

 <p>THE CENTER FOR JUSTICE & PEACEBUILDING</p> <p>A PROGRAM OF EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY</p>	<p>POWER, DIFFERENCE, AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN PRACTICE PAX 671</p> <p>SPI 2026 May 28-June 5, 2026</p> <p><i>Course meeting location and time: TBA</i></p>
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INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

For Restorative Justice practitioners, what core competencies support the work of addressing differences in culture and power? Although RJ practices seek to equalize power and difference, they do not eliminate them. In fact, RJ has often been accused of protecting institutions and their representatives by obfuscating harmful power dynamics.

This discussion, theory, and practice-based course offers an in-depth exploration of core competencies for working across lines of difference and power. Questions and topics include: organizing and working across lines of difference; addressing issues of power, identity, positionality; the origins of RJ and settler-colonialism; critiques of RJ from transformative justice; distinguishing between conflict and harm; and how RJ work is connected to historical and ongoing institutional harms. Students will develop, practice, and apply facilitation skills and reflective practices to address power dynamics in different contexts. By the end of this course, students will be equipped with the foundational knowledge and practical tools necessary to apply Restorative Justice facilitation in real-world situations and contribute to living and practicing restoratively in their personal, community, and professional lives.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Develop skills for working across lines of difference
- Learn how to apply RJ approaches in different contexts of power
- Practice addressing issues of power, identity, and positionality in RJ settings
- Explore the origins of RJ and settler-colonialism
- Learn how RJ work can be transformative and support institutional change
- Design RJ processes to navigate issues of power in real-world settings

REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER RESOURCES:

adrienne maree brown. *Loving Corrections*. AK Press, 2024. ISBN 9781849355544. **Available via
EMU Library online:**

<https://emu.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=3676855>

Fania Davis. *The Little Book of Race and Restorative Justice: Black Lives, Healing, and US Social Transformation*. Good Books, 2019. ISBN: 978-1-68099-343-1. \$5.99. **Available online via Library:** <https://emu.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1972518&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

David A. Hooker. *The Little Book of Transformative Community Conferencing: A Hopeful, Practical Approach to Dialogue*. Good Books, 2016. ISBN: 9781680991666. **Available online via EMU Library:** <https://research-ebsco-com.emu.idm.oclc.org/c/gydtl5/search/details/wvfnrko4z?db=nlebk&db=nlabk>

Resmaa Menakem. *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*. Central Recovery Press, 2017. ISBN: 9781942094470. **Available online via EMU Library:** <https://research-ebsco-com.emu.idm.oclc.org/linkprocessor/plink?id=c43dc613-9549-3cff-bc96-4009286fe98e>

David Moore and Alikki Vernon. *Setting Relations Right in Restorative Practice: Broadening Mindsets and Skillsets*. Routledge, 2024. ISBN 9781032123233. **Available via EMU Library online:** <https://research-ebsco-com.emu.idm.oclc.org/linkprocessor/plink?id=e9dd95b8-30d1-33c4-86c5-1a3475f8153f>

Edward Valandra, editor. *Colorizing Restorative Justice: Voicing Our Realities*. Living Justice Press, 2020. ISBN: 9781937141233. **Available via EMU Library in hardcopy.**

Howard Zehr. *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*. Revised and updated ed., 2015. ISBN 9781561488230. \$6.99. **Available via EMU Library in hardcopy and online:** <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/emu/detail.action?docID=1922319>

Supplemental Reading Materials –

- Aquino. (2021). *The Little Book of Youth Engagement in Restorative Justice: Partnering with Young People to Create Systems Change for More Equitable Schools*.
- Bolitho and Bruce, "Science, Art and Alchemy: Best Practice in Facilitating RJ"
- Cunneen, C., Deckert, A., Porter, A., and Tauri, J. eds. (2023). *Routledge International Handbook on Decolonizing Justice*. New York: Routledge.
- Gavrielides, T., ed. (2019). *Routledge International Handbook of Restorative Justice*. New York: Routledge.
- Haines, S. (2019) *The Politics of Trauma: Somatics, Healing, and Social Justice*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.
- Hollins, C., and Govan, I. (2015). *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Strategies for Facilitating Conversations on Race*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Hooker, D.A., and S.A. Bedi. (2021). Redefining Justice and Creating Pathways for Healing. *Journal of Transdisciplinary Peace Practice*, 3:1, 17-45
- Hooker, D.A., and A.P. Potter. (2012). *Transforming Historical Harms*. Harrisonburg, VA: Eastern Mennonite University and the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding.
- Rosado, F. (2024). *Justice From the Inside Up: A Restorative Justice Education Facilitator's Manual*. St. Paul, MN: Living Justice Press.
- Zehr, H. & Towes, B. (eds.) (2010). *Critical Issues in Restorative Justice*. London, UK / Boulder, CO, USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS:

This course is offered for 2, 3, or no credits in the case of purely professional education or training. The different expectations of those taking the course for credit or auditing are indicated below.

Course Participation: 25% [expected of all participants]

Students are expected to attend each session and be ready to participate in group exercises and discussions.

Roleplay Participation: 25% [expected of all participants]

During class time, we will prepare for and engage in roleplays for skill development. As this is a practice course your active participation is important in developing your skills and capacities. Attendance and contributing in class discussions and feedback are vital components of the course. Full description and instructions will be available in Guidance Notes on the Moodle site.

Reflection Paper on Power, Difference, and Restorative Justice in Practice: 25% [expected of all participants receiving 2 or 3 credits]

Students will write a paper to reflect on your capacity as a restorative justice facilitator in addressing issues of power and difference. Explore skills, training, and techniques that you bring to the mediations, conferences, dialogues, or circle facilitations you lead where issues of power and difference can emerge. What key resources, activities, and experiences support your development as you build capacity and competency for addressing issues of power and difference? Assess your skillset, potential biases, attitudes, values, worldview, and areas for growth and development. Full description and instructions will be available in Guidance Notes on the Moodle site.

Case Study Design: 25% [expected of participants receiving 3 credits]

Students will develop a case study that analyzes a community, organization, or institution that faces challenges around addressing power and difference. Analyze the context and design a pathway for addressing issues of power, difference, and privilege in the organization that draws from restorative justice theories, practices, and critiques. Full description and instructions will be available in Guidance Notes on the Moodle site.

All SPI 2026 assignments should be submitted by no later than 7 August, 2026.

These are brief descriptions of required graded assignments for the course. More details for each assignment can be found on the "Guidance Notes" that will be provided in class.

DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE:

Will be posted on Moodle by the first week of class.

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 the SPI team and confirmed with the instructor. **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, they will be asked to leave the course and no money will be refunded for remaining course time.

GRADING CRITERIA AND OTHER POLICIES:

SPI provides all students taking the course for graduate credit some supplemental information that will serve as a resource after SPI when students are working on course assignments. This includes information on library resources, EMU's academic integrity policy, and 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 all available online.