Course Descriptions - Center for Justice and Peacebuilding

Note regarding the syllabi linked below: at the end of course descriptions are syllabi from a recent time in which this course was taught. Do not rely on syllabi for upcoming course information regarding the faculty member teaching the course and the time/day/location for the course.

PAX 516 – Program Evaluation Through Qualitative Research (3 SH)

This course is designed to help students understand and practice the implementation of program evaluation through the methodologies of qualitative research. Historic and contemporary sociological and anthropological approaches (Western and Indigenous) will provide the theoretical and philosophical background for our work, but the focus will be on practical applications of qualitative methodology in evaluation. Students will practice conducting structured and semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, coding interview transcripts, and will practice designing an evaluation: working with a client, determining appropriate methods, collecting data, analyzing the data, interpreting the data, and communicating the findings. This course complements, but does not take the place of other research and evaluation courses that focus entirely on either research or evaluation.

The course format is participatory, experiential and adaptive. Students will conduct an actual professional evaluation of an on-going program; consequently, students will find themselves leading and/or participating in processes with which they have no prior experience. Further, the syllabus, readings and assignments may need to be adapted to meet the changing needs of the program. The course involves a significant amount of group work; each participant is advised to consider that requirement in relation to personal obligations, distance from campus, ease of meeting with other students and individual willingness to participate in a work team.

Students with higher levels of reactivity to course content will be met with a higher level of flexibility.

PAX 532 – Formation for Peacebuilding Practice (3 SH)

When we feel called to work for peace and social justice, we are the instrument of the work. Therefore, we need to cultivate our ability to engage conflict and injustice with compassion and clarity. This course explores various competencies needed for the vocational call of working for peace and social justice. Participants will strengthen their abilities to listen and communicate, create and maintain healthy boundaries, recognize and promote diversity and equity, lead from their vision and values, and engage people in dialogue and decision-making. We will also survey a range of roles and domains for conflict transformation and social change such as mediation, negotiation, and arts-based peacebuilding. Course participants will gain a deeper understanding of self as person, practitioner, and leader as well as a menu of personal skills and processes for integrating analysis, theory and practice within an assets-based approach to social change. This course is taught during our annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute www.emu.edu/cjp/spi/.

Pre-requisite: PAX 535 Research Methods for Social Change (graduate students) or permission of the instructor.

This course includes upper level undergraduate students).

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PAX 533 – Analysis: Understanding Conflict (3 SH)

This course focuses on the analysis of conflict and violence as the foundation for designing strategies for peacebuilding and conflict prevention and is taught during our annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute www.emu.edu/cjp/spi/. Participants will learn a variety of tools to “map” and describe the nature and dynamics of conflict. Drawing from broad interdisciplinary theoretical bases, the course focuses on human needs theory as a central framework for examining the complex causes of conflict, crime, and violence. Participants will explore the role of group and individual identity; respect and the role of shame and humiliation in the cycle of violence; security and the role of attachment; and the impact of structural violence on other forms of conflict. Participants will practice power analysis, cultural analysis, and psychological analysis of conflict. Participants will develop their ability to “see” and describe conflict from different perspectives. This course is taught during our annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute www.emu.edu/cjp/spi/.

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PAX 534 – Foundations for Justice & Peacebuilding | (6 SH)

Foundations I and II give an overview of social justice and peacebuilding practice and its multi-disciplinary, multi-level aspects. This course, Foundations I, addresses personal, interpersonal, small group, and organizational-level conflict transformation and social change. Foundations I will center personal formation, basic action research, analysis for understanding conflict and injustice, theoretical underpinnings of practice, theories of change, practitioner roles, essential skills and basic processes in our work, and process design. Foundations II focuses on communal and societal levels of conflict and social change, centering critical theory, analysis, power, structural and macro-level engagement, larger group processes, process design and more. Throughout the two courses, you will integrate critical self-assessment, ethical application of theory, technical utilization of research and analysis tools, and systematic processes of planning and implementation for intervention or action across many sectors and at different levels of society.
This course is taught during our annual Summer Peacebuilding PAX 588 – Nonviolent Mobilization for Social Change (3 SH)

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PAX 540 – STAR Level 1 (2 SH)

This course presents an integrated theoretical and training approach to the trauma, conflict, and violence caused by nature, human beings, or societal institutions and structures. Research and experience demonstrate that unaddressed trauma often leads to conflict and violence against self or others, as trauma-affected people act out against others or become self-destructive. STAR combines theory with experiential learning to increase awareness of the impacts of trauma on the body, brain, beliefs and behaviors. The course offers tools for addressing trauma and breaking the cycles of violence. The STAR multidisciplinary framework draws on the fields of trauma and resilience studies (including neurobiology), restorative justice, conflict transformation, human security and spirituality for building healthy, resilient individuals and communities. The theoretical and practical focus of the course provides a model to understand and interrupt cycles of violence at the individual, communal and societal levels.

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PAX 563 - Forgiveness & Reconciliation (2-3 SH)

This course will explore the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation, their various components, and the place they occupy in the spectrum of the various social science conflict-handling mechanisms. It will examine the concepts from different philosophical, cultural and disciplinary perspectives and look at how they have been used for healing interpersonal relationships as well as addressing large-scale social (political, inter-ethnic or international) conflicts. Although the main emphasis will be on social conflicts, the personal, psychological, spiritual and ecological dimensions of forgiveness and reconciliation and their interrelationships with one another will be explored. The course will involve lectures, discussion, group work, student presentations, and writing assignments. There are many methods for creating and facilitating trainings. In order to create a training that will not only be delivered successfully, but where knowledge is retained, the facilitator needs to know the learners for the training, their experiences and their own needs and interests. This course begins with the premise that learners must be empowered to learn in a way that works for them and that traditional educational methods simply are not well-suited to learning that lasts beyond the event itself. This course is taught during our annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute www.emu.edu/cjp/spfl.

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PAX 571 – Restorative Justice: Principles, Theories & Applications (3 SH)

This course provides a critical examination of the values, principles, and practices of restorative justice. It provides a unique opportunity to explore the philosophy of restorative justice from various perspectives, and as it is applied in various contexts. Our primary starting point is the U.S. criminal legal system and the problems posed by its dominant responses to crime and violence. We examine how restorative justice presents an alternative philosophy of justice that addresses the needs of multiple stakeholders, draws from faith-based and indigenous approaches, and challenges interpersonal and structural forms of harm. We also explore intersections and applications of restorative justice with multiple fields and movements including racial justice, trauma healing, education, youth development, and transitional justice. This is a core requirements for MA in Restorative Justice students.

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PAX 585 – Global Development (3 SH)

This course introduces you to the field of global development through examining both the history of the field and the current debates and challenges faced by development practitioners. The purpose is to explore and critically evaluate the basic assumptions underlying the major competing theories and current approaches towards alleviating poverty and global inequality. This course approaches the phenomenon of development in its broadest sense as the study of change, with attention to global justice, equity, and the historical links between development, colonialism, and global capitalism. In the course, we will explore what development means, how to measure it, and how to understand attempts to balance between economic, ecological, and equity concerns. The course engages the key propositions that emerge in contemporary development debates, and offers frameworks for evaluating theories, interventions and policies. The course focuses especially on who decides, how decisions are made, and what the impacts are of development strategies on the environment and on the most vulnerable members of society. With this attention to power relations, we will consider critiques of the development project sensitive to race, gender, ecology and other political economy traditions, in dialogue with the dominant understanding of development as technical interventions for enhancing the market mechanism. This will provide a foundation for uncovering and assessing social and political structures, institutions, inequalities, and development policies as theories meet practice. The course is primarily run in a seminar discussion format. Guest speakers as well as class participants will be invited to share their own stories from the field of global development and peacebuilding.

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PAX 588 – Nonviolent Mobilization for Social Change (3 SH)

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Foundations I is constructed to assist you to integrate these vital elements - theory, research, analysis and practical skills and processes – into your justice work and peacebuilding practice. You will be introduced to basic literature and theory of the fields; explore conflict transformation from an individual, interpersonal and organizational level; consider the dynamics of conflict and injustice, and experience the practice of peacebuilding through reading and discussions, intensive teamwork, interactive case study, role-plays, and simulated practice exercises. Skills competencies are emphasized in the areas of self-awareness, team-building, conflict analysis and assessment, communication, construction of theories of change, strategies for intervention in interpersonal, intra-and intergroup conflicts, and process design. Basic processes that help structure conversations (such as negotiation, mediation and facilitation), nonviolent social action, accompaniment and coaching strategies and other transformative processes are highlighted. This course employs the action-reflection learning cycle as the undergirding educational framework throughout the semester. Foundations I cannot be taken for reduced credit or for professional education/training.
“Each day, love comes to us and says What will you show up for? What, in the end, is the truth of your heart? We answer with our bodies. We show up for the struggle. We show up for each other. We show up just as we are. Precious, flawed limited, magnificent Human. We show up for change. We choose the power of movement. We love by showing up. - from “What Moves Us” by Shailja Patel

What does it mean to build movements for social change? In this course, we look at the power of ordinary people to effect change through social movements using community organizing, public activism, and advocacy. We will examine how to build bottom-up movements through a study of the Mississippi Freedom Struggle; analyze how contemporary movements challenge violence and oppression in and by the U.S.; and explore histories and models of nonviolent resistance around the world. Throughout, we pay special attention to the following four themes:

1. Culture, faith and spirituality 2. Political education 3. Relationship building and leadership development, and 4. Gender justice (within an intersectional anti-oppression framework) Participants will have the opportunity to develop practical skills and experience in community engagement, grassroots organizing, and lobbying. A weekend trip to Washington, D.C. for advocacy training and lobbying meetings with U.S. Congressional representatives is a mandatory component of this course.

For CJP MA in Conflict Transformation students this course through spring 2019 satisfied the required skills assessment course if taken for 3 credits. As of spring 2020 this will be an elective but no longer a skills assessment course.

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PAX 601 – Mediation and Negotiation (3 SH)

Negotiation is the fundamental process by which human beings discern how to resolve differences and move forward together—whether in a family, a local community, an organization, a society, or a world community. Mediation adds a third party to the negotiation process, and has proven remarkably effective in resolving and even transforming certain disputes. This course will train participants to be effective negotiators and to serve as impartial mediators, but will also explore the varying contexts in which these processes take place and the variety of perspectives and worldviews that parties bring to a negotiation or mediation process. For CJP MA in Conflict Transformation students this course satisfies the skills assessment course requirement. Each student will be evaluated by the instructor and by class peers for competency in mediation & negotiation skills.

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This course is designed to develop participants’ capacities as skillful facilitators and to enable them to design and lead effective group processes for dialogue, deliberation and decision-making. The course is structured around six all-day class sessions that are complemented by observation of real meetings and mentored, applied practice as facilitators in the community.

We will learn methods appropriate for guiding community and organizational meetings, conducting public processes, and for enabling difficult dialogues across conflict divides. Participants will learn how to assess the needs of the group and then to design processes to address them. This will include processes to help groups improve understanding, strengthen relationships, engage in collaborative problem solving and make effective decisions. Participants will become familiar with a variety of methods and techniques to achieve process goals, with groups ranging in size from three to 3,000.

Through a variety of readings, exercises and reflections, the course will assist participants’ formation as reflective practitioners assisting group processes. We will focus on developing self-awareness and awareness of group dynamics, while cultivating openness and offering a calm presence even in the midst of high levels of anxiety and conflict. We will consider a variety of facilitator roles and functions and critically assess the ethics and appropriateness of these for different types of situations. While rooted in a North American peacebuilding paradigm, we will aim to also explore facilitation in other cultural traditions and raise awareness of the challenges of facilitating cross-culturally.

This course is designed for participants enrolled in CJP’s graduate studies program and assumes knowledge of basic conflict analysis and peacebuilding concepts and methods. As such, Foundations I or an equivalent course is preferred. This class qualifies as a skills assessment course for the CJP MA degree.

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PAX 615 – Leading Organizational Change (3 SH)

Whether for-profit, not-for-profit, or governmental, every organization today exists in a rapidly changing set of environments. Organizations that fail to adapt to these changes face decline and eventual death. However, organizations that lurch reactively from crisis to crisis are equally vulnerable to being selected out. Needed are leaders able to steer an organization through adaptive change processes in ways congruent with the organization’s deepest values. This seminar course will equip participants with the tools to understand organizational systems, to assess their changing environments, and to lead adaptive change processes. It is based on the theory and research of the organizational development field and the emerging literature regarding complex adaptive systems, as well as on the lived experience of participants. Seminar participants will accompany local organizations through assessment and intervention processes, gaining hands-on experience in leading change.

This is one of several Seminar courses that are geared primarily to second year graduate students at the Center for Justice & Peacebuilding. They require that a student have taken Foundations I & II unless otherwise noted. These seminar courses will be capped at 15 students, with up to 18 students with special instructor permission. Students from other graduate programs should meet with the professor to determine the suitability of the course for their learning goals. In order to participate in this particular advanced seminar, students will be required to have completed either the Foundations I course (offered by CJP) OR the Organizational Behavior course (offered by EMU’s MBA program).

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PAX 634 – Foundations for Justice & Peacebuilding II (6 SH)

Foundations I and II give a comprehensive overview of justice and peacebuilding practice and its multi-disciplinary, multi-level aspects. Foundations I centered on personal, interpersonal, small group and organizational transformation analysis, theory and practice. Foundations II focuses on communal, societal and global processes of transformation, with particular attention to the relationship between power and the production of justice and peacebuilding theories and practices. Throughout the two courses, you will be required to understand and integrate ethical application of theory, technical utilization of analysis tools, and systematic processes of planning and implementation for practice interventions across a myriad of sectors in society.
In this course, faculty continue to coach students as they further develop their knowledge and skills for dealing with conflict and situations of injustice and building sustainable peace, with increased sensitivity to race and gender as well as history, and political economy. Students work individually and in teams to learn new theories and concepts and to apply these ideas and skills to cases that progress in complexity from the community to the national and global levels (and back again). Throughout the course, we also examine the intersections and overlaps among the local and the global.

Students continue to develop their self-awareness as well as their capacity for professional judgment and reflective practice. Students become familiar with theories and frameworks that help explain the causes and dynamics of larger-scale conflicts, injustice and structural violence. They explore the roles of social-movement organizations, practitioner groups and policy engagement for dealing with such situations. Students prepare for future employment by completing assignments that develop professional skills, including but not limited to: communicating complex ideas clearly and succinctly, working in teams on complex projects, researching strategies and moving from analyzing a situation of injustice or conflict to designing and preparing strategies to impact that situation.

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**PAX 640 - STAR Level 2 (2 SH)**

Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience Level 2 invites people who have started to bring trauma awareness into their life and work for greater resilience to strengthen and sharpen their praxis. In Level 2, participants have a chance to:

- review and deepen the learning around trauma awareness and resilience
- grapple with the complex realities and implications of structural and historical harms
- practice and deepen capacity for trauma-informed facilitation, and
- share plans and questions, while connecting with others who are applying STAR learning in their lives and work.

STAR Level 1 provides foundational content for this course. In Level 2, we continue to focus on trauma’s impacts on body, brain, beliefs and behavior; how those impacts often lead to cycles of violence; and possibilities for breaking free of cycles of violence and building resilience. To build on STAR 1 learning, STAR 2 will focus on four key areas:

1. Starting with self (including focused work on social identity and systems of power).
2. Reviewing and deepening skills and concepts for working with trauma and building resilience.
3. Developing a healing-centered pedagogy and practice.
4. Facing and healing historical and structural trauma.

Participants in STAR Level 2 will also have the opportunity to join the STAR Practitioner learning community for ongoing connection and exchange as well as conceptual and practical resources.

Participants must have applied STAR concepts personally or professionally since completion of STAR Level 1 training (normally for a period of about 3-6 months). STAR 2 is also offered in the Summer Peacebuilding Institute as a 3 SH option.

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**PAX 671 - Truth-telling, Reconciliation & Restorative Justice (2 SH)**

“Truth-telling” is paramount in the quest for justice, particularly against the backdrop of silenced historical harm. This course grapples with the form and function of truth telling in the pursuit of justice and critically explores linkages between the two. We will survey and analyze historical approaches to truth-telling in the international context, whether in the context of truth commissions or indigenous practices. Of particular interest in this course are the emerging truth-telling, racial healing and reparations initiatives in the United States to address racial violence against African-Americans. Together, using restorative justice-based and critical race pedagogical approaches, we will grapple with the following questions and more:

- What does truth-telling mean in the quest for justice?
- How has truth-telling looked in historical international contexts and how is it looking in the contemporary domestic context?
- What form have truth and reconciliation processes taken historically?
- How do we distinguish restorative justice-based truth-telling processes from historical transitional justice processes?
- How might we envision a restorative justice-based truth, racial healing and reparations process to address racial violence in the US against African-Americans?

This course is taught during our annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute [www.emu.edu/cjp/spi/](http://www.emu.edu/cjp/spi/).

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**PAX 672 – Circle Processes (1 SH)**

This course will introduce participants to the peacemaking circle process and explore:

- foundational values and philosophy of peacemaking circles,
- conflict as opportunity to build relationships,
- creating safe, respectful space for dialog
- consensus decision making,
- structure of the circle process,
- facilitation of the circle process
- practical applications of circle process,
- problems and challenges in circles.

This course will use the peacemaking circle process as the primary form of group work.

This course is intended to provide experience in the circle process as well as an understanding of the foundational values and key structural elements for designing and conducting peacemaking circles. The class will prepare students to design and facilitate peacemaking circles in a variety of situations.

3 SH version of this class is offered during our annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute [www.emu.edu/cjp/spi/](http://www.emu.edu/cjp/spi/).
students are able to petition the Academic Committee for an exception to the general rule that all students will do a Practicum (PAX 682). Once granted permission to do a thesis in lieu of a practicum the student would:

- normally available only for those students planning on doing their practicum/thesis in the spring of their second year, and for those that will be in residence. An exception will be vetted based on their experience and the quality of their proposal. A maximum of 2 persons per year will be granted this thesis option. This option is normally available only for those students planning on doing their practicum/thesis in the spring of their second year, and for those that will be in residence. An exception will be vetted based on their experience and the quality of their proposal. A maximum of 2 persons per year will be granted this thesis option. This option is

PAX 673 – Independent Study (1-3 SH)

Course work undertaken through independent study must be approved by the student’s academic advisor and completed in collaboration with a supervising instructor.

Please note: Directed/independent study courses will only be approved for students who have demonstrated the ability to do independent work (and therefore not approved in the first semester of a student’s program). See the registrar or your advisor to learn about independent study options.

PAX 676 – Restorative Justice Practices (3 SH)

Restorative Justice embodies a set of foundational values which inform both RJ processes as well as how RJ programs are implemented. In this course we will explore those guiding values and principles and examine the many ways they guide us in providing RJ processes (with special attention to community conferencing) across various sectors (including courts, schools, prisons, neighborhoods, etc.). We will also explore the ways that core principles shape how RJ programs are implemented within communities, organizations, and institutions. Program implementation issues will include design, evaluation, and funding. Conducted in a seminar format, there will be both experiential and didactic learning components, and students will be engaged in practicing RJ skills as well as completing writing assignments that are directly related to individual skills, training, and interests. For MA in Conflict Transformation students this satisfies the Skills Assessment course requirement if taken for 3 credits, and is a required course for all MA in Restorative Justice students. The PAX 571 core RJ class is a pre-requisite for this class, unless given special permission due to RJ background/experience.

PAX 677 – Restorative Justice & Whole Systems Approaches (3 SH)

The recent expansion of the Restorative Justice (RJ) field is almost breathtaking. We are now seeing an exponential volume of research, writing and practice exploding on the scene. This is exciting on one hand, daunting on another. There is general consensus that RJ as a field is at the edge of a totally new level of impact and influence. While controversial, many leaders in the field feel that RJ will either fade away, or be co-opted by the legal system as long as we view it as only one more “social service reform.” However, if we understand it as a “social movement” and study and apply it as such it has a great potential for both serious interpersonal and structural transformation. This course is geared toward empowering RJ practitioners and thinkers who are prepared to position themselves (both internally and externally) as change agents for political, legal and social justice systems shifts. Through intensive reading, structured debates, tailor-made research on critical and emerging RJ issues, and interaction with leaders in the field, we will explore whole system applications of RJ in public violence contexts, in realigning societal institutions such as in schools, prisons, courts, and governance structures, and in post-war reconstruction efforts through hybrid transitional justice processes.

Each student is required to identify a particular “real-time” case scenario that they will use as their source material for developing a comprehensive whole systems RJ approach to structural change. The Emergent-Adaptive Systems model introduced and used in Foundations I & II, along with the work around Human Systems Dynamics (HSD) - www.hsdinstitute.org/ will provide the primary frameworks for this course. Key terms and concepts that will be utilized to guide our thinking are:

- Chaos, disorganization & self-organizing theory
- Social capital networks and interdependencies (Network Weaving)
- Coalition building, social mobilization, and social movement theory & practice
- Systemic inputs & outputs, and
- Structural Information & Communication feedback loops.

The course is facilitated in a seminar format using circle process, reading summaries, presentations, group analysis & brainstorming (e.g. a think-tank model) and virtual interaction with various practice leaders in the fields of emergent-adaptive systems and restorative justice.

PAX 682 Practicum (6-9 SH)

The Center for Justice & Peacebuilding is a practice oriented academic program. The theories of change and the practice skills offered at CJP are meant to prepare individuals for a career in real world settings of complex conflict and injustice. The practicum is a time for learning and preparing for a career through personal involvement in and reflection on initiatives in actual situations. It is also a time to learn new theories and practice skills at the practicum site. Overall this hands on experience, with extensive interaction with people outside the classroom, and in organizations dealing with the subjects of students’ specializations, provides first-time or additional work experience for CJP students. Their experience is critical to employers as well as overall career development. Therefore, being prepared academically and having additional work experience through a practicum strengthens the individual student’s ability and capacity to offer a full range of experience to the people they will eventually work for and serve. In addition to doing an organizational practicum, CJP students may do a research-based practicum (independent or nested within an organization). In very select cases, a student may be granted permission to pursue a thesis (PAX 683 described below) in lieu of a practicum.

PAX 683 Thesis (6-9 SH)

CJP full-time residential students are able to petition the Academic Committee for an exception to the general rule that all students will do a Practicum (PAX 682). Students will be vetted based on their experience and the quality of their proposal. A maximum of 2 persons per year will be granted this thesis option. This option is normally available only for those students planning on doing their practicum/thesis in the spring of their second year, and for those that will be in residence. An exception to these guidelines will be considered for a student who has proven him/herself to be both an excellent writer and a self-initiator. A student can make the case to write from a distance or on an alternate time table if he/she has:

- Demonstrated capacity (at CJP) to complete complex research and writing projects in a timely manner.
- Adequate access to Internet and technology to support the process.
- Strong writing and editing skills so that there is limited or no need for writing support.

Applicants for a thesis option should identify their area of focus by the end of their second semester, and should select seminar courses and electives in their third semester so that they are completing a robust literature review prior to the thesis semester. Once granted permission to do a thesis in lieu of a practicum the student would:
• Formally ask two professors to serve as his/her thesis advisors (the student should have preliminary conversations with faculty members to gauge their interest).
• Research and write a publishable master’s level thesis (For example, 40-50 pages for 6 credits)
• Present the thesis (both a thesis defense and capstone to broader CJP and EMU community).
• Submit thesis to be bound and placed in the EMU library collection.

PAX 688 Justice, Peace and the Biblical Story (3 SH)

The Bible has often been used to justify war and other forms of violence. The biblical story has also been read and interpreted as pertaining to only personal beliefs and behavior rather than communal concerns or social issues. The intent of this course is to explore the biblical story and what it says about issues of violence, justice, and peace. How are people who embrace the biblical story called to apply these understandings to their lives, personally and collectively? How have Christian communities around the world made use of the biblical story as a core component of their efforts to work for safety, emancipation, self-determination, and healing? How can we use biblical narratives in our work to build peace and justice within communities? As we examine these questions, we will center perspectives and traditions of reading the Bible birthed by people experiencing direct violence and oppression. *This course is an elective at EMS and CJP.*

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PAX 684 - PAX 694 (1-3 SH)

CJP attempts to offer a wide variety of courses on critical issues and skills needed in the peacebuilding field. Especially in our Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI) each May and June, we offer new topics courses based on what we are hearing is needed most out in the field. These topics courses are one time offerings that may or may not be offered again, but are not a required part of the graduate program (though students may take these courses as elective credits). Recent offerings include: Christian Spirituality for Social Action, Designing Facilitated Processes, Sexual Harms: Changing the Narrative; and Transformative Leadership.

PAX 692 Re-imagining Identity (3 SH)

When reflecting on your various identities and those ascribed to you, how does experiencing them shape the way you see yourself and view the World? In this course, we will journey together to explore some of the narratives we hold surrounding our various identities. We will individually and collectively dissect some of the impacts of these narratives and examine their psychosocial effects on ourselves and the communities to which we belong. We will boldly create safe spaces for one another to explore what healing may look like within ourselves and our communities. This will be done through a process of re-naming, re-claiming, re-shaping and re-imagining how we show up in the world. In this way, dignity and its power of honoring the value and worth of self and other, will become part of the fabric of our understanding and experience. Using Talibah Aquil’s Arts Based Research Practicum Presentation “Ghana, Remember Me…” as a guide, you will also have the opportunity to creatively explore how to share in class your journey of re-imagining identity, using whatever medium you feel most connected to.

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