Communication 423/523 Nonviolent Communication & Peace, Wednesday Evenings 4:20-7:00pm

Office Hours: Bal 3018 (Prof. Office: 683-4866) M, W, & TH 2:30-3, and by appointment

Snail mailbox: Bal 3000 (Comm. Dept. Main office: 683-3828)

E-mail: JBaesler@odu.edu
Type “Peace” in subject area so I can flag it; I regularly answer e-mail on Monday-Thursday

General Course Description:

Introduces students to nonviolent communication and peace issues from the micro level (e.g., intrapersonal issues related to beliefs, attitudes, values, and worldviews), to interpersonal relationships (e.g., conflict management and resolution), groups (tribes, gangs, social support, social collectives), organizational systems (business/economic institutions like schools, healthcare, food industry, governments, religious/spiritual), and the macro or global level (e.g., political relationships between nations, our relationship with the natural world). The peace contexts are based on the work of Baesler, E. J., & Lauricella, S. (2013). Reaching peace by teaching peace: Assessing instruction of the nonviolent communication and peace course. Journal of Peace Education, 10, 1-18 (available on bb as pdf or ODU library).

An Invitation:

Most people agree that peace is noble ideal, but few understand the role that nonviolent communication might play in creating peaceful relationships with ourselves and each other (interpersonally, in groups, organizations, among nations, and the greater environment). There is a rich history of nonviolent communication and peace issues that remains hidden from the typical college student’s experience. Most students are familiar with names like Gandhi, Mandela, Mother Teresa, and King, but how many know of Dorothy Day, Peace Pilgrim, Walter Wink, Thich Nhat Hanh, Marshall Rosenberg…?

The global crises around the world, including issues like poverty, hunger, economic and religious wars, environmental degradation, terrorism, and materialism, need not be managed/resolved with only violent methods…there are other options. It is my hope that a course like this might provide some space in a student’s life for exploring nonviolent and peace options to the world’s many challenges.

Specific Course Objectives:

(1) Develop an attitude of openness and trust with the professor and with classmates: explore, dialogue, think and question, investigate.

(2) Engage with some of the assumptions, beliefs, values, and behavior associated with nonviolent communication and peace from multiple perspectives, including your own unique perspective.

(3) Exposure to historical knowledge about successful nonviolent communication and peace case studies, including information about particular people, places, situations, and peace tactics/strategies.

(4) Develop competencies in nonviolent peace communication skills through reading, viewing, reflection, and in and out of class practice.

(5) Choose a specific topic within the general area of nonviolent communication and peace, propose a project, engage the project during the semester, complete the project, assess the project, and share what you've learned with the professor and class via an oral presentation.
Peace Readings

(1) Our core list of common readings is compiled by Coleman McCarthy for a "Class of Nonviolence" which he taught to over 7,000 students in high schools, universities, and prisons since the 1980's. These readings are available as one pdf file on blackboard under the modules section. They are organized by Lesson number, title of article, and author (course calendar lists which readings are scheduled for a given week). To engage the readings, and prepare for discussion in small groups and as a class, create a "peace card" for each reading (see below).

Peace Cards

Complete one "Peace Card" for each of the readings. Suggestion: number these using the format below on a 3 X 5 index card—I use the "index card" as a metaphor. You don't have to actually use an index card (but you could if you like). You could type out your reactions/responses in an on-line blog, or you could hand write them in a peace journal. My intention is to have you document (provide evidence for) what you learned, and to collect your learnings as part of a larger peace portfolio of learnings that you will share with me during our mid and end of semester student conferences:

Front side of the card:

1) At the top of the card, print your name and the initials "HP" (for Honor Pledge)

2) Write the lesson number, author’s last name, and title of the reading (for example: L1, Guinan, If we listen well)

3) Write a one sentence quote from the article (write a partial quote if the quote takes up more than two lines on the notecard). Choose a word or phrase from the quote to “meditate on” for 3-5+ minutes; underline the part you meditated on, and write a one sentence “learning” based on your meditation (if you don’t feel like you learned anything, try meditating a second time).

4) Write out a one sentence “behavioral objective”—think of this as how to apply something you learned from this reading to your everyday life. The application may or may not be related to the quote you chose. You may or may not actually try out the application in your life. Imagine yourself giving instructions to a friend on how to DO SOMETHING related to peace—what concrete advice could you give them to create more peace in the world based on this reading?

Back side of card:

5) Write out one thoughtful and creative question designed to stimulate class discussion, take us deeper, think harder, more critically, and/or more imaginatively.

6) Level up (as they say in the gaming world). Take us to the next level by getting on your favorite search engine for 5-10 minutes and find a news story, short video, blog, wiki article, tweet, journal article, book summary…some content related to the reading that stimulates your interest in peace. Cite the source author, title, year, http site), and include 1-2 sentences on what the content is about, and why you included it.

My hope is that preparing the peace cards outside of class will allow us to discuss the readings with openness, respect, and some degree of depth. We will use the “peace cards” to dialogue about the peace readings in small groups. The interaction that takes place in these smaller groups is a good place to share your insights from meditation, test out your peace application, challenge the group with your peace question, and/or help the group connect with a peace idea that you found on the internet. Each group will have a chance to present their “best learning” to the class followed by class discussion.

If you have another (perhaps better?) way to engage with the peace readings and demonstrate what you learned, please do so. For example, you may want to “free style” journaling after you read each peace reading, or outline what you read, or write a poem or short story based on the peace reading, or do your own “scholarly research” related to the peace reading, or argue with the author of the peace reading by writing a scripted conversation, or simply brainstorm questions that the article stimulated, or talk with someone about the peace reading, or…Whatever method you choose, put something in writing as evidence of your learning…this is part of your peace portfolio of learnings.
Nonviolent Communication (NVC)

NVC is a language of love, learning to connect with people at the heart level, and then opening up avenues to make natural giving possible. NVC is countercultural; it feels awkward/different/weird/wrong at first because most of us that have grown up in the industrialized west have learned to normalize “violent communication.”

We will learn the language of peace through watching Rosenberg speak on NVC, discuss NVC skills from the NVC pdf, and practice those skills in class with a partner. We will change partners each time we introduce another NVC skill so that you become accustomed to working with different kinds of energies/personalities. We will also role play some NVC scenarios as a class to refine our understanding of NVC.

The **NVC core skills** build on each other as a sequence (as you will come to learn, it's more of a “dance” than sequence):

- Observation,
- Feeling,
- Need,
- Request,
- Empathy, and
- Gratitude.

**Free Resources:** Each week we will introduce another skill and review the previous ones, putting all of the skills together at the end of the term. There is a link on blackboard to Rosenberg's **three hour video workshop** (it is also available on-line through other *You Tube* sources...google “Marshall Rosenberg” and look for a three hour video of an all day workshop in San Francisco). I recommend you watch the entire video in three one-hour segments as soon as possible to get an overview of the process of nonviolent communication. I will play a short excerpt from the video relating to a particular nonviolent communication skill in class, followed by a class discussion of the skill and practice with partners. There is also a very valuable **pdf file titled Nonviolent Communication** (in bb modules section) that defines, explains, and provides examples of the NVC skills. I recommend you preview this before each skill along with viewing the Rosenberg video. See class calendar for which skill we cover each week, what pages numbers in the NVC pdf to preview, and the starting cue point for the Rosenberg video. There are also other youtube videos on NVC that you might check out.

Each time we introduce a NVC skill and practice, i’d like you practice the skill outside of class, and journal about your experience, especially what you learned and how you felt. Consider these journal entries as part of your peace learning portfolio.

**Peace Project**

The peace project is a chance to be creative and do something that interests you…

*Ideas for peace project.*

We will introduce the peace project the first day of class. I encourage you to peruse the **bibliography of peace resources** under course documents in blackboard and the **PowerPoint of peace people** also in blackboard course documents for project ideas.

Meditate on PEACE AND…

- music, art, dance, poetry,
- politics, protest, history,
- geography (peaceful places),
- people (models of peace), communal living, relationships, groups,
- organizations, societies, economics (simple and sustainable living),
- education,
- mediation, negotiation,
- business,
- …your imagination is the only limit 😊
Students will present a short overview of their project idea and receive feedback from the class and the professor the second day of class. A written project proposal (see bb for assessment criteria) is submitted the third day of class. Students will have several weeks to complete the project after they receive written feedback. Presentation of peace projects (see bb for assessment criteria) take place during the last few weeks of class (a schedule with names and times will be circulated in class prior to presentations). Projects and presentations are returned to students during the last set of student conferences.

Please document your learnings as you journey though the peace project, from the inception of the idea, through the proposal, feedback, revisions, conducting the project, results, and preparing for the presentation. What kinds of things did you learn from doing the peace project at each step along the journey? Record a description of your progress on the peace project, and anything you learned/felt, each time you work on the peace project. These journals are another part of your peace journal portfolio.

Peace Case Studies:

We will view and discuss several nonviolent communication and peace case studies of approximately 25 minutes each based on Ackerman & Duvall’s (2000). A force more powerful: A century of nonviolent conflict. NY: St. Martin’s Press (see website for more resources: A Force More Powerful). Each film portrays major long-term changes in the betterment of society as a result of nonviolent communication and peace strategies. These cases demonstrate a historical precedent for the success of particular nonviolent communication and peace campaigns.

There are three ways you might process (view, listen to, question) each video. Choose from one of these or invent one of your own:

As a journalist, answer the questions: Who are the peace and violence players? What issue is at stake, and what peace methods are used with what degree of effectiveness? Where geographically does the case take place? When did these events take place? Why did these events happen—what forces were at work?

As a lawyer, imagine someone saying, “Yeah, that peace stuff may have worked with Gandhi in India, but it never worked anywhere else and it wouldn’t work now.” Based on the video, what kind of “case” could you present to the person as a peace advocate lawyer? What claims could you advance, and what evidence could you present to support the claims?

As a human being, what does this have to do with my everyday life? Are their principles and practices that I could use in my daily life? If so, what are they, and how, concretely, would I go about realizing them?

For each case study, I’m expecting to read your “reaction” to the case using one of the above (or some other method) to show me what you learned, and how you applied what you learned to your daily life. The reactions, learnings, and applications of the peace case studies is part of building your peace learning portfolio.

Attendance and Class Participation:

I hope students attend class because they want to, because they know they will learn something that might make a difference in their lives; and, that when they participate in class, they do so because they feel moved to, because they have something thoughtful to say, and/or because they have a question that will help us think more deeply about some peace issue.

There is some truth to Woody Allen’s maximum: "Ninety percent of life is just showing up." In my observations of students over the last 30 years of teaching in higher education, I have noticed that intentional attendance and thoughtful participation, for the vast majority of students, positively correlates with learning.

I realize that there are certain challenges associated with a three-hour course in the evening, but there are also benefits with the extended time, like making direct connections between concepts and skills, moving deeper into a topic of discussion, and building personal relationships with classmates. Also, consider: taking a nap before class if your schedule permits (even a 15-minute meditation can be energizing), bringing a healthy and energizing snack and drink to class (maybe some extra to share with classmates?), and making friends with classmates—consider arranging time together outside of class to: practice NVC, complete peace cards, help each other with peace projects, and review case notes.
You are part of a collective truth that we are attempting to discover as a class—without your ideas about peace, our truth will be incomplete. Finally, know that the future of our human life on earth rests with each of you—you are our best hope for the peaceful transformation of society, and it all starts with an intention to give your very best to each other in and outside of the peace class each week.

Other Policies:

Academic Honesty: Students write out and sign the honor pledge for all work (Your signature or initials and the phrase “ODU Honor Pledge” or “HP” is sufficient).

Participation in Research: Students may be asked to participate in Communication related research as part of the course. This is voluntary. No one will receive a lower grade if they choose not to participate.

Students with Special Circumstances: There are a variety of situations that may influence a student’s learning during the course of the semester including: learning disabilities, student athletics, University sponsored activities, medical issues, military obligations, family crises, etc.

I do not have a set policy for any of these circumstances. I handle these situations on a case-by-case basis. If you feel that some life-circumstance is negatively impacting your learning in the course, please make an appointment to discuss your situation outside of class. I will do my best to work with you in your unique circumstances. We are in this learning/life thing together...you are not alone.

Graduate Students: Students taking the course at the 523 graduate level engage in the same activities as undergraduate student except with a higher level of expectation. For example, the peace project should be a “research project” with an abstract, literature review, method, data analysis, results, discussion, and reference sections written in APA style. Alternatively, OR one may write an autoethnographic research paper (see Dr B for resources to assist with this methodology), OR you may have another research related methodology you would like to explore (e.g. creating a “system of peace” using free software called Insight Maker). Graduate students are also expected to model scholarly inquiry behaviors in class discussions, and develop a higher level of NVC competency.

Method of Assessment:

Given the protocol of our University system, a final grade will be entered into your academic record that hopefully approximates your learning about peace during our short time together. I do not assign letter grades, we negotiate grades based on your educating me about the quality of work you have completed, and what you have learned in the process, primarily through your peace portfolio of learnings. This negotiation and dialogue takes place during two student conferences—one at mid-term and one at the end of term (we also negotiate a final grade for the course during the end of term conference). It’s up to you to show/tell me what you learned and provide evidence for your learnings through your peace portfolio. As a reminder, the peace portfolio includes:

Engaging in the Peace Literature through Peace Cards (label PR-peace readings)
Practice and Learnings about the Language of Peace: Nonviolent Communication (label NVC)
Building a Case for Peace—Journalist, Lawyer, & Human Being (label PC-peace cases)
Peace Project: Proposal, Project, Presentation (label PP-peace project)

I will also ask you questions during the student conference to find out more about what you have learned—how you respond to these questions is part of the learning assessment.

Course Calendar begins on next page...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Number &amp; Date</th>
<th>McCarthy Peace Readings Lesson (L) # Author : First word(s) of title (PR)</th>
<th>Nonviolent Communication Skills: Marshall Rosenberg (NVC)</th>
<th>Possible Activities</th>
<th>Case Study Videos (PC)</th>
<th>Peace Project (PP)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: 8/30</td>
<td>Intro to the course: Meditate Building Community: Yarn Review Syllabus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduce PP; Brainstorm ideas; prepare to share your ideas with class next week</td>
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<td>2: 9/6</td>
<td>Group Formation L1 Guinan: If we L1 Vanderhaar: NV</td>
<td>Intro to NVC NVC pdf 8-13 VID 0-18</td>
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<td>Present PP ideas; Prepare PP proposal</td>
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<td>5: 9/27</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Conferences-- bring peace portfolio (ck bb for times)</td>
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<td>Return PP Proposal</td>
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<td>6: 10/4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conferences</td>
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<td>Return PP</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Events</td>
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<td>7: 10/11</td>
<td>Bring peace portfolio (ck bb for times)</td>
<td>Proposal</td>
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<td>8: 10/18</td>
<td>Fall Break</td>
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<td>8: 10/18</td>
<td>L8 Akers: Vegetarian</td>
<td>Developing a needs literacy Manfred Max-Neef: Needs</td>
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<td>10: 11/1</td>
<td>Smookler’s Tribes NVC REQUESTS NVC pdf 29-35 VID 1:04:45-1:29</td>
<td>Work on PP</td>
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<td>10: 11/1</td>
<td>L6 Sharp: Technique</td>
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<td>11: 11/8</td>
<td>Sharp: Politics Sharp: Methods NVC EMPATHY 1 NVC pdf 44-63 VID 1:30:45-1:50 EMPATHY 2</td>
<td>Work on PP (project due next week; presentations the next 2 weeks—ck bb for times)</td>
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<td>11: 11/8</td>
<td>&amp; Mediation VID 1:58-2:10</td>
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<td>12:11/15</td>
<td>Peace Project Presentations (ck bb for times)</td>
<td>PP Due</td>
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<td>13:11/22</td>
<td>Thanking Break</td>
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<td>14:11/29</td>
<td>Conferences Bring peace portfolio (ck bb for times)</td>
<td>Return PP</td>
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<td>15:12/6</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:12/13</td>
<td>Final Exams Week—No Final</td>
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