

**Professor Baesler**

**Fall 2009**

**Communication 495/595 Topics Course: Nonviolent Communication & Peace**

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Type "C495 Peace" in subject area line or I cannot assure you of a response  
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General Course Description:

Introduce 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, nature, the environment, mother earth).

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, 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, Thomas Merton, Peace Pilgrim, Walter Wink, Marshall Rosenberg, and a host of other peacemakers...?

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 room in a student's life for exploring nonviolent and peace options to the world's many challenges, leaving the student with the choice of whether or not they ultimately will adopt these methods for their own lives.

Course will include reflective reading, introspection of values, creative writing, dialogue, and "experiments" in everyday life.

Specific Course Objectives: By the end of the course the student will:

- (1) Develop an attitude of openness and trust with the professor and with your classmates, allowing for the possibilities of: exploring alternative ideas, free flowing dialogue, encouragement of critical thinking...these ideals are made concrete if we remember to continually *discover what's alive in yourself and others by focusing on creating a quality of connection with each other that makes life more wonderful for everyone.*
- (2) Be able to define some of the assumptions, beliefs, values, and behavior associated with nonviolent communication and peace from multiple perspectives, including your own unique perspective.
- (3) Be able to give an account of some historical knowledge about successful nonviolent communication and peace case studies, including information about particular people, places, and situations.
- (4) Become familiar enough with the methods of nonviolent communication and peace that you could, in principle, apply these methods to a variety of scenarios relevant to your everyday life.
- (5) Choose a specific topic focus within the general area of nonviolent communication and peace, educate yourself on this topic, and share this knowledge with the professor and class via a paper and oral presentation.
- (6) Purchase one book related to nonviolent communication and peace before the end of the semester that is personally meaningful, one that you would want to keep as a part of your personal library.

Course Readings, Activities, and Assignments:

Readings:

There is no required book for everyone to purchase.

There is a requirement however to purchase one book related to nonviolent communication and peace before the end of the semester. This book should be carefully chosen, and approved by the professor. I recommend waiting until at least mid-semester before you decide on a particular book. I expect to see this book in your hands, and to hear the story of why this particular book is personally meaningful to you, the last day of class.

We do have a list of common readings for the course. These readings are compiled by Coleman McCarthy. Coleman's "Class of Nonviolence", which uses these readings as the primary material for the course, has been taught to over 7,000 students in high schools, universities, and prisons since the 1980's. These readings are available on-line. You may also want to download the readings, free of charge, as a pdf file at:

[Coleman McCarthy readings on Nonviolence & Peace](http://www.salsa.net/peace/conv) <www.salsa.net/peace/conv>

I will provide a suggested format for these readings during the first day of class called "meditative reading." The readings are relatively short (most of them 1-3 pages), and there are 6-7 of these listed per week, but I selected only about 2 per week to allow for "meditating" on the content (see calendar for specific readings for each week)--you are of course free to read more, especially if the topics are related to your individual paper. The idea is to READ, REFLECT, WRITE and DIALOGUE...it's almost that simple.

### Readings for [Lesson One](#)

1. [If We Listen Well](#), by Edward Guinan
2. [Nonviolent Response to Assault](#) by Gerald Vanderhaar
3. [Human Nature Isn't Inherently Violent](#) by Alfie Kohn
4. [Axioms of Nonviolence](#) By Lanzo del Vasto
5. [Teaching Reverence for Life](#) by Albert Schweitzer
6. [Students Astutely Aware](#) by Colman McCarthy

### Readings for [Lesson Two](#)

1. [Doctrine of the Sword](#) by Mohandas Gandhi
2. [Gandhi in the 'Postmodern' Age](#) by Sanford Krolick and Betty Cannon
3. [Family Satyagraha](#) by Eknath Easwaren
4. [Ahimsa](#) by Eknath Easwaren
5. [My Faith in Nonviolence](#) by Mohandas Gandhi
6. [Love](#) by Mohandas Gandhi
7. [A Pause From Violence](#) by Colman McCarthy

### Readings for [Lesson Three](#)

1. [Love is the Measure](#) by Dorothy Day
2. [Poverty and Precarity](#) by Dorothy Day
3. [Undeclared War to Declared War](#) by Dorothy Day
4. [This Money is Not Ours](#) by Dorothy Day
5. [The Scandal of the Works of Mercy](#) by Dorothy Day
6. [Dorothy Day](#) by Colman McCarthy

### Readings for [Lesson Four](#)

1. [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) by Charles De Benedetti
2. [Loving Your Enemies](#) by Martin Luther King, Jr.
3. [Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam](#) by Martin Luther King, Jr.
4. [Pilgrimage to Nonviolence](#) by Martin Luther King, Jr.
5. [King and Pacifism: The Other Dimension](#) by Colman McCarthy

### Readings for [Lesson Five](#)

1. [Feminism, Peace and Power](#) by Mary Roodkowsky
2. [Rape is all too Thinkable for Quite the Normal Sort of Man](#) by Neal King and Martha McCaughey
3. [To the Women of India](#) by Mohandas Gandhi
4. [Narrowing the Battlefield](#) by Carol Ascher
5. [Patriarchy: A State of War](#) by Barbara Hope
6. [An American Shero of 1941](#) by Colman McCarthy

### Readings for [Lesson Six](#)

1. [The Technique of Nonviolent Action](#) by Gene Sharp
2. [The Politics of Nonviolent Action](#) by Gene Sharp
3. [The Methods of Nonviolent Protest and Persuasion](#) by Gene Sharp
4. [Albert Einstein on Pacifism](#)
5. [Letter to Ernesto Cardenal: Guns Don't Work](#) by Daniel Berrigan
6. [Building Confidence at Prairie Creek](#) by Colman McCarthy

### Readings for [Lesson Seven](#)

1. [On the Duty of Civil Disobedience](#) by Henry David Thoreau
2. [The Judge and the Bomb](#) by Miles Lord
3. [Patriotism or Peace](#) by Leo Tolstoy
4. [What Would You Do If?](#) by Joan Baez
5. [Pray for Peace but Pay for War](#) by Maurice F. McCrackin
6. [A Vigil for Life While We Celebrate Death](#) by Colman McCarthy

### Readings for [Lesson Eight](#)

1. [Animals, My Brethren](#) by Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz
2. [Interview on Respect for Animals](#), with Isaac Bashevis Singer
3. [A Vegetarian Sourcebook](#) by Keith Akers
4. [Diet for a New America](#) by John Robbins
5. [Diet for a Small Planet](#) by Frances Moore Lappé
6. ['Terrorists' for Animal Rights](#) by Colman McCarthy

### Activities:

There are a number of class activities related to the readings that we will engage in together. Most of these are based on suggestions from the peaceCENTER in San Antonio, TX. The Center has offered Coleman's Class of Nonviolence twice a year for over 10 years in a variety of venues in groups ranging in size from 5-30, thus their ideas seem worth exploring together.

### Video/Films:

#### Case Studies:

We will view and discuss six nonviolent communication and peace case studies of approximately 25 minutes each. These are based on: Ackerman, Peter and Jack Duvall (2000). *A force more powerful: A century of nonviolent conflict*. NY: St. Martin's Press. The book develops these, and other, case histories in much more detail than can be covered in a short film.

The website related to the film and book is:

[A Force More Powerful](http://www.aforcemorepowerful.org). <[www.aforcemorepowerful.org](http://www.aforcemorepowerful.org)>

A quick reference to the films is as follows:

1930's India, Gandhi, freedom from British rule  
 1940 Denmark, refusing to cooperate with the Nazis  
 1960's Nashville, Tennessee, civil rights in public places  
 1980's Poland, workers unite in Solidarity to create a union  
 1980's Chile, Bringing down a Military dictator  
 1980's South Africa, ending apartheid

Each film portrays major long term changes in the betterment of society as a result of nonviolent communication and peace. These cases demonstrate a historical precedent for the success of particular nonviolent communication and peace campaigns.

There is also one film, "*Sacred, Sacred*," (about 100 mins running time) related to "case studies" of ground zero places on the planet where hope still survives through nonviolent/peace efforts. The film is based on 5 years in the life of Velcrow Ripper who travels to:

- Toxic wasteland of Bhopal, India: Holistic medical care facility
- Killing fields of Cambodia: Khmer Rouge de-mining efforts
- Bosnia bombs at Sarejevo: Art as a tool for survival
- Tibetan Buddhists in exile: Dali Lama speech
- Muted voices at Hiroshima: Healing in telling their stories
- War-torn Afghanistan: Rawa women's association
- Post-9/11 New York: Time Square vs Union Square
- Afganistan: Sufi singer, and the Songbirds
- Israel and Palestine, the Wall: Bereaved Families Circle

The website for the film is:

[Scared Sacred: Home](http://www.sacredsacred.org) <www.sacredsacred.org>

Velcrow Ripper has a new (recently released in August 2009 in the U.S.) film entitled *FIERCE LIGHT: When Spirit Meets Action...* I have not seen it yet, but if it's anything like *Sacred, Sacred*, it may be worth trying to work this into the schedule (the trailer for the movie is on the Sacred Sacred website above).

I would also like to show the film *Gandhi* in its entirety (191 mins is just over 3 hours...we will need just over a full class period for this...it's probably the best single film on the real spirit of satyagraha (truth and love) behind nonviolent communication and peace that I've seen to date.

#### Nonviolent Communication: Giraffe vs Jackal talk:

There are a series of video workshops that I have purchased, based on the Nonviolent Communication methods of Marshall Rosenberg, that I would like to share with the class. Rosenberg's method is geared toward interpersonal and group communication, although he also applies it at times to larger "gangs" as he calls them (multinational corporate groups, and nation/states). We will watch him in action at a workshop, learn his methods, and practice applying them.

Rosenberg's center for Nonviolent Communication can be found on the web at:

[The Center for Nonviolent Communication](http://www.CNVC.org) <www.CNVC.org>

Finally, there are a number of shorter "you tube" type clips and/or trailers that I would like to show. Many of these are related to authors from the Coleman McCarthy readings.

Assignments:Coleman McCarthy Readings & Peace Cards:

The Coleman readings are accompanied by one "Peace Card" for each of the readings that includes (number these using the format below on a 3 X 5 index card):

Front side of the card: Your name

- 1) Lesson number, Author, and title of the reading
- 2) One sentence quote from the article, and why this quote is meaningful to you,

Back side of card:

- 3) How might you apply something you learned from this reading to your everyday life, and
- 4) One thoughtful question for class discussion.

The peace cards are checked at the beginning of class for the date that we are scheduled to discuss them. The peace cards are assessed as: credit, partial credit, or no credit.

A Force More Powerful Nonviolent Case Studies:

For the case study films, I would like students to take notes as follows:

- 1) Historical time period and place,
- 2) Name of at least one important person in the film, and what they are best known for
- 3) One Nonviolent/Peace Method used, and
- 4) Summary of events: what was the problem & outcome

Compile your notes into a typed paper organized in the order that we viewed the films. These papers will be turned the week before thanksgiving. I will choose two of the six cases at random for assessment purposes.

Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication Method:

For the Rosenberg workshop videos, I would like students to:

- 1) Recall from memory the basic steps in the nonviolent method,
- 2) Explain some of the assumptions behind each of the steps, and
- 3) Demonstrate a minimal level of competency in using the steps via in-class role-plays.

I'm not sure how I will assess these learning outcomes (yet)...this is still an evolving project for me...I am open to class suggestions here...

Individual Topic Paper:

As you become familiar with the topics related to nonviolent communication and peace, I would like you to choose a specific topic focus (proposal for the paper is due the 6th week of class), and educate yourself on this topic. The topic for the paper should be negotiated and approved by the professor prior to turning in your proposal (see me during office hours to discuss individual topics). I would like you to share the knowledge you gain with the professor and class via a short paper (you decide how long) and oral presentation (time limit will depend on class size)--the paper and presentation are due the 14th week of class.

In-Class Learning's Essay:

I would like you to meditate/reflect on what you have learned during the course of our time together, and then summarize the most important of these "learnings" in an essay format during the last class period. You can bring in any materials you wish for the essay, but my hope is that you won't need these academic props. My desire is that you write from the heart more so than from the head, for it is the things of the heart that you will take with you. The heart is seat for all wisdom, and that is what I'm most interested in. How does nonviolent communication and peace fit into your life now that you have been through the course. What learnings seem most significant and why? The heart is also sometimes the most difficult but vital place we need to learn to communicate from. It is from the heart that nonviolent communication and peace springs.

Class Participation:

Openness and vulnerability, trust and honesty, courage to explore and move beyond one's comfort zone are all essential qualities I hope we can encourage in each other. I hope we are able to have authentic dialogues with each other, conversations that explore and respect differences, talk that isn't afraid to challenge each other on occasion without being too defensive in our reactions to critical comments, listening that shows a genuine interest in the other's world by asking thoughtful questions that get at deeper layers of meaning, and so forth... the words in the opening "objectives" for the course bear repeating here: let us strive to... continually *discover what's alive in ourselves and others by focusing on creating a quality of connection with each other that makes life more wonderful for everyone.*

Other Policies:Academic Honesty:

Students write out and sign the honor pledge for all work.

Participation in research:

Students may be asked to participate in Communication related research as part of the course (usually there is some type of extra credit awarded for participation in the research). 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 students learning during the course of the semester including (but not limited to): learning disabilities, student athletics, university sponsored activities, illnesses, 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:

The additional requirement for graduate students is a second paper and teaching a portion of one of the classes. The paper and teaching assignment are negotiated with the professor. There is also a modified grading system based on the second paper and teaching assignment. See the professor for details.

Method of Assessment:Philosophical commentary:

Some students think of grades as a reward and/or punishment given by the teacher...I don't see it that way. I like to think that we engage in the learning process together, and that together we create this thing called a "grade". Some part of the grading process remains mysterious to me. Grades I think should be based on a student's reading, thinking, speaking, listening, interaction, writing, growth/progress, curiosity, feelings and attitudes about the course, and so forth. This kind of human evaluation can only take place over a period of time, hopefully in the context of a student-teacher relationship characterized by openness, vulnerability, respect, trust, and a willingness to engage each other in our attempts to embrace the learning process. For me, I have to get to know the unique individual person I am attempting to evaluate. This poses many challenges for me, even in a small class of students. However, it remains my personal goal to learn as much about, and from, each of you as I can. Learning from you, as well as you learning from me, contributes to my personal well-being and happiness.

Pragmatic commentary:

Given the constraints of our University system, a final grade will be entered into your academic record that hopefully approximates the cognitive and affective learning during our short time together. Thus, grades will be earned/given in the traditional A-F format where 90-100% = A, 80-89% = B, and so forth...based on fulfilling the following course requirements, and on my human attempts to understand the "mysterious" part of our learning together.

Note these percentages are approximate. They serve as guides for those that want to know the relative weight of different learning activities. I reserve the right to change these percentages based on the progress of the class.

Peace Cards based on Coleman McCarthy readings	15%
Historical Case Study Summaries	15%
Individual Paper & Presentation	15%
Rosenberg's Method of NVC	15%
One Book related to NVC & Peace	5%
Class Participation and Discussion	20%
In-Class Learning's Essay	15%

## Tentative Course Calendar:

<b>Week Number &amp; Date</b>	<b>Coleman McCarthy Readings Lesson #</b>	<b>Planned Activity(s) and related resources</b>	<b>Audio/Video(s) FMP= A Force More Powerful Case Studies</b>	<b>Reminders for Assignments</b>
1: 9/3	No Readings	Intro to the course; Building community; Peace Symbols;  Intro to Coleman McCarthy's Class of NV readings: How to access	Intro to field of NVC & Peace: Coleman McCarthy video	How to do Meditative Readings (MR); 1st MR due next wk
2: 9/10	L1 Guian: If we listen Vanderhan: NV response...	Nagler's Search for NV Future bk;  NVC Grid activity	Tour of bibliography of sources; websites...clips	Explore topics for Individual Papers;  Meditative Reading (MR) for nxt wk
3: 9/17	L1 Kohn: Human nature isn't... de Vasto: Axioms of NV	Kohn's Punished by Rewards bk;  Rosenberg's bks: Nonviolent Communication, Speak peace in a world of conflict;  Schmookler's story of the Tribes;  Many roles in NVC activity	Intro to Rosenberg's NVC	Contin. explore topics for paper;  MR for nxt wk
4: 9/24	L2 Gandhi: Doctr. of the sword Gandhi: Love	Easwaren's Gandhi the Man bk;  Nameaste greeting;  Gandhi quotes activity	FMP: Gandhi & salt in India	Contin. explore topics for paper;  MR for nxt wk

5: 10/1	L3 Day: Love is the measure Day: This money is not ours Day: The scandal of... McCarthy: Dorothy Day	Catholic Worker in Norfolk, VA...excerpts from newsletter  Day's autobiography: The Long Loneliness;  River babies story;  Golden rule activity	Dorothy Day trailer/clips  Bo Lozoff  Continue Rosenberg's NVC	Proposal for topics paper due nxt wk;  MR for nxt wk
6: 10/8	Literary Festival this week; Topic is peace and war;  Attend one session/event, bring a one page summary/reaction paper to class for discussion	Thich Nhat Hanh Peace is every step	Continue Rosenberg's NVC	Proposals for topics paper due;  MR for nxt wk
7: 10/15	L4 Martin Luther King, Jr.: Loving your enemies Pilgrimage to NV (only pps 89-92)	King's A Testament of Hope bk;  6 principles & 6 steps activity	FMP Nashville, TN We were warriors	Return Proposals; make revisions if needed;  MR for nxt wk
8: 10/22	L5 King & McCaughey: Rape... Ascher: Narrowing the... McCarthy: An American...	Pace Bene story of Mom's in gang country;  Mother's day card activity	FMP Bringing down a dictator in Chile	Work on Papers;  MR for nxt wk
9: 10/29	L6 Sharp: Technique of NV... Sharp: Politics of NV... Sharp: Methods of NV...	Sharp's 198 methods of NV action;  Peace Loteria cards activity	FMP Poland's Solidarity	Wk on Papers;  MR for nxt wk
10: 11/5	L7 Baez: What would you do... McCrackin: Pray for peace... McCarthy: Vigil for life...	Dear's autobiography, A Persistent Peace;  Grossman's bks: On Killing, & Stop Teaching our Kids to Kill;  Making paper cranes activity	FMP Denmark's Living with the enemy;  John Dear movie trailer	Finish drafts for Papers;  MR for nxt wk;  Reminder to order your book due the last week of class

11: 11/12	L8 Akers: Vegetarian... Robbins: Diet for a new...	Assortment of veggie cookbooks;  Vegan for a day challenge;  Peta website	FMP South Africa Apartheid;  Animated Video on true cost of food	Reminder: Case History papers due nxt wk (review criteria)
12: 11/19	No Reading Assignment	No Activity	Gandhi film--this film is just over 3 hours...plan to come 5 mins early and stay 5 mins late...	Turn in Case History Papers;  Final edits for Individual Topics Papers, & Begin preparing for presentation in 2 wks
13: 11/26	Thanksgiving Break --No Class			Reminder: Individual Papers and Presentations due next week
14: 12/3	No Readings	Presentation of Papers to Class		Return Case History Papers;  Turn in Individual papers
15: 12/10	No Readings;  Last Day of Class;  Grades posted by end of nxt week	Presentation of favorite book & why;  In Class Learning's Essay		Return Individual papers