

PAX 200

# Dilemmas of War & Peace: An Introduction to Peace Studies

4-week Summer Session – May 30– June 23, 2023

100% Online Course – No class meetings



This is a picture of the Lennon Wall in Prague

Photo credit: Image downloaded from <http://nosescapamoseu.blogspot.com/2013/12/praga-la-ciudad-dorada-o-de-las-cien.html>

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**Zoom Student Hours: By appointment** – I will be available to meet via Zoom any afternoon from Monday to Thursday while the course is in session. Send me an email or a message in Canvas Inbox to schedule an appointment.

## Course Description

This course explores reasons for the continuing prevalence of war, violence, and injustice, and challenges students to think about how we might build a more peaceful and just world. It aims to introduce students to the interdisciplinary field of Peace Studies and serves as the core introductory course for students desiring to pursue a minor in Peace Studies. Scholars in this field agree that the fundamental questions related to war and to peace require a holistic and integrative approach that draws on insights from a wide variety of fields. As such, in this course we will explore these questions using

resources from multiple disciplines, including religion, psychology, biology, anthropology, political science, and international relations, and our exploration will move across multiple levels of human action from the individual to societal, to national and international levels. The contributions of ordinary citizens, social movements, and activists to resisting militarism, racism and other forms of oppression, and promoting peace, justice, and nonviolence will part of our exploration. By the end of the course, students will have developed their own understanding of peace and nonviolence and will have grappled with obstacles, as well as possible roads to peace.

### Course Learning Outcomes

*After successful completion of this course students will:*

- Demonstrate knowledge about key concepts in peace and conflict studies, including:
  1. Multiple meanings of peace anchored in definitions of negative and positive peace.
  2. Multidisciplinary explanations for the causes of war and conflict, including perspectives and theories from religion, philosophy, the behavioral and social sciences.
  3. Strategies for promoting peace and social justice, ranging from individual to societal transformation, to actions taken by governments and international institutions.
  4. Nonviolence, exploring both its religious/moral/philosophical foundations, as well as the sources of its strategic power as a tool for social and political change.
- Understand the U.S.'s position today as the preeminent military power and be able to articulate different perspectives on this role.
- Demonstrate knowledge about ways in which individuals, organizations, and governments from around the world have made contributions to peace building and struggles for social justice.

### Required Texts

- David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel. 2022. *Peace and Conflict Studies, Fifth Edition*. Sage Publications. (Available through Text Rental)
- Thich Nhat Hanh. 1987. *Being Peace*. Berkeley: Parallax Press. (This book is available for purchase at the bookstore and is also available for free as an e-book on the course e-Reserves)
- In addition, there are numerous assigned readings and videos that you will access through the course e-Reserves on Canvas.

### The Online Nature of this Course

This course will take place completely online with no class meetings. You will need to pick up a textbook from text rental at the UWSP bookstore. You should also purchase *Being Peace* by Thich Nhat Hahn unless you want to read this book on e-Reserves. After acquiring the required texts, all other interactions and course materials, including writing assignments, group discussions, quizzes, and exams will be conducted via Canvas. You will access mini lectures, participate in group discussions, and upload all written work to Canvas. Because everything will be done online, ***it is essential that you have reliable, high-speed access to the internet***. You will need to be able to access Canvas Monday through Thursday. You will also need to be proficient in the use of a common word processing program, such as Word, to write your essays and upload them electronically.

Online courses give you, the student, flexibility in terms of scheduling and allow you to work independently and at your own pace. However, they also require self-discipline and good time management. This four-week course covers roughly the same amount of content as would a semester-

long course; the pace is rapid. Thus, it is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT that you work consistently EVERY DAY on the assignments; otherwise, you will quickly fall behind.

### Overview of Course Activities

During this course, most of your time will be spent reading as well as watching films and videos, and then writing about or taking quizzes on what you have read and watched. I will also provide a few mini lectures to guide you in thinking about some of the readings. You will process and respond to these materials in one of three ways, depending on the assignment for that day or week: 1) by participating in online group discussions with your peers, 2) by taking quizzes or exams, or 3) by completing short writing assignments. All assignments, quizzes, and exams are based on the assigned readings and films; you will not be expected to do any independent research or outside reading for this course. The assignments and due dates are laid out in the Reading and Assignment Schedule, which is available on Canvas in the Course Organization module. Daily assignments are also easy to follow directly on Canvas: on each day of class, you should go to the appropriate page and follow the instructions for that day.

### Grading

Your grade will be determined by your completion and performance in the following areas:

<u>Day 1 Assignments:</u>	<u>3%</u>
• Introductions (1%)	
• Establishing Rules for Online Discussions (1%)	
• Syllabus Quiz (1%)	
<u>Current Events Discussion Board</u>	<u>4%</u>
• Share a story (2%)	
• Comment on stories posted by other students (2%)	
<u>5 Online Discussions (5% each)</u>	<u>25%</u>
<u>3 Quizzes (5% each)</u>	<u>15%</u>
<u>3 Short Responses (5% each)</u>	<u>15%</u>
<u>Essay - Human Nature and Peace</u>	<u>18%</u>
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>20%</u>
TOTAL	100%

## **Daily Assignments**

The Reading and Assignment Schedule gives you an overview of the daily assignments and activities and their due dates. In addition, there is a separate page in Canvas for each day that contains detailed instructions for that day's assignments, as well as links to all necessary materials, forums, assignments, etc. Use the Reading and Assignment Schedule to lay out your work for the month, and then at the start of each day go to the appropriate page in Canvas to complete the assignments.

## **Quizzes**

There will be several quizzes. The first will be a multiple-choice quiz on the syllabus. After that, there will be quizzes on the assigned readings. Quizzes will usually entail a combination of multiple-choice and short answer questions. All quizzes are listed in purple on the Reading and Assignment Schedule. Each quiz will become available by 10 am on the day assigned and will close at 11:30 pm that same day. Once you start a quiz, you will have a specific amount of time in which to complete it, so make sure to look at the time allotted carefully before beginning. Before you begin, make sure you have completed all the assigned readings and/or watched any assigned films and that you are free from distractions for the quiz period. Specific instructions and timeframes will be visible in Canvas for each quiz.

## **Online Group Discussions**

These will be a central part of the course and will count for 25% of your grade. The goal of these discussions is threefold: 1) to improve your comprehension of the material; 2) to encourage you to think deeply about the issues and ideas through respectful discussion and debate with your peers; and 3) to help you form your own perspectives on prominent issues in the field of peace and conflict studies.

Face-to-face discussions have the advantage of directly seeing and hearing others' facial expressions and voices, but online discussions also have their advantages. In online discussions you do not have to wait to be called on, you can take time to formulate your ideas and compose them in a thoughtful way, and everyone, not just the outspoken students, get heard. For online discussions to work well, ground rules must be established. We will do this together as a group on the first day of class.

Beyond the first day's discussion about establishing ground rules, there will be five other days you will be expected to participate in a group discussion on the assigned readings and/or audiovisual material. Discussions are marked in green on the Reading and Assignment Schedule. For detailed instructions about participation in online discussions, as well as a grading rubric for them, please read Guidelines and Grading Rubric for Online Discussion Forums, in the Course Organization module.

## **Reading and Video Short Responses**

On some days in lieu of an online discussion or a quiz you will be required to provide a short response to the assigned materials on Canvas. You will be asked to offer some reflection on the assigned material and raise any questions you might have.

## **Essay – Human Nature and Peace**

This will consist of a 3-5-page, double-spaced essay in which students will use assigned course readings to answer the question, "Given human nature, is peace possible?" A prompt, instructions, and grading rubric for this assignment are provided in Canvas. This essay will be due **Sunday, June 11 at 5:00 pm.**

**Final Exam** - The final will be an open-book essay exam, and will be due in Canvas on **Sunday, June 25 at 5:00 pm.**

### **Current Events Discussion Board**

There is much that is going on in our country and in the world right now that is related to peace studies. The current events discussion board will be open for the duration of the course and is meant to be a space where we can reflect together on what is going on in the world and how it relates to peace studies. Once during the course, each student will be expected to share a news story of their choosing on the discussion board. The student should provide a link to the story, offer a brief description, and provide some thoughtful commentary on what is going on and how they see it relating to peace studies. Other students are then encouraged to respond to and comment on these stories. At a minimum, every student is expected to post at least one reply to the current events board weekly.

I encourage all students to get in the habit of following the news. A wonderful way to do this, even when you do not have much time, is to listen to the daily news programs on National Public Radio (NPR). They will keep you up to date on current events and critical issues, both domestic and international. You can hear NPR news on Wisconsin Public Radio, which has two local radio stations: The Ideas Network at 99.1 FM and News and Classical at 90.9 FM. You can also listen live and access podcasts of previous shows at [www.wpr.org](http://www.wpr.org).

I also recommend the daily news program Democracy Now! for excellent and critical coverage of national and world events from a progressive, non-mainstream perspective. This television news program is broadcast weekday mornings and can be heard anytime online at: [www.democracynow.org](http://www.democracynow.org)

There are many terrific podcasts that can help you learn about and keep up with the news. One that I recommend for delving deeper into top news stories is “The Daily,” which is produced by the *New York Times* and is available for free on Apple Podcasts and other platforms.

### **Grading Scale**

Course grades will be calculated on a straight percentage scale. An A equals 93 or above, A- 90-92.99, B+ 87-89.99, B 83-86.99, B- 80-82.99, C+ 77-79.99, C 73-76.99, C- 70-72.99, D+ 67-69.99, D 60-66.99, F 59.99 and below.

### **Academic Integrity**

All students are expected to abide by the university’s guidelines for academic integrity. Please read the brochure from the Dean of Students on this topic: [Academic Integrity Brochure](#)

All students need to be well acquainted with these guidelines, particularly with what constitutes plagiarism, as violations can result in severe consequences. I use Turnitin.com to check for plagiarism and for writing that is produced by AI programs like ChapGPT. All papers that you submit to Canvas will automatically be scanned by the Turnitin program. DO NOT use AI technology to write your papers, answer quiz questions, or other written work! The Turnitin program is effective at identifying AI produced work. Using AI to do your written work constitutes academic misconduct. I take academic misconduct seriously and impose penalties when students do not uphold academic integrity.

***All quizzes and exams are open-book and open-note. You are expected to work INDEPENDENTLY.***



## **Communication**

I will communicate with the class through Canvas. I will post announcements on the Canvas Homepage and use the Canvas Inbox to correspond with individual students as needed. *Make sure to check Canvas daily, so as not to miss important news and/or instructions.*

I welcome your questions, thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. There are several ways you can communicate with me: the “Hey Prof. Collins!” discussion board, Canvas Inbox, regular e-mail, and Zoom office hours.

I will be available to meet with individual students via Zoom in the afternoon from Monday through Thursday while the course is in session. To make an appointment, email or send me a message through Canvas Inbox.

For private matters or questions that are of concern only to you, the most efficient way to contact me is via Canvas Inbox, which I will monitor daily while the course is in session; you can also use regular email or set up a Zoom office hours appointment. For questions about the syllabus, course organization, specific assignments, or course content, I encourage you to use the “Hey Prof. Collins!” discussion board, which will be open for the duration of the course. This discussion board serves as a venue for you to ask me questions that might be of interest to the whole class, such as those pertaining to content or the mechanics of how the course works. The board is NOT graded and will not have any impact on your final grade. It is simply a vehicle for you to communicate with me about course organization and content. Feel free to post questions or simply look in to see what questions other students have posted. I will monitor the board Monday-Thursday from 3 - 5pm and respond promptly at those times. On other days and at other times my response may be delayed.

## **Policy on Deadlines**

Given that this class runs for only four weeks, it is important that students adhere to assignment deadlines, *especially* the discussion boards. Failure to submit assignments on time or to participate in the discussion boards according to the timelines will result either in a zero or a lower grade for that assignment or discussion board. However, if you have extenuating circumstances or have a few days where travel or work will impede you from completing your work on time, let me know and we can work something out. The important thing in these circumstances is to communicate with me and request an extension or some arrangement that will allow you to complete the work. I will only accept late submissions if the student has requested an extension or accommodation ahead of time or communicated with me as soon as possible after the missed deadline to explain the reason for the need for an extension.

Students who require extra time for quizzes should make this request through Disability Services and have them get me the proper paperwork. While some students may be allowed extra time to complete quizzes, all students will complete the quizzes on the day they are assigned. Therefore, please take time to read the course schedule and make sure you will be able to meet the deadlines. Please note that the hour listed on Canvas as the deadline is the time when the assignment closes. You must have completed the quiz or submitted the essay by these deadlines. All assignments will be open at least 12 hours before the deadline, thus giving you the flexibility to schedule the quizzes at times that are convenient for you.