COURSE DESCRIPTION

Adopting a multidisciplinary approach, this course aims at replacing peace and conflict-studies and its evolutions within the wider context. It also aims at presenting theoretical and practical issues relating to: conflicts, their sources, their underlying dynamics, their mechanisms and regulations...

In doing so, it will constantly rely on case studies and will endeavour to familiarize the students with a set of conceptual tools and approaches, enabling them to analyze and understand contemporary conflicts and the kind of efforts that are deployed in order to bring strife to an end.

The course is divided into three sections. The first section will present the major concepts, definitions and approaches through which armed conflicts and the conditions of various conceptions of peace can be made intelligible. The second section will deal with the causes and reasons that might trigger armed conflicts and highlight the factors that might affect the course of an armed conflict once it has started. The third section will focus on the crucial issue of the regulation of armed conflict and the curbing of violence, dwelling notably on the stakes of negotiation, peace operations, demobilization and state-building and the actors involved. The conclusion will linger on the challenges of bringing violence to a durable halt, and it will critically review current approaches to peace-building.

COURSE REQUISITES

There are a few prerequisites to attend this course.
1. First, students must be acquainted with social sciences. They must have at least attended in previous years about five basic courses in fields such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, history, political science, issue areas…
2. Second, students must have attended, and successfully passed the exam of, at least one of the following courses: international economy; history of the 20th century; international relations; foreign policy; international public law; international organizations.

3. Third, students must be fluent in English.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of this course are:

1. introducing and analyzing the major concepts in the field of Peace and Conflict Studies;
2. presenting current debates in the field;
3. familiarizing the students with the relevant literature.

In addition, the course aims at allowing the students:

4. to better understand today’s conflicts and notably civil wars, and to critically reflect on their causes, their actors and both their endogenous and exogenous dynamics;
5. to identify what is at stake in issues of peace and conflict, such as human rights, justice and reconciliation, social justice, non-violent resistance, gender issues;
6. to analyze the actors of conflict regulation and peace promotion as well as the various instruments developed in this field.

**TEACHING METHODS AND MANDATORY READINGS**

The course will take the form of twelve classes of two hours each.

Prior to each class, two texts have to be read by each student: these readings are mandatory and must be read in a careful and reflexive way. They are to allow the students to grasp the topics and issues presented during the classes, to participate in discussions… For the exam you will be asked to read all of the texts. The texts can be found in electronic version on the Université Virtuelle/ Web-CT.

**EXAM**

The final exam will include three questions pertaining to the course and the required readings. They are to be in answered in two hours (1 page per question). It will be a closed book exam, except for one dictionary. The questions can be answered either in French or in English.

**GRADING OF THE EXAM:**

Each question counts for 33% of the grade.

The answer to each question will be evaluated as follows:

- The questions will require theoretical and factual knowledge of the elements seen throughout the course and readings (33%).
- To answer you will need to make use of your analytical skills, the ability to take a critical distance, to put into perspective, to abstract from acquired knowledge (33%).
- Finally, you will have to demonstrate your academic writing skills, your capacity to use relevant terminology and bring forward a line of argumentation in a convincing, clear and structured way (33%).
GENERAL OUTLINE

1/ Introduction – Why Peace and Conflict Studies?
**Keywords:** Just war; absolute war; law of nations; non-violent conflicts; violent conflict; deadly conflict; armed conflict; IAC & NIAC, interstate & intra-state wars

I – A Multiplicity of Concepts, a Plurality of Approaches

2/ Analyzing Armed Conflicts. Multiple Approaches
**Key words:** Levels of analysis; Actors; Reasons: survival, power, interests, ideas, grievance, identity, perceptions; Causes: anomy, crisis, rational choice, security dilemma, exclusion, (relative) deprivation, aggression; Dynamics: strategy, war economy, cleavage, bandwagonning & balancing, dual polarization, push to the extremes, escalation

**Readings:**

3/ The Logics of Violence in the Context of Armed Conflicts
**Keywords:** Expressive violence & instrumental violence; conflicts without violence & violence without conflicts; the concept of terrorism; symbolic violence;

**Readings:**
- Stathis Kalyvas, “The Ontology of ‘Political Violence’: Action and Identity in Civil Wars,” Perspectives on Politics, 1:3 (September 2003), 475-494

4/ What about Peace?
**Keywords:** Conflict settlement, resolution & regulation; reconciliation; positive & negative peace; balance of power; deterrence; interdependence; justice; structural violence; peace research; pacifism; pacification; non-violent resistance

**Readings:**

II – The Parameters of Contemporary Armed Conflicts

5/ The Space and Time of Armed Conflicts
**Keywords:** Space: the battlespace and battle for space, battlefield, frontline, territory; Time: “phases of conflict”, risk; early warning, structural prevention, escalation, peak, de-escalation, post-conflict

**Reading (Please read Walter; either Cunningham OR Quinn):**

6/ Political Regimes and Violent Conflict
democratic peace theory; autocracy; dictatorship; totalitarianism; legitimacy & legitimation; diversion; nationalism; state weakness, strength and failure; revolution; liberation wars; people’s wars; mass wars; ideology; militarism; rebellion; insurgency

Readings

7/ Greed vs. Grievance: an on-going Debate
Keywords: Conflict-trap; resource wars; primitive accumulation of capital; predation; war economy; globalization wars; globalizing wars; class-struggle; Washington-consensus; environment

Reading :

8/ Identity Politics and Violent Conflicts
Keywords: nationalism; religion; clash of civilisation; ethnic conflict; ethno-nationalism; primordialism; sectarianism; exclusive & inclusive identities; relational identities; identification, self-identification

Reading
III – From Conflict to Post-(Armed) Conflict

9/ From Armed Conflict to Non-Armed Conflict: Social Functions and Dysfunctions

Key words: DDR, social stratification, social system, combatant careers, “warlords”, stakeholders; weapons; individual trajectories; accumulation of power; economic accumulation; gender; gendering war

Readings (please choose 2 out of 3):

10/ The Politics of Ending Armed Conflicts: Actors and Dilemmas

Key words: SSR; State-building; peace-making; negotiation; institutional engineering; bottom-up & top-down peacebuilding; local ownership; international administrations; spoilers; power-sharing; Westminster model; consociationalism; confessionalism;

Readings (please choose 2 out of 3):

11/ “Liberal Peace-Building” and its Critics

Key words: security-development nexus; human rights; democracy & liberal democracy; human security; market economy; structural adjustments, responsibility to protect; peace operations; peacebuilding; humanitarian aid, rehabilitation, development;

Readings

12/ Conclusion: Pacification vs Reconciliation? The Dilemmas of Peace and the Notion of Justice

Keywords: Legitimacy, settlement, resolutions, pacification, spoilers, amnesty, truth and reconciliation commissions, pardon, collective memories,

Readings