

SIS 619-022: Youth and Conflict
“Youth in Conflict and Peacebuilding”
School of International Service
American University
Spring 2018

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Office: EQB 308
Office Hours: Mondays & Thursdays from 11:20am – 1pm. Wednesdays from 2:30pm – 4:30pm. Sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydz2ozl7>

Class time: Wednesdays: 5:30pm – 8:00pm
Classroom: SIS 233

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will explore the various roles of youth in conflict contexts, be it as victims or perpetrators of violence or as actors in peacebuilding processes. Although youth are seen as a particularly vulnerable population who can be susceptible to recruitment into violent activities, they can also be an incredible driving force for change, and may be less jaded than older individuals involved in the political process. We will examine the role of youth in violence and child soldier experiences, as well as the experiences of youth in post-conflict reconstruction processes such as reintegration and reconciliation. We will pay special attention to the discourses surrounding these youth and the general absence of young women from these conversations. Additionally, we will consider how youth influence social movements and peacebuilding processes when they mobilize nonviolently and trends in programming with youth in conflict regions such as peace education and youth peacebuilding through sports and the arts. Throughout the course we will draw from current events and inspect case studies in Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Africa to ground our study in practical experiences of youth throughout the globe.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will:

- Understand the multitude of roles played by youth in conflict, “post-conflict”, and peacebuilding processes
- Be familiar with foundational texts *and* cutting edge thinking in the field of youth and conflict
- Develop proficiency in applying literature on youth and conflict to analyze pressing international conflicts
- Be familiar with different approaches to intervention programming with youth in conflict situations and designing interventions appropriate for these contexts
- Reflect on personal trajectories for working with youth in peace and conflict based on knowledge and skills gained throughout the course

REQUIRED TEXTS

Özerdem, Alpaslan and Sukanya Podder. 2015. *Youth in conflict and peacebuilding: Mobilization, reintegration, and reconciliation*. (E-Book Available from <http://link.springer.com.proxyau.wrlc.org/book/10.1057%2F9781137314536>)

REQUIRED ARTICLES/BOOK CHAPTERS

All remaining assigned readings will be provided in PDF form or through links on Blackboard.*

**I reserve the right to add or subtract readings as we progress.*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Class Attendance and Participation:	15%
Youth and Conflict in the News	10%
Midterm	20%
Group Proposal Presentation:	25%
Final Research Paper:	30%
Total:	100%

Class Attendance and Participation (15%): Attendance and participation is an essential part of this course. Students are expected to attend class, to participate actively and responsibly, to hand in all assignments when due, and to support other students in the learning process. We will all learn from each other. Each student will be an active learner, coming fully prepared to listen to and learn from others and to raise questions and suggest answers or tracks to follow in search of answers. Students are expected to read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts. We will work collaboratively to understand each other's perspectives and support the growth and learning of one another. **Additionally, the use of cellphones is absolutely not permitted during class. Laptops are also not to be used as they can distract from full participation in class discussions.**

Youth and Conflict in the News (10%): For this assignment you will pick a conflict case that illustrates the topic for the class on that particular week. You are to describe the case and apply course content from the readings that week to help make sense of youth experiences in this conflict. You should also identify a specific organization or project that is taking place in this context involving youth, and describe what the key objectives of their project are, what some of their activities were, and what came out of them. This presentation should therefore inform our understanding of how class readings can practically be applied to understand the role of youth in particular cases, as well as how specific actors intervene within these contexts. Please also prepare some discussion questions for the end of your presentation. This presentation should be between 10-15 minutes long and will be done in groups of 2.

Mid-term Assignment (20%): This assignment will involve the choice between either a research paper where you will select a particular conflict case and describe the various roles of youth in this particular context, or report where you will identify an organization

that works with youth in conflict situations, what their approach is, and how the literature helps to explain their work with youth in conflict contexts. This assignment will be due on Blackboard on Wednesday, March 7th by 5:30pm. More information about this assignment will be provided in class.

Group Proposal Presentation (25%): The class will be divided into groups and each group will be tasked with selecting a case study, presenting on the role of youth in conflict and peacebuilding for their particular case, and proposing an intervention that will address the issues faced by youth in the conflict. The group should provide a thorough explanation of the dynamics of the conflict and how youth are involved in these dynamics. They will also need to detail the specific initiatives targeting youth that have been implemented in the country. (Examples include reintegration programs, economic or vocational trainings, peace education, civil society trainings, Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) programs, peacebuilding through sports or the arts, etc.) Most importantly, students should propose a specific intervention plan that addresses the issues they have mapped in the conflict. Presentations will be between 25-30 minutes long and will take place on April 11th and 18th. More information on this assignment will be provided in class.

Final Research Paper OR Policy Memo (30%): Students will write a policy memo or a research paper for this assignment. You will need to inform me by Wednesday, April 18th as to which of these options you will choose. This assignment will be due on Wednesday, May 2nd by 11:59pm on Blackboard. More information on both assignment options will be provided in class. Some details for each assignment are below.

The **policy memo** will be directed towards the United Nations or another International Organization of your choice on how to include youth in post-conflict reintegration, reconciliation, or peacebuilding processes in a particular conflict context. The memo should address questions such as: what role have youth played in the conflict as violent actors, victims, and peacebuilders? How have former governmental and nongovernmental interventions involved youth? How do you recommend that future interventions involve youth to build peace in this particular conflict? The memo should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words. It is expected that your writing will be concise and to the point.

The **research paper** will provide an in-depth analysis of the role of youth in a specific international conflict of your choice. In this paper, the conflict should be mapped as a whole and the student should detail the involvement of youth in violence, their experiences as victims, and any relevant role they played in social mobilization, peacebuilding, or the post-conflict reconstruction process. The paper should use theories explored throughout the course to support students' explanation of these conflict dynamics. The student's work should also provide feasible recommendations on how to further include youth in reconciliation and reintegration processes, peace education, peacebuilding, and civil society building to address unresolved issues in the conflict. This paper should be between 12-15 pages double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, using the citation style of your choice.

Late Work: Papers and other assignments are to be submitted through Blackboard before the start of class. **Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day.** No work will be accepted over one week late without a valid written medical excuse or notice of death in the family. Work should be submitted in the required format.

Journal of International Service: For students looking to improve their writing, build their resume, and expand their portfolio, you are encouraged to submit your class papers, or modified versions, to the Journal of International Service (JIS). To learn more about JIS and how to submit, please visit: www.american.edu/sis/jis

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: January 17 – Introduction to the Course & Each Other

We will review the syllabus, discuss expectations, and get to know each other.

Reading: Albom, M. (1997). *Tuesdays with Morrie*: pp. 154 – 157 (pdf)

Week 2: January 24 – Children and Youth: Victims of Violence, Actors for Violence, or Change Agents for Peace?

Readings:

- *Youth in Conflict and Peacebuilding*, Chapter 1
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (Summary & Fact Sheet) (PDF)
- UN Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace & Security (Annotated by UNOY) (PDF)
- UN and the World Bank Group Report. 2017. *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches for Preventing Violent Conflict*. (Read only pages 1-23. Focus on how youth and youth inclusion is portrayed.)

Week 3: January 31 – The Youth Bulge & Youth Mobilization in Conflict

Readings:

- *Youth in Conflict and Peacebuilding*, Chapter 2
- Urdal, Henrik. 2012. “A Clash of Generations? Youth Bulges and Political Violence.” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs*. (PDF)
- Sommers, Marc. 2007. “Embracing the Margins: Working with Youth amid War and Insecurity.” In *Too Poor for Peace? Global Poverty, Conflict, and Security in the 21st Century*, ed. Lael Brainard & Derek Chollet. Brookings Institution Press. (PDF)
- Dwyer, Leslie. 2015. “Beyond youth ‘inclusion’: Intergenerational politics in post-conflict Bali.” *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development* 10 (3): 16-29

Week 4: February 7 – Child Soldiers and Violent Youth Participation in Conflict

Readings:

- Child Soldiers International website. (<http://www.child-soldiers.org/>) Review everything under the “The Issue” tab (“Who are child soldiers?,” “International Standards,” and “FAQs”).
- Huynh, Kim, Bina D’Costa, and Katrina Lee-Koo. (2015). *Children and Global*

- Conflict*. Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 5) (PDF)
- Wessells, Michael. 2006. "Child Victims, Young Combatants," Chapter 1 in *Child Soldiers: From Violence to Protection*. Harvard University Press.
 - Rosen, David. 2005. *Armies of the Young*, Chapter 1 (Link on Blackboard)
 - Shepler, Susan. 2005. The Rites of the Child: Global Discourses of Youth and Reintegrating Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone. *Journal of Human Rights*. 4: 197-211. (PDF)

Week 5: February 14 – Youth in Social Movements; the Arab Uprisings

Readings:

- Bazeed, Mariam. 2012. "Anonymous no more." In *Arab Spring dreams: The next generation speaks out for freedom and justice from North Africa to Iran*, eds. Nasser Weddady and Sohrab Ahmari. Palgrave Macmillan. (PDF)
- Cole, Juan. 2014. *The New Arabs*. New York, Simon & Schuster. (Chapter 1) (PDF)
- Honwana, Alcinda. 2013. *Youth and revolution in Tunisia*. New York, Zed Books. (Introduction and Chapter 1)
- Tarrow, Sidney. 1998. *Power in movement: Social movements and contentious politics*. NY: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 1) (PDF)

Week 6: February 21 – Post-Conflict Youth Reintegration and General Approaches to Youth Programming

Readings:

- *Youth in Conflict and Peacebuilding*, Chapters 3 & 5
- Schwartz, Stephanie. 2010. *Youth in post-conflict reconstruction: Agents of change*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press. (Chapter 1) (PDF)
- de Berry, Joanna. 2008. "The Challenges of Programming with Youth in Afghanistan." In *Years of Conflict: Adolescence, Political Violence, and Displacement*, Jason Hart, ed. New York: Berghahn Books. (PDF)
- Barber, Brian K. 2013. "Annual Research Review: The Experience of Youth with Political Conflict – Challenging Notions of Resilience and Encouraging Research Refinement." *The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 54 (4): 461-473
- Gopin, Marc. 2004. *Healing the heart of conflict: Eight crucial steps to making peace with yourself and others* (excerpt) (PDF)

Week 7: February 28 – Youth in Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Processes

Readings:

- *Youth in Conflict and Peacebuilding*, Chapter 4
- Hylker, Lyndsay McLean. 2009. "Everyday Ethnicities: Identity and Reconciliation Among Rwandan Youth." *Journal of Genocide Research* 11 (1): 81-100. (PDF)
- Magill, Clare and Brandon Hamber. 2011. "'If They Don't Start Listening to Us, the Future Is Going to Look the Same as the Past': Young People and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Youth & Society* 43 (2): 509 – 527. (PDF)

- Filipovic, Zlata. 1994. *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*. New York: Scholastic Inc. (excerpt) (PDF)
- Wessells, Michael. 2005. "Child Soldiers, Peace Education, and Postconflict Reconstruction for Peace." *Theory Into Practice* 44 (4): 363-369. (PDF)

Week 8: March 7 – Gender (Girls and Young Women as Victims and Activists)

Readings:

- Ziada, Dalia. 2012. "My sacred NO!" In *Arab Spring dreams: The next generation speaks out for freedom and justice from North Africa to Iran*, eds. Nasser Weddady and Sohrab Ahmari. Palgrave Macmillan. (PDF)
- Swaine, Aisling, with Thomas Feeny. 2004. "A neglected perspective: Adolescent girls' experiences of the Kosovo conflict of 1999." In *Children and youth on the front line: Ethnography, armed conflict & displacement*, eds. Jo Boyden and Joanna de Berry. New York, Berghahn Books. (PDF)
- Zelikovich, Shiran and Hasboun, Mary Masrieh. 2006. "Second Intifada, 2000-". In *Stolen Voices: Young People's War Diaries, from World War I to Iraq*, eds. Zlata Filipovic and Melanie Challenger. New York: Penguin Books. (PDF)
- Khoja-Moolji, Shenila. 2016. "Doing the 'Work of Hearing': Girls' Voices in Transnational Educational Development Campaigns." *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 46 (5): 745-763. (PDF)

*******Due Before Class on Blackboard: Midterm Assignment*******

Week 9: March 14 – Spring Break (NO CLASS)

Week 10: March 21 – Youth Agency & Empowerment in Conflict & Peacebuilding

Readings:

- *Youth in Conflict and Peacebuilding*, Chapter 7
- Barber, Brian K. and Joseph Olsen. 2009. "Positive and negative psychosocial functioning after political conflict: Examining adolescents of the first Palestinian Intifada." In *Adolescents and war: How youth deal with political violence*, ed. Brian K. Barber. Oxford University Press. (PDF)
- Bajaj, Monisha. 2008. "Introduction." In *Encyclopedia of peace education*, edited by Monisha Bajaj, 1-11. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Cromwell, Alexander. Forthcoming. "Building cultures of peace: The long-term effects of field-based peace education with Pakistani youth." PhD Dissertation, George Mason University. (Chapter 5)

Week 11: March 28 – Peace Education in Ethnopolitical Conflict

Required Readings:

- Salomon, Gavriel. 2008. "Peace education: Its nature, nurture and the challenges it faces." In *Handbook on building cultures of peace*, edited by Joseph de Rivera, 107-121. NY: Springer.
- Lazarus, Ned. 2015. "Evaluating seeds of peace: Assessing long-term impact in volatile context." In *Peace education evaluation: Learning from experience and*

exploring prospects, eds. Celine Del Felice, Aaron Karako, & Andria Wisler. Charlotte, Information Age Publishing. (PDF)

- Ross, Karen. 2017. *Youth encounter programs in Israel: Pedagogy, identity, and social change*. NY: Syracuse University Press. (Preface and Chapter 5)
- Cromwell, Alexander. Forthcoming. "Building cultures of peace: The long-term effects of field-based peace education with Pakistani youth." PhD Dissertation, George Mason University. (Chapter 6)

Recommended:

- Malhotra, Deepak, and Sumanasiri Liyanage. 2005. "Long-term effects of peace workshops in protracted conflicts." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 49 (6), 908-924. (PDF)

Week 12: April 4 – NO CLASS (Prof. Cromwell Presenting at International Studies Association Annual Convention)

- Work on Group Project Proposals

Week 13: April 11 – Youth Peacebuilding through Sports and the Arts

Readings:

- Tuohey, Brendan and Brian Cognato. 2011. "PeacePlayers International: A case study on the use of sport as a tool for conflict transformation." *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 31 (1): 51-63.
- Mitchell, David, Ian Somerville, and Owen Hargie. 2016. "Sport for peace in Northern Ireland? Civil Society, change, and constraint after the 1998 Good Friday Agreement." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 18 (4): 981-996.
- Galily, Yair, Michael J. Leitner, and Pini Shimion. 2013. "The effects of three Israeli sports programs on attitudes of Arabs and Jews toward one another." *Journal of Aggression, Conflict, and Peace Research* 5 (4): 243-258.
- Lederach, John Paul. 2011. "The 'Wow Factor' and a non-theory of change." In *Positive approaches to peacebuilding: A resource for innovators*, eds. Cynthia Sampson, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Claudia Liebler, and Diana Whitney. (PDF)
- Opiyo, Lindsay McClain, and Tricia Redeker Hepner. 2013. "Youth in transition: The arts and cultural resonance in postconflict Northern Uganda." In *Conflict and peacebuilding in the Africa Great Lakes Region*, eds. Kenneth Omeje and Tricia Redeker Hepner. (PDF)

Week 14: April 18 – Group Presentations (Groups 1-4)

Week 15: April 25 – Group Presentations (Groups 5-6); Course Wrap-up: Reflection on Learning

Week 16: May 2 – FINAL PAPER DUE BY 11:59PM

UNIVERSITY-WIDE POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's Academic Integrity Code, which can be found at: <http://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/code.cfm>

It is expected that all assignments will be completed according to the standards set forth in this code. By registering, students have acknowledged awareness of the Academic Code and are obliged to become familiar with their rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in disciplinary action. Please see me if there are any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general, or as they relate to particular requirements for this or any other course or work at American University.

DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please do not hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements:

Academic Support and Access Center (x3360, MGC 243):

In addition to using the resources available in this department, all students may take advantage of individual academic counseling, skills workshops, tutor referrals, Supplemental Instruction, and writing appointments in the Academic Support and Access Center.

Note: Students with Disabilities:

If you wish to receive accommodations for a disability, please notify me with a letter from the Academic Support and Access Center. As accommodations are not retroactive, timely notification at the beginning of the semester, if possible, is requested.

Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214):

The Counseling Center offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

Writing Center:

The Writing Center in 228 Battelle-Tompkins offers free, individual coaching sessions to all AU students. In your 45-minute session, a student writing consultant can help you address assignments, understand the conventions of academic writing, and learn how to revise and edit your own work. The Center offers appointments on the hour from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, and 3 to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Call 202- 885- 2991 to arrange a session.

Center for Diversity & Inclusion:

The Center for Diversity & Inclusion is dedicated to enhancing LGBTQ, Multicultural, First Generation, and Women's experiences on campus and to advance AU's commitment to respecting & valuing diversity by serving as a resource and liaison to students, staff,

and faculty on issues of equity through education, outreach, and advocacy. It is located on the 2nd floor of Mary Graydon Center: 202-885-3651, email is cdi@american.edu.

AU EMERGENCY PREPARATIONS

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease) (or other emergency), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format or use of distance instructional methods, or both. All faculty members will design alternative means of completing classes. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. I will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail, or Blackboard, or both, while you must inform me immediately of any absence due to illness or emergency. Students are responsible for checking AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, you should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at 202-885-1000 for general university-wide information. AND contact your faculty, or respective dean's office, or both for course and school/college-specific information.