

NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COURSE SYLLABUS

POLS150 - Peace Studies & Conflict Resolution

(Study Abroad – Costa Rica 2011)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

The course examines the political, socioeconomic, and historical factors contributing to a culture of peace and non-violence in Costa Rica as well as the contemporary challenges in maintaining that culture. Students will meet with decision makers and practitioners in the fields of government, business, education, religion, security, foreign policy, environment, and the media. Basic language and cultural instruction will be included along with excursions to areas of interest in Costa Rica. (Study abroad)

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Compare alternative perspectives on regional/global attitudes and approaches to the prevention of, intervention in, and responses to conflict.
2. Evaluate the merits of a systems approach as it is applied to the prevention of, intervention in, and responses to conflict.
3. Analyze conflict resolution from the perspective of each of the nine tracks of multi-track diplomacy (government, non-government/professional, business, private citizenry, research/training/education, activism, religion, funding, and communications/media).
4. Describe the historical, cultural, political, and socioeconomic factors that have promoted peace and nonviolence in Costa Rica.
5. Apply the multi-track diplomacy system to Costa Rica's approach to peace building.
6. Examine Costa Rican political and social institutions for evidence of public forms of conflict resolution (e.g., arbitration, negotiation, mediation, restorative justice, circle processes, and strategic peace building.)
7. Evaluate the current and historical challenges to nonviolence and conflict resolution in Costa Rica's political and socio-economic framework.

8. Examine one's own perspective, worldview, and assumptions about nonviolence and conflict resolution and critically evaluate these views from a culturally different perspective.

TEXTBOOKS / WEBSITES:

Required:

- Palmer, Steven and Ivan Molina, eds. *The Costa Rican Reader*. Duke University Press, 2004.

Recommended:

- Schirch, Lilsa. *Strategic Peacebuilding*. Good Books, 1969.
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GRADES: Your final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Points</u>
1. Pre-trip quizzes (50 pts ea.) Theory Country Info Survival Spanish	150
2. Oral presentation	150
3. Group discussions	100
4. Writing assignments	100
5. Reflective Journal	200
6. Research paper or Service Learning Journal	200
7. Attendance/Participation/Team Work (Commitment)	100
	<hr/> 1000 pts
A – 900-1000 pts	
B – 800-900 pts	
C – 700-800 pts	
D – 600-700 pts	
F – 600 pts or less	

Reflective Journal Assignment (200 pts)

You will be required to keep a journal one week prior to departure, during the trip to Costa Rica and one week after returning home. The journal will consist of writing an entry every day which should include the following:

- Summaries of key events of the day;
- Summaries of lectures attended;

- Observations on some aspect of Costa Rican politics, society, culture, family, religion, art, or history.
- Reflections on how the various activities and experiences in Costa Rica enhance understanding of the country's culture of peace and the challenges in creating/sustaining such a culture.
- Possible practical applications to one's home community.

When keeping your journal, it is important to remember that journals are not the same as diaries. While both are daily recordings, journals tend to be more observational and analytical while diaries are more personal reflections. It may be helpful to think of yourself as a researcher in the field, observing and recording what you are learning about a country's history, society, culture, and politics.

Example of inappropriate journal entry: "Today we had lunch at McDonald's. I was very pleased to find out that the fries tasted exactly the same as in the U.S.!!"

Example of appropriate journal entry: "Today we listened to a lecture on Costa Rican history. It was very interesting to find out that Costa Rica abolished its military as early as 1948! I would like to find out more about this event as I think it relates directly to Costa Rica's culture of peace. Perhaps it will be the topic of my research paper..."

Please consult the "Rubric for Reflective Journal" posted on Blackboard under "Content". It describes in detail what your instructor will be looking for when grading your final journal.

Option A – Research Paper (200 pts)

You will be required to write a research paper. Topics will be decided upon consultation with the instructor from your college.

As a minimum, your research paper should be six (6) pages long, typed, double-spaced, size 12 font. You should use a MINIMUM of 4 sources (books, articles, journals; your personal journal or personal interviews can be used as sources). Appropriate internet sources: official government agencies or educational institutions; non-profit organization; or international organizations such as the UN, OAS, World Bank etc. Newspaper/magazine articles from major news sources such as New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Christian Science Monitor, Financial Times, Wall Street Journal, Time, Newsweek, the Economist, etc. are acceptable as well.

Your paper should also include a Works Cited page in the MLA format. If you are quoting someone you spoke with in Costa Rica directly, you should include their name, title, and the date of interview/conversation in parenthesis immediately following the quote.

Consult the "Rubric for Research Papers" posted on Blackboard under "Content". It lists all the criteria your instructor will use to grade your final research paper.

The list below is provided to help you start thinking about course-appropriate research paper topics. Please consult with your instructor regarding questions about your paper such as narrowing down your topic, appropriateness of sources etc. Your topic/analysis should be

clearly related to one or more of the concepts/theories of peace, conflict transformation, and/or multi-track diplomacy covered in this course.

- Costa Rica's history of peace (specific events, leaders etc.)
- Laws/ international agreements related to peace
- Government structure in Costa Rica and peace
- U.N.-mandated University for Peace
- Oscar Arias: his work and the Nobel Peace prize.
- Demilitarization and peace.
- Earth University and the relationship b/w sustainable agriculture/fair trade and peace.
- Challenges to sustaining a culture of peace (domestic violence, drug trafficking, immigration, poverty etc.)
- Education/curriculum in Costa Rica and peace
- Indigenous tribes and peace
- Status of Costa Rican women and peace
- Community activism and peace
- The role of media (contributing/hindering a peace culture?)
- Religion and peace in Costa Rica
- Costa Rican economy and peace
- Business/Private sector and peace
- Organized labor and peace
- Security forces in Costa Rica and peace
- Regional challenges and peace (Nicaragua-Costa Rica relations, OAS, drug trade etc.)
- U.S.-Costa Rican relations and peace
- Peaceful communities in Costa Rica (Monteverde Quakers etc.)
- Peace movement/peace groups in Costa Rica

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. NCC has a strict policy in this area – if you present someone else's work as your own, submit a paper found or bought on the Internet as your own, or quoting someone without using quotations, you will be punished for academic dishonesty according to NCC policy as explained in the Student Handbook and College Catalog. That could mean a failing grade for the project, course, or worse. I recommend that you save all rough drafts of your paper as well as hard copies of your sources until you receive your final grade for the course. *I may request to see them at any time.*

Useful links / websites:

- *Beyond Intractability.* <http://www.beyondintractability.org/>
- Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy. <http://www.imtd.org/>
- BBC News – Country Profiles (Costa Rica):
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1166587.stm
- Economist – Country Readings (Costa Rica):
<http://www.economist.com/countries/CostaRica/>

- United Nations
<http://www.un.org/>
- Organization of American States (OAS)
<http://www.oas.org/en/default.asp>
- The University for Peace
<http://www.upeace.org/>
- Earth University
http://www.earth.ac.cr/ing/info_general.php
- U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica
<http://costarica.usembassy.gov/>
- Costa Rican Embassy in the U.S.
<http://www.costarica-embassy.org/>
- Costa Rican newspapers
<http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/costaric.htm>

General Resource Pages – Cases, articles, research, publications on international and domestic conflicts

- The Conflict Resolution Information Source: <http://www.crimfo.org/>
- United State Institute of Peace: www.usip.org

Media and Peacebuilding

- Search for Common Ground: <http://www.sfcg.org/>
- Democracy Now The War and Peace Report: <http://www.democracynow.org/>

Focused on the Protection of International Human Rights/Humanitarian Law

- Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org/>
- Amnesty International: <http://www.amnesty.org/>
- International Committee for the Red Cross – Exploring Humanitarian Law:
<http://www.ehl.icrc.org/>

Non-Violence, Multi-Track Diplomacy, and Sustained Dialogue

- International Center on Nonviolent Conflict: <http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/>
- Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy: <http://www.imtd.org/>
- International Institute on Sustained Dialogue: <http://www.sustaineddialogue.org/>
- M. (Mohandas) K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence: www.gandhiinstitute.org/
- National Civil Rights Institute Museum: www.civilrightsmuseum.org
- The King Center (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.): www.thekingcenter.org

- Birmingham Civil Rights Institute: www.bcri.org
- Southern Poverty Law Center, Teaching Tolerance: www.teachingtolerance.org

School Conflict Resolution Education

- International Conflict Resolution Education: www.CREducation.org
- E-based Academy: www.ebasedacademy.org
- E-based Prevention: www.ebasedprevention.org

Higher Education Conflict Resolution Resources

- Campus Alternative Dispute Resolution: www.campus-adr.org

State Government/State-wide Organizations/ Resources

- Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management: www.disputeresolution.ohio.gov
- Ohio Domestic Violence Network: <http://www.odvn.org/>
- Ohio Sexual Assault Prevention Taskforce: <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/hpr/sadv/sadvprev1.aspx>
- Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation: <http://www.ohiospf.org/>

International Governmental Organizations Focused on Peace and Security

- Organization of American States (Democracy for Peace, Development, and Security) – serves the 34 countries of the Americas, a governmental organization: www.oas.org
- The United Nations Development Programme – Free publications in peace and security issues, including addressing structural violence issues for improved efforts in development: <http://www.undp.org/publications/>
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: <http://www.osce.org/>
- Association for Conflict Resolution: www.acrnet.org

International Non-Governmental Organizations Focused on Peace and Security

- Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict: www.gppac.net

Listserve to join for regular resource and opportunity updates domestic and international including internships, jobs, events, new resources, etc.

- Peace and Collaborative Development Network: <http://www.internationalpeaceandconflict.org/>

National Associations:

- National Association for Conflict Resolution: www.acrnet.org
- National Peace Academy: www.nationalpeaceacademy.us
- Peace and Justice Studies Association: www.pjsa.org

(Has a link to U.S. Colleges and Universities with programs/centers in peace or conflict studies)

Option B – Service Learning Journal (200 pts)

Students must select a project that is relevant to the course and have it approved by the lead instructor as well as the student's local instructor. Students choosing the S/L option must submit a service learning plan including their learning objectives, the service site and a time line within two weeks of the return from Costa Rica. Before the end of the student's summer term, the students must submit two (2) progress reports and a final journal instead of the research paper.

Service learning is a collaborative teaching and learning strategy designed to promote academic enhancement, civic engagement, and personal growth. Students who choose this option will do volunteer work for 15 hours before the end of summer for a project that addresses critical political, social or economic needs in our communities. This component of the course will deepen the students' understanding of multi-track diplomacy, peace building and conflict transformation. The work site will be arranged by the students in cooperation with their local instructor. Students who choose the S/L option for this course can participate in one of the following areas:

Social / Environmental Justice: Students who choose this S/L option will work with a local government agency or non-profit organization addressing community needs such as homelessness, immigration, women's rights, gay rights, and other aspects of political, economic and/or social exclusion. Students are responsible for adhering to a precise work schedule that will satisfy the required 15 hours throughout the semester. Sample work sites will be provided by the local instructor.

Diversity / Multiculturalism: Students who choose this S/L option will work with a local non-profit organization or government agency addressing issues related to racial, ethnic, religious, economic, cultural or other diversity in our communities. Students are responsible for adhering to a precise work schedule that will satisfy the required 15 hours throughout the semester. Sample work sites will be provided by the local instructor.

Peace / Conflict Resolution: Students will be required to spend 15 hours working with a local non-profit organization or government agency addressing issues related to peace and/or conflict resolution at the individual, group or global level. Students are responsible for adhering to a precise work schedule that will satisfy the required 15 hours throughout the semester. Sample work sites will be provided by the local instructor.

Service Learning Expectations and Responsibilities:

Students participating in the Service Learning option in this course are expected to:

- Write a Service Learning Project proposal and obtain a service site within two weeks after the return from Costa Rica.
- Fulfill their 15 hours and complete projects.
- Agree to a precise work schedule with the site supervisor and adhere to it.
- Provide a minimum of 24 hours notice of absence.
- Participate in any required orientation/training in their work site.

- Follow work site regulations and respect fellow co-workers.
- Serve in a manner that reflects positively on the student's community college.
- Notify the instructor if the site supervisor terminates the volunteer position.
- Submit 2 one-page progress reports at specific points in the semester (due dates provided in the syllabus).
- Submit a final journal (5 pages long, typed, double spaced, size 12 font) by the date specified. Guidelines are provided at the end of the syllabus.
- Reflect on their experience and share their insights during class discussions.

Work site supervisors are expected to:

- Provide meaningful work related to skills, interests, and available time.
- Provide orientation/training to the site and position.
- Provide the student with a clear schedule of work hours.
- Offer sound guidance, direction, and input.
- Provide opportunity for the student to make suggestions and receive feedback.
- Ensure that student is treated as an integral part of the organization.
- Complete an evaluation of the student's efforts at the end of the term.
- Recognize the student's efforts as a volunteer.
- Notify the lead instructor if the student does not complete the required 15 hours of service.

Students should answer and discuss the following questions in their final journal (6 pages long, double-spaced, size 12 font):

(To receive an A in this part of the course, a student must address ALL the questions below):

1. What type of service learning project did you participate in? Describe the project and/or the structure, functions, and goals of the agency you worked in.
2. What were your reasons for selecting this particular work site?
3. What tasks did you perform during the project?
4. How was your S/L project related to material discussed in class or covered in the textbook? Which readings or class discussions come to mind as you reflect on your S/L project?
5. What did you learn from the project about yourself, your role in the community, and others?
6. How does this project relate to your own personal experiences, or professional / personal goals?
7. In what ways did the project force you to question your own assumptions, beliefs, or stereotypes?
8. What do you plan to do with the new skills/awareness you acquired?

9. How can we sustain an active role in our communities throughout our lifetime? What are the challenges in doing so and how can we deal with such challenges?

Please read the Rubrics for Service Learning Journals attached to this syllabus to familiarize yourself with the criteria used to grade your service learning journal.

Writing Assignments (100 pts):

Students are required to submit a completed Reflection Form (found at the end of this syllabus) for each lecture/presentation they attend while in Costa Rica. Additional writing projects may be assigned during the trip.

Attendance, Participation, Team Work (100 pts):

To be able to do meaningful group work you should:

1. Be on time for all group activities and not leave early.
2. Complete all readings and other preparatory assignments.
3. Give thoughtful answers to questions.
4. Participate in small-group and whole-class discussions.
5. Be an active listener and respect the opinions of others.
6. Be open to changing or rethinking your perspective.
7. Contribute actively to your group's tasks.
8. Contribute to resolving group conflict in a transformative way (please read and become familiar with "Conflict Transformation" handout posted on Blackboard under "Content").

TENTATIVE READING SCHEDULE:

I. Conceptualizing Peace

"The Meanings of Peace", pp. 3-26 in David Barash and Charles Webel's Peace and Conflict Studies (on reserve at the library).

PRE-TRIP QUIZ #1 (50 pts) – Due no later than Friday 5/20. Questions Based On Reading I Above. (Matching and short-answer questions)

II. Conflict Resolution/Transformation

Lederach, John Paul. "Conflict Transformation." *Beyond Intractability*.
<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/transformation/>

United Nations Charter. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml> (Preamble, and Articles 1, 2, 11, 55, and 76).

Organization of American States Charter: http://www.oas.org/dil/treaties_A-41_Charter_of_the_Organization_of_American_States.htm#ch1
(Chapters I, II, V, and VII Article 34).

III. Building Peace

“Multi-track Diplomacy”, by John W. McDonald.
<http://www.beyondintractability.org/action/essay.jsp?id=28733&nid=1332>

“Multi-Track Diplomacy in the 21st Century,” by Louise Diamond
http://www.gppac.net/documents/pbp/part1/6_multit.htm

“Peacebuilding,” by Michelle Maiese
<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/peacebuilding/>

IV. Costa Rica: History, Culture, Politics

U.S. Department of State
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2019.htm#history>

Oscar Arias Sánchez, “Only Peace Can Write the New History,”
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1987/arias-lecture.html

PRE-TRIP QUIZ #2 (50 pts) Due no later than Friday, 5/27.
Based On Readings II-IV Above. (Sentence completion and short-answer questions)

PRE-TRIP QUIZ #3 (50 pts) Due no later than Friday, 6/3.
(Based On Survival Spanish Handout – this will be posted on Blackboard shortly)

IN-COUNTRY ORAL PRESENTATION (150 pts)

All readings are from The Costa Rican Reader (TCRR) by Palmer and Molina:

Student presentations – Session #1 – June 8 (Date subject to change)

Entire class should read and be prepared to discuss: Introduction and “Birth of an Exception?,” pp. 1-12 and “Coffee Nation”, pp. 55-56, in TCRR.

Presenters:

Zackary Audenried – “Hunting Indians,” pp. 16-21

Lorri Davis – “Life and Labor in the Central Valley, circa 1821,” pp. 35-43.

Douglas DeLabar – “Privatization of the Land and Agrarian Conflict,” pp.57-61.

Samantha Dean – “Getting to Know the Unknown Soldier,” pp. 90-96.

Student presentations—Session #2 – June 10 (Date subject to change):

Entire class should read and be prepared to discuss: “Popular Culture and Social Policy,” pp. 99-100 and “Democratic Enigma,” pp. 139-142, in TCRR

Presenters:

Edgar Espinoza – “Women of the Barrio,” pp. 102-108.

Jillian Farnack – “A Governor and a Man Faces the Social Problem,” pp. 135-138.

Michael Flesher – “The Polarization of Politics, 1932-1948,” pp. 163-169.

Pete Smillie – “Democracy on the Brink: The First Figueres Presidency,” pp. 175-182.

Student presentations – Session #3 – June 15 (Date subject to change)

Entire class should read and be prepared to discuss: “The Costa Rican Dream,” pp. 183-186 and “Other Cultures and Outer Reaches,” pp. 229-231, in TCRR.

Presenters:

Lawanna Kendricks – “Growing Up in the Dream,” pp. 203-209.

TBA – “The Crisis: 1980-1982,” pp. 212-218.

Cassandra Prime – “Passing: Nicaraguans in Costa Rica,” pp. 257-263.

Ferzana Ramin – “Taking Care of Sibö’s Gifts,” pp. 264-273.

Michelle Randall – “West Indian Limón,” pp. 237-242.

Student presentations – Session #4 – June 16 (Date subject to change)

Entire class should read and be prepared to discuss: “Working Paradise,” pp. 275-277 and “Tropical Soundings,” pp. 319-321 and “Costa Rica: A Millennial Profile” pp. 361-363, in TCRR.

Presenters:

Antonio Sanford – “Migration and the Costa Rican Environment since 1900,” pp. 284-292.

Ahad Shah – “Pesticides and Parakeets in the Banana Industry,” pp. 298-309.

None – “Social Development with Limited Resources,” pp. 323-333.

Tiphney Strickland – “Men in Crisis?,” pp. 350-357.

Lisa Wright – “Costa Rica: A Millennial Profile,” pp. 361-363.

All students are expected to participate in the group discussions by making relevant comments, asking questions etc.

Presenters are expected to make a 5-10 minute presentation which should include the following:

- A concise summary of their assigned reading. -20
- Key points/arguments made by the writer. -20

- Explain how their readings contribute to a better understanding of historical/cultural and other factors contributing to Costa Rica's culture of peace or the challenges in sustaining such culture. -30

How does it relate to multi-track diplomacy and peace theory – 30

Delivery – 25:

Posture and Appearance – 10

Voice - 10

Eye - 5

Overall impression -10

Time limit - 5

POST-TRIP ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:

Reflective Journal Due Date: June 30

Research Paper (or Service Learning Journal) Due Date: July 15

REFLECTION

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Speaker/s: _____

Organization: _____

Diplomacy Track: _____

Background information on the speaker:

Write down at least 5-8 key points from the presentation.

Based on the background information and the presentation itself, write down at least 2-5 questions. Ask at least one of the questions and record the answer.

What is the one primary thing you will take away from this presentation?

How does this presentation fit with what you have learned about multi-track diplomacy?

How does this presentation fit with what you have learned about conflict transformation theory?