

# What is the PACS Certificate?



Prepared by PACS Director, Dr. Michael English (May 2023)

# The PACS Certificate

## Description

- The Certificate in Peace, Conflict, and Security is designed to help students explore why conflict and violence occur, and to develop practical, transferable skills to analyze, intervene, and resolve conflicts using nonviolent means in their personal life, in their communities, and between countries.

## Why complete the PACS Certificate?

- The PACS Certificate is a professional specialization for CU undergrads.
  - Our goal is to help students develop both analytical and practical skills transferable across contexts for addressing conflict
    - Skills include conflict analysis, mediation, facilitation, and collaborative problem solving.
  - We offer smaller class sizes and more personalized instruction.
  - All instructors are experts and professionals in the field of peace and conflict studies.

[www.colorado.edu/pacs/peace-conflict-and-security-program](http://www.colorado.edu/pacs/peace-conflict-and-security-program)

# Careers that Benefit from PACS

- Diplomacy and foreign service
- Law and politics
- Social activism and advocacy
- Nonprofits and NGOs
- Business, leadership, and team management
- Peace Corps, humanitarian assistance, and international development
- Military and policing
- Intelligence analysis
- Journalism
- Film and the arts



# 18 Credit Hours to Earn the PACS Certificate (same as a minor)

- 12 credits of PACS courses (students take four PACS specific-courses)
  - Intro Course
    - PACS 2500
  - Conflict Resolution Course
    - PACS 3700 (Interpersonal), 3850 (International), or 3860 (Environmental)
  - Capstone Course
    - PACS 4000, 4100, 4500, 4900, approved internship or global seminar
    - Senior level courses are all about hands-on skills development
  - PACS Elective Course
    - 3700, 3800, 3850, 3860, 3870, 4000, 4100, 4500, 4900 or approved substitute
    - PSCI 3123 - War, Peace, and Strategic Defense counts as an elective
    - The elective can be any PACS course not yet taken
- 6 approved elective credits (two courses)
  - These are typically required courses completed as part of a student's major

# PACS Courses and Semester Offered

- PACS 2500 - Intro to Peace, Conflict, and Security Studies
  - In-Person - Fall, Spring, and Summer
  - Online - Fall, Spring, and Summer
- PACS 3700 - Communication and Conflict Management
  - In-Person - Fall
  - Online - Fall, Spring, Winter and Summer
- PACS 3800 - Security Studies
  - In-Person - Fall
    - Depends on instructor availability
- PACS 3850 - International Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding
  - In-Person - Spring
  - Online - Fall, Spring, and Summer
- PACS 3860 - Environmental Conflict & Conflict Intervention
  - In-Person - Spring
- PACS 3870 - Nonviolent Civil Resistance: Social Movements and Strategies
  - In-Person - Spring
    - Depends on instructor availability
- PACS 4000 - Special Topics: Restorative Justice
  - In-Person - Fall
- PACS 4000 - Special Topics: Mediation Skills
  - In-Person - Spring
- PACS 4100 - Managing Organizational Conflict
  - Online - Fall and Spring
  - Starting Spring 24
- PACS 4500 - Senior Seminar: Critical Inquiry in PACS
  - In-Person - Fall
- PACS 4900 - Independent Study: Internship with CU's Restorative Justice Program
  - In-Person - Fall and Spring
  - Must take PACS 3700 or 4000 RJ to be eligible.

# Sample Paths to Certificate Completion

## International Path

### PACS Courses

- PACS 2500
- PACS 3850
- PACS 3800 or PSCI 3123
- PACS 4500
  - Counts as IAFS Senior Seminar

### Elective Courses

- IAFS 1000 or PSCI 2012
- IAFS 3000 or PSCI 2223

## Interpersonal or Skills Focused

### PACS Courses

- PACS 2500
- PACS 3700
- PACS 4000 Restorative Justice
- PACS 4100

### Elective Courses

- PSYC 2606 or SOCY 2011
- PSYC 3303 or SOCY 3314

## Environment Focused

### PACS Courses

- PACS 2500
- PACS 3860
- PACS 3700
- PACS 4000 Mediation

### Elective Courses

- ENVS 1000 or ENVD 1010
- ENVS 3033 or ENVD 2003

# Things to know in advance:

- **Students need at least one full academic year to complete the program.**
  - Most students start the program in their junior year and complete one course per semester.
- **Students must submit a plan of study to be officially registered for the program.**
  - The PACS Director reviews and approves the plan of study to ensure feasibility.
  - The PACS Director also serves as the student advisor for all registered PACS students.
- **For more info or to register for the certificate:**
  - General Information - <https://www.colorado.edu/pacs>
  - Email me at [michael.d.english@colorado.edu](mailto:michael.d.english@colorado.edu)
  - If you are ready to register, you can fill out our online form - <https://forms.gle/ByMr4utbu8auf2p27>

# PACS Program Data

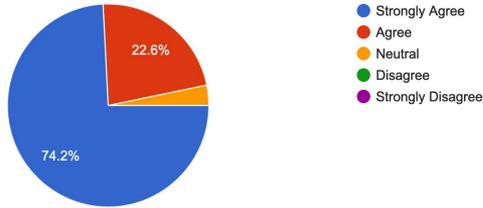
Year	# of course sections offered	# of students served	# of PACS Certificate graduates
2017	16	183	11
2018	11	237	11
2019*	14	357	13
2020	19	420	20
2021	20	436	25
2022	23	456	29
2023**	8	189	29

- There are currently 49 students enrolled in the program. This typically jumps over Fall Semester to near 80 students.
- The top two majors earning the PACS Certificate are: 1. Political Science and 2. International Affairs.
- \* This is the year Dr. English took over as director of program. I started at CU in Fall 2018.
- \*\* This data shows calendar, rather than academic year.

# Student Satisfaction with PACS Certificate (Exit Survey Data)

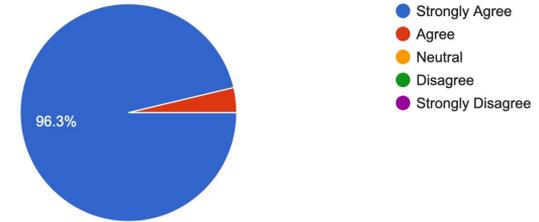
2021-22

I believe the PACS Certificate Program improved the quality of my experience at CU Boulder.  
31 responses

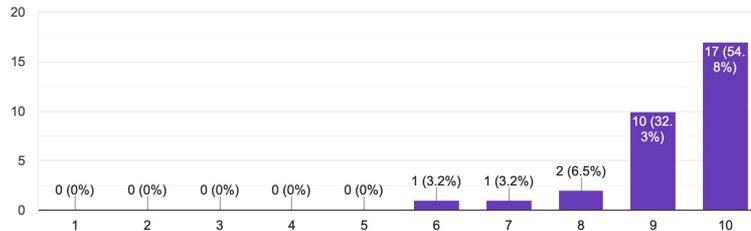


2022-23

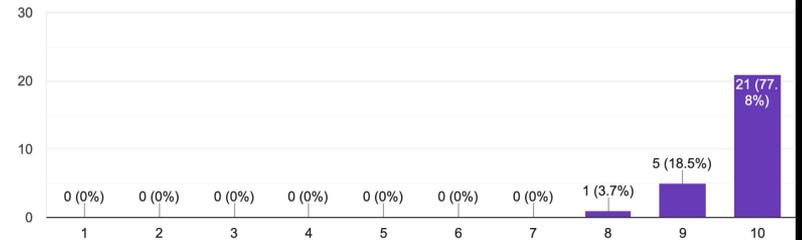
I believe the PACS Certificate Program improved the quality of my experience at CU Boulder.  
27 responses



On a scale from 1 to 10, please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the PACS Certificate Program.  
31 responses



On a scale from 1 to 10, please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the PACS Certificate Program.  
27 responses



# Qualitative Data From PACS Exit Survey

- “I have loved getting my PACS certificate, these were my favorite courses I took during my time at CU, and I really wish I would have been able to have a PACS major or minor. PACS fits exactly what I want to do after graduation and think it would be extremely beneficial for CU to offer PACS as a minor or major”
- “By far the best program I have been a part of at CU, no question. I have always found the curriculum interesting, current, and applicable. Furthermore, I think the community of students that PACS has, is downright awesome. Though I really want this program to expand (because it truly deserves to), there is something about having that small group of dedicated students sticking together from course to course. Lastly, thank you for being an understanding and candid professor. You are one of the few professors on campus that I feel spares students the bullshit; you call it how it is and it is incredibly refreshing. On the other side of the coin, you have been incredibly understanding. From sick days, to ROTC training, to mentally off days, to my days of pure confusion as a first-gen college student -- you have been understanding and adaptable in the classroom. You never shutdown student ideas, you always help us expand our perspectives and learning in a respectful manner, and I always feel I can participate without judgement. You can't find these qualities in all classrooms at CU, so I have appreciated the safe space on campus. Thank you for all you do Professor English and thank you for an awesome program!”
- “Michael does an amazing job as the head of the PACS certificate and does his best to get to know his students. He offers a safe space to discuss controversial topics without any blame or offense. This certificate brought a lot of information to light regarding different jobs in the international system and different ways of looking at the world.”
- “I would just like to say I am incredibly grateful for the offering of this program and the knowledge of which I gained through partaking in the program. I hope it continues to grow and get funding as it greatly improved my educational experience.”
- “Thank you for the program! PACS classes have completely transformed how I view and deal with conflict and those skills will apply to both my personal and work life.”
- “It was really great! I loved it and it has shaped what I want to do with my life moving forward.”
- “I just loved this program so much. Truly one of my favorite things about my time here.”
- “Highlight of my college career the classes are so fascinating.”

# CU Boulder Certification Completion Totals at CU (2014-2021)

Top 13 Certificate Programs	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
1. Public Health		19	79	119	133	178	167	205	900
2. Technology, Art & Media		88	114	82	151	165	126	58	784
3. Real Estate	45	44	54	56	66	87	27	1	380
4. Global Business		32	59	45	44	54	49	61	344
5. Engineering Management	32	9	56	56	46	39	39	17	294
4. Speech Lang Pathology Asst		23	39	27	25	32	34	35	215
5. Social Respons and Ethics	25	19	23	14	31	36	31	30	209
6. Center for Teaching & Learning	24	38	21	25	17	19	34	24	202
7. Engineering Leadership	2	15	13	13	21	19	31	34	148
8. Peace, Conflict, and Security	17	35	20	10	12	11	15	26	146
9. Entrepreneurial Studies	18	20	22	14	14	12	15	15	130
10. Neurosciences and Behavior	23	23	14	12	14	12	8	9	115
11. Actuarial Studies&Quantitve Fin	11	21	11	9	9	14	20	19	114
12. Digital Media	92	21							113
13. Global Engineering	17	14	20	6	12	15	18	10	112

- PACS is 8th overall and 2nd behind Public Health within the College of Arts and Sciences based on available data.
  - <https://www.colorado.edu/oda/institutional-research/our-students/degrees>
- When compared with CU data on completion of minors over this same period, PACS would rank 30th.