jankowitz, S. (2021). Grassroots Organizations and Peacebuilding. In <i>The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies</i> (pp. 1-10). Cham: Springer International Publishing.</p> <p>To solve mass violence, look to locals </p> <p>Severine Autesserre </p> <p>TEDGlobal 2014</p>	Pop culture homework assignment due by 11:59 PM
Tuesday, March 25	NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK	
Thursday, March 27	NO CLASS!	SPRING BREAK	
Tuesday, April 1 Class 21	Track III Diplomacy: dialogue processes	<p>Fisher-Yoshida, B. (2014). Creating constructive communication through dialogue. In P. T. Coleman, M. Deutsch, & E. C. Marcus (Eds.), <i>The handbook of conflict resolution: Theory and practice</i> (pp. 877-897). Jossey-Bass.</p>	

Thursday, April 3 Class 22	Transitional justice	Fischer, M. (2011). Transitional justice and reconciliation: Theory and practice. In B. Austin, M. Fischer, H. J. Giessmann (Eds.), <i>Advancing conflict transformation: The Berghof handbook II</i> (pp. 406-430). Barbara Budrich Publishers.	Modes of diplomacy short paper due by 11:59 PM
Tuesday, April 8 Class 23	Post-conflict reintegration	Nilsson, A. (2005). Chapter 2: Defining reintegration. In <i>Reintegrating ex-combatants in post-conflict societies</i> (pp. 22-30).	Comprehension quiz 3 due by 11:59 PM
Thursday, April 10 Class 24	Conflict and learning	Maulden, P. A. (2013). Education and learning. In <i>Routledge handbook of peacebuilding</i> (pp. 297-305). Routledge.	
Tuesday, April 15 Class 25	Group work	University of Minnesota Group Projects Tutorial	
Thursday, April 17 Class 26	Group work	No readings	
Tuesday, April 22 Class 27	Student presentations	No readings	In class: peer grading rubrics
Thursday, April 24 Class 28	Student presentations	No readings	In class: peer grading rubrics
Tuesday, April 29	Student presentations	No readings	In class: peer grading rubrics

Class 29			
Thursday, May 1	Future of peacebuilding	Future Visions of Peace Zachary Metz TEDxHofstraUniversity	
Class 30			
Thursday, May 8	NO CLASS	FINALS WEEK	Final paper due by 11:59 PM