

Political Science 242-00: Intro to Conflict and Peace Studies
Spring Semester 2021
(Monday and Wednesday 5:00 – 6:15 p.m.)

Instructor: Brian Mello
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Course Web Site: available through Canvas

Office: Ettiinger 308 D

Office Hours: I can be available to meet via phone or Zoom Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays between 9:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. Please email or text me to set up a meeting time that works for you. If you cannot meet during these hours we can work together to find a time that will.

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Overview: World War I was supposed to have been “the war to end all wars,” but the remainder of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first have witnessed no let up in human conflict, and the prospect for peace in the world seems as remote as ever. This raises several questions: Is peace worth pursuing? Is it possible to eradicate conflict? Is conflict somehow inherent to human nature? This is an introductory course in the interdisciplinary study of peace and conflict. We will examine the theoretical arguments about if and how the seeds of conflict might be in the nature of man; examine the utility of both violence and non-violence; consider how patriotism and identity might either be the source of peace and solidarity or the catalyst for conflict and enmity; think through just and unjust wars and the spread of militarism; consider how conflicts may be resolved and sustainable peace implemented. As the course is part of the Women and Gender Studies program at Muhlenberg College, throughout the course, we will utilize feminist theory and feminist approaches to international relations as a means to orient our exploration of these questions. This course fulfills a Social Science requirement and a Human Diversity and Global Engagement (HDGE) requirement, as well.

Goals: By the end of the semester:

- Students should gain a more thorough awareness about the complex theoretical and practical debates around peace and conflict. As part of this process students should gain both an increased understanding of particular cases of conflict, as well as an increased understanding of the challenges involved in conflict resolution.
- **Students should learn how to define and apply various IR theories (including Liberalism, Realism, and Feminist IR theories).**
- **And, through this analysis of conflict and peace students should develop knowledge of how social differences are created, maintained, and challenged, with emphasis on questions of social power in both the justifications for war and conflict, and in the history of activism and political thought dedicated to building peace.**

Responsibilities: This is an introductory political science course, and I will assume that most students may not generally be familiar with political science, or the sub-field of international relations. While students will not be expected to have any prior knowledge of or interest in the material studied, students taking this course should be willing to engage the material with an open mind. I expect that you fulfill the following responsibilities:

1. Students should attend all sections either virtually or in person. While I am aware that obligations or illnesses may cause some sections to be missed, the material we will examine can be complex, and many absences or the failure to keep up with the reading will adversely affect your ability to accomplish the goals of this course.

2. Students shall be prepared for each class by carefully reading all assignments. Prepared students will be able to ask informed questions and perform well on all exams and papers.

Grading: Grades for this course will be determined as follows:

75% - Guided Essays. There will be three essay assignments throughout the semester. These essays will ask you to critically engage with the course readings, cases, concepts, etc. The final assignment will be distributed during the last week of class, and will be due during the final exam period in lieu of a final exam. These essays should be about 5-7 typed pages in length, 11-12 point font, and double-spaced.

10% - Group Storymap JS. We will divide into groups of 3 (with either one group of 2 or one group of 4 if we cannot divide evenly). Each group will take on an existing or recent conflict and, using Storymap JS develop an overview of the conflict focusing on key events; key causes; and reflecting on how the conflict was resolved, or if it is on-going, on the major impediments to conflict resolution. We'll use the last couple of weeks of class to work on these projects.

15%- Participation & Hypothes.is Annotations. This grade will be determined by evaluating your productive contribution to the course discussions, and by your regular participation in annotating course texts through Hypothes.is. There will only be a few readings during the semester where I will not require Hypothes.is annotations to be completed by 2:00 p.m. on the day that readings are due. I will indicate this in the opening page for each module/section of the course in Canvas. For all other days readings should be read and annotated prior to 2:00 p.m. on the day the readings are to be discussed, which will give me the opportunity to look through and respond to any questions either on Hypothes.is or during our class discussions.

Grade Discussions: The discussion of graded material is important both for the clarification of why a particular grade was received and to address concerns and improve writing and analytic skills from one assignment to the next. In order to maximize the usefulness of grade inquiries, discussion of grades on particular papers will follow the following procedure:

Carefully read the comments.

Write a clear and specific statement (typed), highlighting specific questions you would like to address.

Bring your paper and your written concerns to my office and we can discuss them.

If warranted, I will re-read the exam and return it to you during the next section.

If you wish to clarify a particular grade (and not simply to address ways to improve writing and analytic skills), you have until 1 week after a grade has been passed back for you to bring your concerns to me. Because of the rapid progress we will make in the semester, this particular point will be strictly adhered to.

Academic Integrity Code: I take academic integrity seriously. You should be familiar with, and at all times adhere to Muhlenberg's Academic Integrity Code. On all work submitted for a grade, you must write and sign the following pledge: "I pledge that I have complied with the Academic Integrity Code in this work." In the case of electronic submissions, you should include this statement along with your initials.

<http://www.muhlenberg.edu/mgt/provost/academic/integrity.html>.

Academic Resource Center:

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) offers individual and small-group tutoring, course-specific workshops, peer mentoring, and professional academic coaching for all currently enrolled Muhlenberg students. Students may request to be assigned to work with a tutor for the

duration of the spring semester starting on Wednesday, February 17th by using the online tutor request form. (This link will go live on 2/17 at 8 AM.) Additional information regarding academic support is available in the ARC brochure and on the ARC website. Questions regarding the ARC or any of their services may be directed to arcstudent@muhlenberg.edu.

Students with Disabilities or Special Needs:

Students with disabilities requesting classroom or course accommodations must complete a multi-faceted determination process through the Office of Disability Services prior to the development and implementation of accommodations, auxiliary aids, and services. Each Accommodation Plan is individually and collaboratively developed between the student and the Office of Disability Services. If you have not already done so, please contact the Office of Disability Services to have a dialogue regarding your academic needs and the recommended accommodations, auxiliary aides, and services.

Students Experiencing Financial Hardship:

If you are experiencing financial hardship, have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or do not have a safe and stable place to live, and believe this may affect your performance in this course, I would urge you to contact our CARE Team through the Dean of Students Office for support. The webpage is: www.muhlenberg.edu/main/aboutus/deanst/careteam/. You may also discuss your concerns with me if you are comfortable doing so.

Class Recording Statement:

By enrolling and attending Muhlenberg College courses, students consent to the recording of classes within the scope of college policies. The purpose of recording a class is to facilitate the achievement of learning outcomes and/or educational access, with the recording serving as a teaching/learning tool. In all cases where a recording will occur, the instructor must be notified in advance of the recording of a class session. An instructor may give students in the class access to a recording as part of the course curriculum or, alternatively, grant permission to select individuals (including proxy recordings). The instructor may rescind previously granted permission to record at any point during the course, provided that doing so does not compromise an approved accommodation. Any permitted class recordings made by students must be destroyed one week after the final grade is posted for the course, unless the student has received permission from the instructor to retain them or is entitled to retain them as an approved accommodation. Instructors may retain a class recording for other purposes on the condition that all identifying student audio and images are edited out of the recording unless permission has been granted. No instructor will be required to permit recording except under requirements of law.

Class recordings may not be reproduced, transferred, distributed, or displayed in any manner. Students may not share authorized recordings from class in any way with anyone. This includes, but is not limited to:

- sharing recordings with other students;
- sharing recordings with parents or guardians;
- sharing recordings with friends;
- sharing recordings through social media;
- posting recordings online;
- e-mailing recordings to anyone; and
- retaining downloaded recordings.

Required Texts: All readings are provided as pdfs through Canvas.

Course Schedule

Part I: Are the seeds of conflict in the nature of man?	
<i>Week 1: Man, the State, and War – A Primer in IR Theory</i>	
Monday, February 8, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Assigned Reading
Wednesday, February 10, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mingst and Arreguin-Toft—“War and Strife”
<i>Week 2: Individual Roots of War: Political Theory, Psychology, and Human Nature</i>	
Monday, February 15, 2021:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobbes – Chapters X & XIII from <i>Leviathan</i> • Kittay – Selection from <i>Love’s Labor: Essays on Women, Equality, and Dependency</i> • DiStefano – Selection from <i>Configurations of Masculinity</i>
Wednesday, February 17, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Konner – “Human Nature, Ethnic Violence, and War”
<i>Week 3: Psychological and Cultural Causes of Conflict</i>	
Monday, February 22, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freud & Einstein – An exchange on the causes of war • Mead – “Warfare is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity”
Wednesday, February 25, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denton-Borhaug – “War Culture and Sacrifice” • Sen – “Violence, Identity, and Poverty”
Part II: Memory, Nationalism, and Conflict	
<i>Week 4: Nationalism and Support for Permanent War</i>	
Monday, March 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedges – “The Plague of Nationalism”
Wednesday, March 3, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayerfeld – “The Myth of Benign Group Identity: A Critique of Liberal Nationalism”
<i>Week 5: Memory, Identity, and Conflict</i>	
Monday, March 8, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miranda – “Within the Shadow of Monuments” • Small – “Grave Goods and Social Identity at the Vietnam War Memorial”
Wednesday, March 10, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please post a song that responded to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 on the Google Slide created for this.

Part III: Thinking about Violence and Nonviolence	
<i>Week 6: Theory and Practice of Nonviolence</i>	
Monday, March 15, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MLK – Letter from a Birmingham Jail • MLK – Beyond Vietnam
Wednesday, March 17, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arendt – Selections from <i>On Violence</i> • ELLS Howes – “The Failure of Pacifism and the Success of Nonviolence”
<i>Week 7: The Dialectics of Violence</i>	
Monday, March 22, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fanon – Selection from <i>Wretched of the Earth</i>
Wednesday, March 24, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naji – Selections from <i>The Management of Savagery</i>
<i>Week 8: Gender and Violence</i>	
Monday, March 29, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuomo – “War is not just an event: Reflections on the significance of everyday violence”
Monday, March 31, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leatherman – “Sexual Violence and Armed Conflict”
Part IV: New Wars/Old Wars	
<i>Week 9: New Wars v. Old Wars</i>	
Monday, April 5, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaldor – <i>New and Old Wars</i> - Chapters 1 and 2
Wednesday, April 7, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaldor – <i>New and Old Wars</i> - Chapter 3
<i>Week 10: Globalization and New Wars</i>	
Monday, April 12, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaldor – <i>New and Old Wars</i> - Chapter 4
Wednesday, April 14, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaldor – <i>New and Old Wars</i> - Chapter 5
<i>Week 11: New Wars Cont.</i>	
Monday, April 19, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaldor – <i>New and Old Wars</i> - Chapter 6
Wednesday, April 21, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaldor – <i>New and Old Wars</i> - Chapter 7
<i>Week 12: The Coming Anarchy</i>	
Monday, April 26, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaldor – <i>New and Old Wars</i> - Chapter 8
Wednesday, April 28, 2021	No classes and no reading assignments

<i>Week 13: Mapping conflict</i>	
Monday, May 3, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reading – Paper Workshop
Wednesday, May 5, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reading – Begin work on group Storymap projects
<i>Week 14: Mapping Conflict</i>	
Monday May 10, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reading – Continue work on group Storymap projects
Wednesday, May 12, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reading – Continue work on group Storymap projects