

Disclaimer: This is an indicative syllabus only and may be subject to changes. The final and official syllabus will be distributed by the Instructor during the first day of class.

The American University of Rome
International Relations Program

Department or degree program mission statement, student learning objectives, as appropriate

Course Title:	Peacebuilding and Mediation: Principles and Techniques
Course Number:	IA 306
Credits & hours:	3 credits – 3 hours
Pre/Co-Requisites:	Junior standing

Course description

This course presents key concepts, theories, and practices related to peacebuilding and international mediation, while clarifying their distinctions from related concepts such as peacekeeping and peacemaking. International mediation has faced an identity crisis, driven by changing global dynamics and challenges in achieving sustainable outcomes. While new approaches and perspectives are emerging in response, they remain far from universally accepted or supported. The course includes the presentation of various case studies and active simulations. By the end, participants will have acquired a clear understanding of peacebuilding and international mediation and will have examined concrete examples from both global contexts and conflict-affected regions.

Required Textbook (subject to change)

- Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse T., Miall, H., Toros H., Contemporary Conflict Resolution, Fifth revised edition, 2024
ISBN: 978-1-509-55758-5

Recommended Websites (subject to change)

- UN Peacebuilding Resources: <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/guides-and-resources>
- Negotiation Tool Templates: <https://frontline-negotiations.org/home/resources/negotiation-toolkit/>
- Digital Peacebuilding: <https://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/digital-peacebuilding-community-of-practice-featured-resources>
- Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts (GPAAC): <http://www.gppac.org/>
- European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO): <https://eplo.org/>
- Agency for Peacebuilding (AP): <https://www.peaceagency.org/>
- Peace Direct: <https://www.peacedirect.org/>

Course Learning Objectives

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

1. Master the theory and practice of peacebuilding and international mediation through readings and case-study analysis.
2. Develop mediation process through in-class simulations.
3. Identify the dynamics and challenges of contemporary peace processes exploring professional peacebuilding and mediation organizations and networks.
4. Recognize diverse mediation actors, levels, and approaches across a range of issues relevant to conflict management and resolution.
5. Explain armed conflict and peace processes through concrete examples of conflict resolution work by global and local organizations.

Course Learning Activities

- **Read & Discuss (individual assignment):** students will read and comment on texts previously assigned to the class (CLO 1-3-4-5).
- **Individual oral presentation:** students must propose their case studies for the oral presentation related to a specific peacebuilding or mediation process (CLO 2-4-6-7).
- **Mid Term and Final exam:** students will take two written tests. All tests will take place in class, via Canvas on Coursework. The exams will focus both on the theory and practice of peacebuilding, as well as the cases addressed in class (CLO 1-3-4-5).
- **Mediation and Peacebuilding Simulations (Group assignment):** Two in-class simulations will be organized to apply and experience some mediation and peacebuilding practices (CLO 2-4-6-7).
- **In-class readings and discussions on news:** the class will engage in reading and discussing news and articles on armed conflicts and peace processes (CLO 1-7).
- **Short 1.200/1.500 word policy paper** related to the oral presentation.

Assessment tools

Class participation	10%
Short Policy Paper	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Oral presentation	10%
Simulations	15%
Final Exam	30%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Reading
1	Introduction to the course and presentation of the Syllabus Defining peace processes, theoretical and methodological issues	Ramsbotham, et al., <i>Contemporary Conflict Resolution</i> , Fourth revised edition, 2016 – Chapter 1.
	Introduction to Peacebuilding	Ramsbotham, et al., <i>Contemporary Conflict Resolution</i> – Chapter 9.
	Peacebuilding in practice: case studies from different regions	Roger Mac Ginty & Oliver P Richmond (2013) "The Local Turn in Peace Building: a critical agenda for peace", <i>Third World Quarterly</i> , 34:5, 763-783, DOI: 10.1080/01436597.2013.80075
	Conflict analysis	Fabio Oliva and Lorraine Charbonnier, <i>Conflict Analysis Handbook</i> , United Nations System Staff College, 2016, pp. 18-34.
2	The role of conflict prevention and early warning	Ramsbotham, et al., <i>Contemporary Conflict Resolution</i> – Chapter 5. United Nations and World Bank. <i>Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict</i> . Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018., https://open-knowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/28337 , Introduction and chapter 2 (pp. 1-9, 49-76).
	International mediation and negotiation	Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse T., Miall, H., <i>Contemporary Conflict Resolution</i> – Chapter 7. Cedric de Coning, Ako Muto, Rui Saraiva (Eds.), <i>Adaptive Mediation and Conflict Resolution</i> – Chapter 1 (pp. 1-17), Palgrave Macmillan, 2022.
	1 st in-class simulation - peacebuilding	
	MID-TERM EXAM	
3	Mediating intractable conflicts	
	Gender and peace processes Oral presentations	Smith, Sarah, "Gender, Security, and Peacebuilding" (Chapter 14), in Oliver P. Richmond, and Gëzim Visoka (eds), <i>The Oxford Handbook of Peacebuilding, Statebuilding, and Peace Formation</i> , Oxford University Press, 2021.
	Youth and peace processes	Celina Del Felice, Rashmi Thapa (et al.), <i>UNOY Peacebuilders</i> (2018), <i>Beyond dividing lines: The reality of youth-led peacebuilding in Afghanistan, Colombia, Libya and Sierra Leone</i> , The Hague, 2018.
4	Climate crisis and armed conflicts <i>Oral presentations</i>	Vally Koubi, "Climate Change and Conflict", <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i> 2019 22:1, 343-360.
	The role of digital and communication technologies in peace processes <i>Oral presentations</i>	Allard Duursma, John Karlsrud, "Technologies of Peace", <i>The Oxford Handbook of Peacebuilding, Statebuilding, and Peace Formation</i> , Oxford University Press, 2021.
	PeaceTech Oral presentations	Digital Peacebuilding Guide: https://cnxus.org/digital-peacebuilders-guide/
	2 nd in-class simulation - mediation <i>Short Policy Paper due</i>	
5	Decolonizing peacebuilding	Lisa Schirch, "Decolonising Peacebuilding: A Way Forward out of Crisis", <i>Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation</i> , Online Edition, 2022. Peace Direct, "Race, Power & Peacebuilding", April 2022.
	FINAL EXAM	Review of the course and self-assessment of acquired skills and tolls.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In keeping with AUR's mission to prepare students to live and work across cultures, the University places a high value on classroom experience. As a result attendance is expected in all classes and attendance records are maintained. The University's attendance policy is as follows:

1.0. Minimum Attendance Requirement: Students must attend a minimum of 70% of a course in order to be eligible to be considered for a passing grade.

1.1. Automatically Accepted Absences

Students will not be penalized for one absence from classes meeting once a week;
Students will not be penalized for three absences from classes meeting twice a week;
Students will not be penalized for four absences from classes meeting more than twice a week, as in the case of some intensive courses.

1.2. If further absences are recorded, grade penalties will be applied according to the Instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus, and following the institutional parameters given in the Note* below.

1.2.1. If the Instructor does not specify an attendance policy, there will be no grade penalty other than that attached to the minimum attendance requirement, and any penalized absences recorded above the basic 70% attendance requirement for the course will be invalidated.

1.3. During Summer sessions where courses are taught more intensively over a shorter period the following applies:

- Students will not be penalized for two absences from class.

2.0. Tolerated Absences

Certain categories of absence will not be penalized but they will be counted as an absence (for a 3-credit course meeting twice a week). These absences are:

- The Model United Nations (MUN);
- Permit to Stay,
- SG's "Ambassador Program" (Student Government initiative)
- Religious Holidays

The American University of Rome makes all reasonable efforts to accommodate students who must be absent from classes to observe religious holidays. (Please refer to the Provost's Office list of accepted absences for religious holidays)

Not attending a class due to the observance of a religious holiday will normally not be counted as an absence.

Students who will need to miss class in order to observe religious holidays must notify their Instructors by the end of the Add/Drop period (first week of classes), and must make prior arrangements with their Instructors to make up any work missed.

2.1. The list does NOT include academic field trips because these (including arrangements for travel) must not overlap with other classes.

3.0. Cases of prolonged absences caused by an emergency or a medical condition may require students to withdraw from some or all of their courses. Under such circumstances students should first consult their academic advisors.

*Note: No Instructor may penalize a student more than half a letter grade for each absence beyond the tolerated limit (e.g. from A- to B+).

Grade Point Average

A student's grade point average (GPA) is computed by multiplying the quality points achieved by the number of credits for each course. The result is then divided by the total number of credit hours taken. The Cumulative or Career Total Grade Point Average (CGPA) is the grade point average for all credit hours taken at the University and at approved study abroad programs. The GPA and CGPA are calculated by truncating after the second digit after the decimal point. Transfer credits have no effect on the CGPA at The American University of Rome.

Grades

Grades are posted on a secure area of the University's official website and are mailed to AUR degree students only upon written request. Grades are mailed to the various study abroad programs. Grades computed in the (GPA) reflect the following grade equivalents:

GRADE		GPA	
A	Excellent	4.00	94 – 100 points
A-		3.70	90 – 93.99 pts
B+	Very Good	3.30	87 – 89.99
B	Good	3.00	83 – 86.99
B-		2.70	80 – 82.99
C+		2.30	77 – 79.99
C	Satisfactory	2.00	73 – 76.99
C-	Less than Satisfactory	1.70	70 – 72.99
D	Poor	1.00	60 – 69.99
F	Failing	0.00	59.99 – 0
WU	Unofficial withdrawal counts as an F	0.00	
P	Applicable to development courses	0.00	
<i>Grades not computed into the grade point average are:</i>			
W	Withdrawal		
AUDIT (AU)	Only possible when the student registers for a course at the beginning of the semester as an audit student		
I	Incomplete work must be completed within the ensuing semester. Failure to do so results in automatically converting the I grade to the default grade, which is then computed into the grade point average		
P	Pass grade is applicable to courses as indicated in the catalog.		
WIP	Work in progress		