

 <p>THE CENTER FOR JUSTICE & PEACEBUILDING</p> <p>A PROGRAM OF EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY</p>	<p>ANALYSIS: UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT PAX 533A</p> <p>SPI 2026, Session 1</p> <p>May 18-26 (excluding Saturday & Sunday) plus one optional June and one optional August online session with several assignments throughout the summer</p>
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INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

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This syllabus explains requirements for those taking this course for graduate academic credit (3 SH). If you are part of this class primarily for professional development or training, this syllabus is provided for your information. You may participate in asynchronous online course activities as you wish, but there are no required assignments.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Analysis focuses on understanding the factors that cause conflict and violence and those that support peacebuilding and social justice. Good conflict analysis (assessment) skills are a central component of designing effective strategies for conflict transformation and constructive social change.

It is especially important to consider the social systems and other variables that contribute to inequities, instability, and conflict as we determine ways to respond. This course provides practical tools for understanding and planning. We will highlight identity (gender, religion, nationality, etc.), culture and worldview; social systems and structures; power, influence and domination; human needs, human rights, and dignity; narratives and discourse, and others. We will engage with each other and with course materials (readings, video, assignments and activities) both simultaneously in real time (synchronous) during the SPI session, and on our own schedules (asynchronous) through the summer.

Case studies of conflicts/social injustice will provide content and an opportunity to practice analysis skills. Participants will also practice self-analysis skills by paying attention to their own roles and biases in conflict and how that affects their ability to describe situations from multiple perspectives and plan for change. The class will include practical research strategies for gathering and organizing data and will utilize theories of change as an intermediate step between analysis and the design of effective social

change. For the final project, participants will select a situation and conduct their own analysis then describe the situation in a paper. This course is being offered for 3 graduate academic credits and professional development. It cannot be taken for reduced credit.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVE

To prepare critically reflective practitioners who skillfully and ethically integrate careful analysis and self-assessment into the process of addressing violence and injustice and building durable peace in personal and professional contexts whatever their field, position or career path.

This course asks participants to:

1. Build a vocabulary for social analysis and a repertoire of theoretical and practical analytical models for understanding social injustice, conflict and violence.
2. Define and use practical concepts in conflict transformation, justice and peacebuilding including basic models, theories, theories of change and analytical frameworks.
3. Apply theoretical and analytical models to case studies, including interpersonal, community and organizational conflicts in various contexts.
4. Practice moving from analysis to theories of change with an ultimate goal of planning, designing and implementing peacebuilding and social change programming (professionally or personally).
5. Use self-assessment tools to understand the factors affecting personal responses to conflict and personal impact on research and the conflict situation (genogram, conflict styles, enneagram, etc.).

Course Delivery and Dates

This course will be conducted in person as part of EMU's Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI) with an online learning platform called Moodle (available asynchronously) for access to course materials. This platform is made available by EMU upon registration for the course.

In-person sessions will take place May 18-26, 8:30-12 noon and 2-5 p.m. US Eastern Daylight Time (US EDT), not including the weekend (May 23-24). Attendance at all sessions is required for graduate credit seeking participants. Please notify the instructors if you encounter unavoidable problems in joining us.

Activities and assignments will need to be completed before, during, and after the in-person sessions of the course. **All final work will be due by August 7 2026.**

Course Philosophy

We, as instructors, seek the creation of a dynamic learning community in which everyone – including students taking the course for graduate credit as well as participants taking the course for training – is a teacher and a learner. Our personal and professional lives, social identities, cultural heritage and spiritual beliefs impact the way we, the instructors, understand the course content and how we present it. Likewise, we invite all course participants to bring the multiple dimensions of your experience and identity into the course. We ask that we all work to:

- a. Respect others' points of view (even when you think and believe differently).
- b. Listen to gain insights, fresh ideas, and new perspectives.
- c. Accept that we are here to learn with and from one another.
- d. Give each other the benefit of the doubt. Avoiding making judgments about each other based on our perceptions. Let's give each other as much grace and flexibility as possible.

These principles are even more important in a short in-person experience. You will be asked to interact with each other and instructors even though you may not know others well. We hope that you will share what you know, and help us all to learn by listening with curiosity to each other, help to hold us all accountable to our values, and find ways to share your constructive criticism, your concerns about process or content, and help us all to be at our best together.

Readings and other materials are provided for differing perspectives and in the same way may not all reflect your values. If you find this to be true, you are invited to share your point of view in class or personally with the instructors.

Teaching Philosophy draws heavily upon Paulo Freire, bell hooks, John Paul Lederach, and Jane Vella among others (samples included below).

RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENTS TO BE COMPLETED FOR THE FIRST DAY

To be read by all participants before the course begins:

1. Lederach, J. P., Neufeldt, R., & Culbertson, H. 2007. [Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit](#), Chapters 1-6.
2. For basic definitions frequently in use at CJP see the links below
 - A. [Conflict Transformation | Beyond Intractability](#)
 - B. [Peacebuilding | Beyond Intractability](#)

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER REQUIRED RESOURCES

Texts and resources are listed in alphabetical order by author. Due Dates for readings will be listed by the bolded word(s) for each resource listed. These are typically the author's last name or a keyword(s).

Required Texts

The following are the textbooks that are required for this course. If you are taking the course for credit, you must have access to these readings. Additional readings will be online available through Moodle (listed on the next page). These two texts are available electronically, or can be purchased through EMU's online bookstore or through any other bookseller.

- Demmers, Jolle. 2016. *Theories of Violent Conflict: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge. ISBN 13: 978-1138856400. Any edition. \$25-35 (e-book or paperback) also available online via EMU Library: <https://research-ebsco-com.emu.idm.oclc.org/linkprocessor/plink?id=fbf4e93d-fde7-39d2-af3e-5c07d70bec17>
- Schirch, Lisa. 2013. *Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Planning Toward a Participation Approach to Human Security*. Boulder, CO: Kumarian Press. ISBN: 978-1565495791.

Approximate price: \$20. **CAPP Handbook** Available online via EMU Library: <https://research-ebsco-com.emu.idm.oclc.org/linkprocessor/plink?id=9bf54571-4aad-37f1-b994-0c84c4819546>

Additional Required Reading materials (All posted on Moodle or available online).

These materials are required, and we would prefer that they all be read. They are provided here and on Moodle to bring diversity of perspectives and identities of authors, and we strongly encourage you to read them when you have time. We fully understand that whether in a semester-long course or in an intensive format, there is often more to read than time allows. Please prioritize the readings listed in the course schedule under assignments/reading due. Lower priority readings will be placed under “supplemental” in Moodle. You are encouraged to share reading responsibilities with classmates.

Allen Nan, Susan and Mary Mulvihill. June 2010. *Theories of Change and Indicator Development in Conflict Management and Mitigation*. United States Agency for International Development (**USAID Theories of Change**), Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), Office for Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM). Available from: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnads460.pdf

Duke University Press. (2016). **Color of violence: The incite! anthology**. Selected chapters.

Dugan, Maire. 1996. “A Nested Theory of Conflict.” *Women in Leadership: Sharing the Vision*. Vol. 1.

Firchow, Pamina and Harry Anastasiou, eds. 2016. Practical Approaches to Peacebuilding: Putting Theory to Work. Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers. (Chapter 1 and 5)

Fisher, Simon, Dekha Abdi, Jawed Ludin, Richard Smith, Steve and Sue Williams. (2000). *Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action*. London: Zed Books. ISBN: 978-1856498371. Chs. 1,2, and 3.

Freire, Paulo and Ramos, B. M. (2018). Pedagogy of the oppressed: 50th anniversary edition. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. Chapter 1.

GPPAC and CDA Conflict Analysis Framework: Field Guidelines and Procedures, 2016
<https://www.cdacollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Conflict-Analysis-Framework-Field-Guidelines-and-Procedures-2016.pdf>

GSDRC Conflict Analysis Topic Guide, 2017.

<https://qsdrc.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/05/ConflictAnalysis.pdf>

Hallward, M. C., Kim, J. E., Mouly, C., Seidel, T., & Wai, Z. (2025). The **sage handbook of peace and conflict studies**. (Vols. 1-0). SAGE Publications, Inc., <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781036204440>. Read Chapter 1 Epistemology: Power and Knowledge in Peace and Conflict Studies. <https://emu.tind.io/record/779640?ln=en>

Lederach et al, J. P., Neufeldt, R., & Culbertson, H. 2007. **Reflective peacebuilding**: A planning, monitoring, and learning toolkit. Mindanao, Philippines: Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and Catholic Relief Services (East Asia Regional Office). Download from http://kroc.nd.edu/sites/default/files/crs_reflective_final.pdf

Max-Neef, M., Elizalde, A., Hopenhayn, M., et al. (1989). Human Scale Development: An Option for the Future. In *Development Dialogue*, published by Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, Vol.1.

Mayer, Bernard. 2012. The Dynamics of Conflict: A guide to engagement and intervention. 2nd Ed. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Chapters 1-4.

Miall, H., Ramsbotham, O., and Woodhouse, T. 2010. Contemporary Conflict Resolution (**CCR**), 3rd Edition. Malden, MA: Blackwell. Chapter 1,2,4.

Powercube: understanding power for social change. Available from <http://www.powercube.net/>

Trujillo, Mary Adams and S. Y. Bowland, eds. 2008. **Re-Centering**: Culture and Knowledge in Conflict Resolution Practice. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Tuso, H., & Flaherty, M. P. 2016. *Creating the third force: indigenous processes of peacemaking*. Lanham, Maryland : Lexington Books, an imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc. Introduction and Chapter 1 and 17.

Supplemental Reading (for your information)

Additional Books and Readings that may be mentioned in class for background and further information if you have interest. These items are not required for purchase or class participation.

Azar, E. (2002). Protracted Social Conflicts and Second Track Diplomacy, in Davies, J. & Kaufman, E. (eds.) Second Track / Citizen's Diplomacy – Concepts and Techniques for Conflict Transformation. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group. Selected chapter.

Church, Cheyanne and Mark Rogers. *Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs*. Washington, DC: Search for Common Ground and U.S. Institute of Peace. Available at: http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/ilr/ilt_manualpage.html

Dernoot, L. L. van, Burk, C., & Conte, J. R. (2009). **Trauma stewardship**: An everyday guide to caring for self while caring for others. Berrett-Koehler Publishers. Selected chapter.

Docherty and Lantz-Simmons. 2017. A Genealogy of Ideas 1: What is old is new again. Center for Justice and Peacebuilding, Eastern Mennonite University, Volume 1. Available on Moodle for this course.

Harris, Collette and Uganda Land Alliance. Gender Analysis Toolkit. June 2016. Saferworld. Available from: <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/.../gender-analysis-of-conflict-toolkit.pdf>

Lederach, John Paul. 1997. *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Levinger, Matthew. 2013. *Conflict Analysis: Understanding Causes, Unlocking Solutions* (USIP Academy Guides). Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace; United States Institute of Peace Academy Guides edition.

Miller 1, Joseph S. 2000. A History of the Mennonite Conciliation Service, International Conciliation Service, and Christian Peacemaker Teams. In *From the Ground Up: Mennonite Contributions to International Peacebuilding*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Miller 2, Joseph S. 2000. Appendix A: Who Are the Mennonites? In *From the Ground Up: Mennonite Contributions to International Peacebuilding*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rhodes, Gloria. 2010. Mennonites and Peace. *International Encyclopedia of Peace*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Richmond, Oliver. 2014. *Peace: A Very Short Introduction*. London: Oxford University Press.

Sen, A. (2009). *The Idea of Justice*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. Introduction.

Stauffer, C. (2015). Formative Mennonite Mythmaking in Peacebuilding and Restorative Justice, in Klager, A. (ed.) *From Suffering to Solidarity – The Historical Seeds of Mennonite Interreligious, Interethnic, and International Peacebuilding*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, (Ch.7).

Vella, Jane. 2002. Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach: The Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults. Hoboken: Jossey-Bass.

Other supplemental reading options will be provided in Moodle.

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS

These are brief descriptions of required graded assignments for the course with assessment noted (percentage). More details for most assignments can be found in the “Guidance Notes” section that will be provided on Moodle.

Students are expected to complete all of the listed readings and written assignments by the dates listed in the schedule. Due dates listed are realistic for expected course completion. If you are unable to meet a deadline, please inform the instructor before the deadline

- A. Course Participation: 25%** Students are expected to attend every class session prepared to participate in discussions, activities, and exercises. You can expect to complete ungraded assignments such as reading, small group work (or in pairs), application of concepts, and various activities including watching a movie and various clips online, completing surveys or inventories, and more. You will have small group assignments due for some synchronous class sessions. **May 18-26.**
- B. EMU research ethics self test. 5%** This self-directed training is required by our EMU Institutional Review Board (IRB) for all students conducting any research as part of their programs at EMU. The training must be completed before any primary research is undertaken for this class. Instructions and a link for accessing this self-paced training is available on the Moodle page for this course. Please submit the training certificate electronically to the link provided on the Moodle site for this course when work is complete. **Required due date: June 30.**

C. Discussion Forum 15% Based on their required readings you will be asked to respond to prompts from the instructor in 5 Discussion Forums. You will also need to respond to each of your classmates doing the course for credit.

- a. Identity (caste, class, race, gender, sexual identity etc.), Demmers Intro, Chs 1-2, and Video Lecture **Due June 19**
- b. Power, Systems and Structures, Demmers Ch 3 **Due June 30**
- c. Human Needs and Multiple Approaches, Demmers Ch 4 **Due July 15**
- d. Rational Choice and Narrative explanations, Demmers Ch 5 and 6 **Due July 31**
- e. Theories of Change **Due August 7**

D. Family System Representation 15% You will develop and submit a visual or spatial representation of your “family.” You may define family as understood from your cultural background. Many people develop a genogram to fulfill this assignment using GenoPro software (freely available with links on Moodle), pen and paper, electronic media (paint, draw etc.) or other visual tool (pencil, paint, marker, etc.). Visuals or 3-D representations may be done physically and photographed or done electronically. These must all be in a format that can be uploaded to Moodle. Additionally, you must include a key/legend, a short paper (2-3 pages) of explanation and of how your visual or representational model or genogram can be explained by family systems theory (information accessed online) or some other theory that explains relationships (options provided on Moodle). More information on Theories/readings and Genograms can be found on Moodle Guidance notes. **Due June 26**

E. Case Analysis: 40% You will choose an interpersonal, small group, or organizational conflict or situation of tension or injustice. You will gather data about the situation. The situation should be something others are writing about (where you can find textual sources of information) and/or a situation where you can interview stakeholders (either in person, by Zoom, or by e-mail, etc.).

25% Cohesive Analysis paper: The paper is constructed as an investigation of a situation within a context. The paper should describe the situation by including an introduction with a clear research question, a body that helps the reader to see the conflict from 7 viewpoints/lenses (a stakeholder map, and one additional visual model/analytical tool for each question WHO, WHAT, WHY, WHERE, HOW, and WHEN).

You will write one paper including visual and conceptual models analyzing the situation you've chosen, for each of the following categories: **Stakeholders** (WHO the parties are including their behaviors and attitudes in relation to the situation); **Identity** (WHO the stakeholders are in terms of identity, empowered and disempowered identities, or social capital etc.) **Issues, drivers, and mitigators** (WHAT the issues are in conflict and what you bring); **Motivations** (WHY the parties are involved in conflict and WHY you want to be involved); **Power and Tactics** (HOW the parties are engaging in conflict and the power that each party holds in relationship to each other and to you); **Context** (WHERE the situation is happening including the relational and cultural context as well as the structural/system level that surrounds and supports the parties and you), and the **Narratives** of the History, Timing and Escalation factors (WHEN has this situation been happening, for how long, and what are the important timing factors to consider and according to whom?).

In addition, at a minimum of two places, you must discuss your analysis through use of at least two theoretical perspectives. You need to provide a theory, describe it, and show how it applies to your conflict situation in relation to the visual in use.

You must also provide a clear conclusion that summarizes the learning and the key ideas from which a theory of change can arise, a complete reference or sources list, and an appendix that includes a personal self-assessment.

Papers are often at least 25 single-spaced pages minimum with graphic components embedded and a Sources list (Reference List) in APA Style. You may propose alternative media or arts-based approaches for presenting your work. The paper will be submitted as a rough draft for which a grade will be given. If satisfied with the rough draft grade, a final paper need not be submitted. Otherwise, edits should be made based on instructor feedback and submitted in final draft form for a final grade that will replace the rough draft grade. More directions for the project are given in guidance notes for this paper. Rubrics with criteria for how the paper will be graded are part of the Guidance Notes. Include as part of your rough draft a self-assessment (not to exceed 2 pages single-spaced) in relation to your interest and involvement in this case/situation. Take this opportunity to “practice” reflecting on your positionality in relation to the case (related to your own biography, identity and cultures, power, and place within the system) the roles you are taking or could take, the skills you already have or that you might need in order to be effective in your roles, and the processes you may need to engage/know in order to contribute to constructive change. Connect your self-assessment to your proposed action in your Theory of Change and Plan of Action Paper. **Rough draft due July 31 (FIRM). Final Due August 7.**

15% Theory of Change Paper and Plan of Action: Based on your research and the conclusions you draw from your analysis, you will write and submit a theories of change and plan of action paper for the situation you are addressing. You are asked to describe your overall goal, how you might address this goal, and one theory of change that may help you meet the goal. Suggest a basic plan of action. This paper is usually 2-3 single-spaced pages minimum. See the separate guidance notes for this paper. **Due August 7**

SPI ATTENDANCE POLICY:

It is expected that individuals registering for an SPI session will attend the entire course (barring unforeseen travel delays or emergencies). Please contact SPI directly at spi@emu.edu before registering if you know you will have to miss any days of a course. SPI certificates are provided to participants only if they miss no more than one class day unless prior arrangements have been made with SPI Director. For-credit participants are expected to attend all class sessions unless they are given permission from the instructor to miss a session. SPI courses rely on active student participation in a learning community. If a participant misses class repeatedly and this disrupts the learning for others, he/she will be asked to leave the course and no money will be refunded for remaining course time.

GRADING CRITERIA AND OTHER POLICIES:

If you are taking the course for graduate credit, please familiarize yourself with the CJP-specific course policies at the link below. This will include information on library resources, EMU's academic integrity policy, guidelines for writing graduate papers, information regarding the grading scale and course

deadlines, and then some suggestions we have for you in order to make your experience of taking SPI courses for graduate credit as successful as possible! These documents are available online at <https://emu.edu/cjp/spi/participants/graduate-credit>.