PAX 201 Syllabus ~ Spring 2016

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Office Hours: Office hours will be Tuesday, 12:30-2 PM or Wednesday evening, 7-8 PM via chat on the course site, Skype, or Facebook instant messaging. If you plan on meeting with me during these scheduled times, please, email or send me a message via private mail, here, on the course site ahead of the scheduled office hours to let me know your intention and communication tool preference. If you would like to meet with me in person, again, please, feel free to email me or send me a message via private mail, and we can schedule a day and time to meet. Please, don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns either using private mail on the course site or one of the email addresses above.

PAX 201: Introduction to Peace and Reconciliation Studies

Introduces students to central concepts in the field of peace and reconciliation studies. Investigates the relationship of forms of violence to social structures and cultural practices, global militarization and environmental destruction, and moves beyond this to concepts of peacemaking, conflict resolution, and the development of a culture of peace through the practice of reconciliation on the individual, social and global level.

Satisfies the General Education Social Contexts and Institutions and Cultural Diversity and International Perspectives Requirements.

Credits: 3

Course goals and objectives:
Goals ~

Introduce students to:

♦ The relationship of violence to social structures & cultural practices
♦ The interrelationship of the culture of violence to global militarization and environmental destruction

Move students to the concept of peacemaking and reconciliation through

♦ Personal Transformation
♦ Conflict resolution
♦ Environmental healing
♦ World Wisdom Traditions

With the objectives of showing how the concepts of personal, social, environmental and planetary transformation from a culture of violence to a culture of peace are interrelated and can be achieved.

At the end of Introduction to Peace and Reconciliation Studies, students will:

♦ Understand complex relationships between systems of violence on the micro and macro level and contemporary and historical issues that have led to war, environmental destruction, and large-scale oppression

♦ Understand the possibilities of transformation to a culture of peace and reconciliation, leading to healing on the individual, societal, and planetary level

♦ Understand the contributions of the wisdom traditions of indigenous, non-Western and Western spiritual traditions of relationship, such as the African idea of Ubuntu, the Buddhist idea of compassion and the Judeo-Christian ideas of atonement and redemption,
Articulate and present these concepts to multiple audiences and understand how they fit into the General Education category of Social Contexts and Institutions and Cultural Diversity and International Perspectives.

How I will grade you:

Since this is an asynchronous course (access anytime), discussion and participation are very important.

1. **Discussion and participation are 35% of your grade.**
   "Discussion" means your written participation on the various "topic" sections having to do with our weekly topics.

   - You are required to respond to **five (5)** of your classmates' essays **each week even if you are not posting your own essay that particular week.** In the event that there are less than five essays posted for a particular assignment, just respond to the essays that are posted, and post to any responses done by your classmates. You are expected to log in and post at least two contributions in the separate “Discussion” forum. One post should be your thoughts about the readings; something that made you stop and think. The other post can be something from outside that relates: e.g., movies, news, internet sites, an event, etc., or a response to another student’s post. The more HIGH QUALITY comments you post— including comments on classmates' essays, the higher your participation grade.

2. **Online essays are 40% of your grade.** You are required to do eight out of the twelve essays (there is no essay for week 10) and essays 1 and 13 are mandatory. You decide/choose the other six essays that interest you, and I suggest that you not leave them to the last minute. By essays, I mean thoughtfully constructed written work with a title, an introduction, discussion and development, and conclusion. Your discussion of the question must include specific connections to the reading assignments. The length should be **650-700 words using word count tool.** Pay attention to spelling and grammar, please, that includes the spelling of book titles and...
authors' names!!! Use quotation marks for book titles and article titles, because underlining is not recognized in the discussion section. Write your essay in your word processing program and then “Copy” and “Paste” your essays into the compose window of the appropriate essay topic. Please, don’t send attachments for your essays.

You will post your essays within the appropriate essay forum, e.g. post essay one in forum "Essay 01". I will also provide comments, of course.

Comments regarding the structure, development, etc. of your work will be made via in the grade comment section, along with the grade you are awarded for the essay. You will find your grade in the “My Grades” section.

3. Online final presentation is 25% of your grade. This is the equivalent of a research project or paper. You may also be creative, e.g. art work, music, or writing. I will be more specific as the course progresses, but you may expect the following parameters:

ALL material will be presented online. You may do a powerpoint presentation having a minimum of 20 slides. This does NOT include the title slide or bibliography slide. Also, I don’t want to see a slide containing only one word. There must be substantial content. Remember, if you use images, you need to have a reference for them. Research papers are to be 8-10 pages, and this does NOT include the title page and bibliography. Please use legitimate scholarly research sources. Dictionaries, encyclopedias, and Wikipedia are not acceptable research references at the university level. For research citations, use the MLA or APA formats for internal referencing and bibliography for both papers and powerpoints. Footnotes are not required.

You may choose a variety of topics, from researching alternative communities to writing a paper on theories of peace. I encourage collaborative projects involving two or more students.
Another option is a creative project - featuring artwork, including graphic stories (meaning shorter stories than a graphic novel), digital photos of artwork, including but not limited to any form of visual art. Well-written poetry (at least 7 substantial pieces), short fiction, etc., or composing music is also a possibility. As part of the creative requirement, you will need to write a 3-5 page formal essay as to what led you to do this particular work and why it relates to peace and this class.

Start thinking about this project now!

Other important policies:

Since participation is a significant percentage of your course grade, I expect active participation.

I expect assignments to be completed at the times indicated on the syllabus. You will always be given a goodly amount of “lead time” for planning purposes.

Please do NOT leave your class responses to the final week of class! Initial responses are due within the times indicated, although your follow-up comments may be added throughout the semester. Initial responses left until the end of the semester will not receive credit, nor will I read them.

Incomplete work: Incomplete grades are a nightmare for students and for professors! Please do everything you can to complete the course within the semester. If something occurs in your life that will make it difficult for you to complete the class, please contact me immediately, and I will see what I can do. Remember that incompletes can only be given if most of the course requirements have been completed.

A word about classroom civility

The topics of this course require us to examine human variation from physical, social, economic, racial/ethnic, cultural, political, cognitive,
religious, and other perspectives. I anticipate that each of us may feel challenged, at times, with the beliefs and values of our classmates and instructors (our “neighbors”) in this learning community.

At the University of Maine, we are working to enhance the ways that we welcome learners from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and belief systems, and to minimize the ways that we exclude those from marginalized populations.

If you are feeling challenged, please think before you react, and, at the same time, please let me know if you feel silenced or intimidated about expressing yourself. In our learning community, I certainly want to model civility, respect, tolerance and deep listening to what our fellow-travelers might be trying to express.

Please familiarize yourselves with the "netiquette" of participating in an online course. Go to http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html for more information on net etiquette.

The University of Maine’s non-sexist language policy may be viewed at: http://www.umaine.edu/WIC/both/language.htm.

If you need technical help, or help with technology related to this class, please call CED Tech Help – (207) 581-HELP or email them on First Class. If you are working from a UNET Site or Center, ask the coordinator of the site as well – often these folks are a wealth of information and support.

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**Academic honesty (plagiarism, etc.)**

If you feel anxious about completing an assignment, we would rather work with you to resolve the issue than to discover that you have used someone else’s work to fulfill a class requirement. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism and all forms of misrepresentation in
academic work, and is unacceptable at The University of Maine. As stated in the University of Maine’s online undergraduate “Student Handbook,” plagiarism (the submission of another’s work without appropriate attribution) and cheating are violations of The University of Maine Student Conduct Code. An instructor who has probable cause or reason to believe a student has cheated may act upon such evidence, and should report the case to the supervising faculty member or the Department Chair for appropriate action.

Students with disabilities

You are not required to disclose your specific disability category to your instructor; however, we find that it helps me as a teacher to know your individual learning style and support needs. If you have a disability for which you may be requesting a formal accommodation (extra time on assignments due to sensory processing impairment, audio version of texts, etc.), please contact Ann Smith, Director of Disabilities Services, 121 East Annex, 581-2319, as early as possible in the term. If you require audio versions of your texts, please arrange for this prior to the start of the semester, since this takes time.

GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS IN THIS CLASS:

1. Yvonne Thibodeau is the instructor for this course. Please contact me directly on our class site (“mail” feature) or on First Class if you have any problems or questions related to this course.

2. This is an asynchronous course, meaning that students and the instructor may work on the course at any time. Please note, however, the due dates for assignments. All assignments must be completed and turned in by the dates listed in the course
ssyllabus. All due dates are 11:59 PM of the date indicated. Assignments turned in late will result in a lower grade.

3. I understand that many of you will only be able to work on this class on the weekends, but try to check in during the week and post comments to your classmates’ discussion postings. If necessary, you can work ahead and post work early!

4. This is an interdisciplinary course, which means that we are exploring the topic of Peace and Reconciliation Studies through the “lenses” of various disciplines. Different disciplines – history, literature, ethics, sociology - employ different methodologies and different sources. As you read and analyze the material, think about how the different sources and methods result in different interpretations. Further, look for connections – patterns and common themes - among the various lessons. Be alert for opportunities to use ideas from one lesson to enhance your understanding of a later lesson.

5. All students must check the course conference frequently - I recommend a minimum of two times per week. Online class participation is a significant and important part of this course. I expect all students to contribute to the electronic discussion regularly and to respond meaningfully to the comments of other students in the class.

~ Readings and Essay Assignments ~

These readings provide the foundation for your essays. Due dates are given here for essay assignments.

Readings are from these textbooks and supplements:(1)

Card, Orson Scott, Ender’s Game

Paul Chappell, The Art of Waging Peace

Chavis, Melody Ermachild, Altars in the Streets

Dalai Lama, Beyond Religion
Week 1. January 19: Language: How do we talk about war & peace; what do we mean?

Readings for the week of January 19, 2016.

Chappell, Preface

Tannen, Argument Culture, Chapter 1

Wheeler & Chinn, Peace & Power (all), excerpts (posted in Course Materials section)

Write and post essay. Due by Jan. 25.

Preliminary essay. (Essay One)

What is your definition of war? Of peace? Do you feel that peace is possible? If so, whose peace? What would that peace be? Do you feel war is part of what makes us human? If so, why? Finally, what do you hope this course will give to you? What do you hope we will cover together?
Post on bulletin board “Forum” “Essay 1” no later than Jan. 25. (This is located by clicking on “bulletin board” and then “Topics”-select appropriate essay)

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**Week 2. Readings for week of Jan. 25: Socio-cultural-political-mythological perspectives**

**Tannen, chapters 2-3**

**Chappell, chapter 1-2**

Write and post essay. Due no later than January 31. This means you can post your essay anytime during the week of Feb. 1, but no later than Saturday night, 11:59 PM. This is the pattern for all your assignments with the exception of Essay 6 and the last essay.

Essay assignment 2.

*Peace and Power* conceives of "problematic" power, or *power over*, in terms of competition, of there being struggle for control of others (p. 8). Tannen discusses the argument culture in very similar terms, using concrete examples of how this attitude of "winners & losers," "best & worst," and other judgement statements permeate our daily lives. Chappell also examines conflict and aggression.

Write a well-reasoned essay defining the ideas and analysis of power in these readings. How do you react to the idea that we assume competition, aggression and conflict are “normal” ways of conducting formal and informal conversations? Do you find that this is true in your formal interactions – i.e., in the classroom, at work, etc.? What about in your informal interactions – friendships, family, etc.? In your conclusion, evaluate how this context has effected the way in which you interact in these situations.

- do you feel free to speak?
- do you feel shut down?
- do you feel it doesn’t matter?
(These are only a few hints to get you going – if you need them!)

Post your essay in the “Essay 2 topic” by February 6.

Week 3. Readings for week of February 1: Language/process

Chappell, chapters 3-4

Tannen, chapters 4-5


Essay assignment 3.

Barbara Ehrenreich describes her experience of seeking a theory of war:

“Ask a scholar for an explanation of war, and he or she will most likely snicker at your naïveté in expecting that something so large and poorly defined could be explained. Ask a non-specialist, however, and you will get any of a dozen explanations, each proffered with utter confidence. It is because of our innate aggressiveness... or because of innate male aggressiveness ... or because of imperialism and greed... or overpopulation and a shortage of resources ... or manipulation of evil, bloody-minded elites ... or simply a manifestation of unknowable evil. “

Ehrenreich implies two important points:

~ the idea of socially-sanctioned violence connected in some biological/evolutionary way to human survival (biosocial model, and possibly, biodeterministic model)

~the tension between “scholarship” always with an impartial “objectivity” and “conventional wisdom” – “what everyone knows” – which is subjective and Socratic, i.e., this is how Socrates arrived at
his conclusions – through asking such questions of “everyday people.”

How do you think of the question "why war"? What is your theory, or theories, of war? On what assumption or belief do you base your theory? Can we know such a complex thing, or is it better left to the experts? How do your thoughts and the statements above relate to your reading in *The Art of Waging Peace, The Argument Culture* and *Peace and Power*?

Due no later than Feb. 13.

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**Week 4. Readings for week of February 8: Other perspectives**

Tannen, ch.6

Chappell, 5-6

Hanh, *Anger*, intro, chapters 1 & 2

Write & post essay no later than Feb. 20.

Essay assignment:

How do the ideas in Chappell and Tannen relate to what you have read thus far in Anger? Also, in looking at Peace and Power, how does this work relate to what you have read in Hanh thus far?

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**Week 5. February 15: Change.**

Chappell, 7-9

Hanh, ch. 3 & 4

Tannen, ch. 8

There are several different examples of behaviors to be “fixed” as a
means to peace in this week's reading. Name three (3) from the readings and explain HOW they are examples of the need to change in terms of country, social relationships and self in order to create the conditions of peace. From your reading and thinking, how possible do you think this is? What do you think would be the starting point? Remember to think creatively!

Post Essay in “week 5 topic.” Due no later than Feb. 27.

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**Week 6. Readings for week of February 22: Culture & war**

Altars, Chapters 1-6

Hanh, Chapters 5 – 6

Write & post essay in week 6 “topics.” Due no later than March 5.

Essay assignment:

After you have finished thinking about Hanh and what you have read thus far in Chappell’s work, look at your reading in Chavis' Altars in the Street. Does this work bear out the basic ideas in Chappell and Hanh about anger and the nature of aggression/conflict/war and human nature? Give specific examples as you support your contentions.

***Post your presentation topic by March 4 in the “Presentation Topic” section.***

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**Week 7. Readings for week of February 29: Does the U.S. have a culture that encourages violence?**

Lost Boys, Excerpts (posted)

Hanh, ch. 7-8 p. 119
Review Chappell, Chapt. 1-2

Suggested viewing: The documentary Bowling for Columbine. Contact me if you would like me to arrange a viewing for you at the University.

Write & post essay. Due by March 21.

Based upon Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and What We Can Do To Save Them, James Garbarino.

Read over chapter 1, "The Epidemic of Youth Violence," and other supplementary material for the topic of youth violence. Think also about the books Altars in the Street and Art of Waging Peace, as you consider the following:

"Epidemics tend to start among the most vulnerable segments of the population and then work their way outward. These vulnerable populations don't cause the epidemic. Rather, their disadvantaged position makes them a good host for the infection." (16)

What does this mean in terms of Peace Studies? What factors make a population "vulnerable"? What does this tell us about our sons, brothers and other developing males? Be sure to be specific about your citations.

***UMaine Spring Break – Mar. 7 – Mar. 20. ***
***Classes resume Mar. 21. Have fun!***

“Ender’s Game”- Half


Altars, Chapters 7-11

Chappell, Ch. 10
Hanh, ch. 9-10

Write & post essay. Due no later than April 2.

As you read through your assignments and listen to the news, think about the phrase "Think Globally, Act Locally." You may draw upon your reading in Chappell, Chavis, Hanh and Garbarino ("Lost Boys"), as well as any experiences you might have in the area of creating/building community. For Part I of our discussion on community, write about what you believe the phrase, "think globally, act locally" means. Also, how do the internet sites I have assigned relate to this phrase and the idea of community? I would also ask you to review several websites on the topic, which you will present as part of your essay. See what you can do with Google, Ask, or Bing (these are search engines). Describe how useful they are, what you learned from them, and any other information you'd like to communicate to the class. You must include at least three sites (URL and title), as well as reviews of them.

Week 9. Readings for week of March 28: “Think Globally, Act Locally, Part II

Altars, to end

Chappell, ch. 11

Hanh, ch. 11

Dalai Lama, preface, ch. 1-4

Write & post essay. Due no later than Apr. 9.

Essay Assignment 9: Question for Altars in the Street.

As you consider the reading assignments so far, think about the place that an attitude of peace can have in the creation of community. Consider your readings in Chavis, Chappell, and Hanh and include connections to the readings in your discussion. Give us your definition of community as well. Reflect upon your own experiences,
your communities or ideals of religious or spiritual practice, and your communities of choice.

Week 10. Reading for week of April 4: Conflict resolution and dialogue. This is a bulletin board discussion about conflict resolution and restorative justice.

Assignment: Look up the ideas of conflict resolution and restorative justice in books, articles, or on the World Wide Web. Post your opinion regarding the intention and effectiveness of these, and anything else you’d like to say.

Starhawk chapters 1-17 (half)

Believe, Half

Dalai Lama, ch. 5-7

Articles in Supplementary Materials. Folder labeled Restorative Justice in the Authors/Excerpts section.

Video: Meeting with a Killer – Link on course site

No essay assignment.

Week 11. Week of April 11: Closing the circle: Reconciliation

Revisit Peace & Power (excerpts) posted

Dalai Lama, Part II, intro. and ch. 8-10

Starhawk chapters 8-37 (end)

Believe, Finish

Excerpts on Ubuntu
Write & post essay. Due by Apr. 23. For this essay only, you may write 3-5 pages.

As you read through Starhawk's book, the Dalai Lama's book and Desmond Tutu's excerpt, and revisit Peace & Power and even Chappell, I wonder what you are thinking - especially since we are now always at war. I invite you to think about the following groups of questions, and address them taking into consideration these readings.

Starhawk, the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu bring a way of thinking about how people live as being INCLUSIVE, RELATIONAL, and SACRED. Yet the sacredness of which they speak is non-denominational, and, at the same time, valuing of all expressions of the sacred. Does spirituality have any part to play in the creation of peace? Should it? (Hint: There is a difference between spirituality and religion.) How does reconciliation play a role in the creation of peace?

Do you think that "power - over" can ever step aside and transform into "power-with?" Do you think that those cultures that live relationally, such as many indigenous peoples, are doomed to lose their life-ways at the hands of those with the "power-over" mentality?

Thanks for considering these questions.

Week 12: Week of April 18:

Ender’s Game – Finish

Write and Post Essay. Due by April 30.
Essay 12: What questions does “Ender’s Game” raise in terms of contemporary America? Do you feel that the book has an effective way of teaching peace? What is it about the book that “works” as an example of the reality of war?
Week 13: Week of April 25: Endings

Art of Waging Peace, ch. 12

Beyond Religion, ch. 11

Required Video-Paul Chappelle, “Why Is Peace Possible and How Can We Achieve It”

Essay 13-This essay is mandatory!

We have read and viewed material on many different approaches to peace, fiction and non-fiction, on a personal, neighborhood, national and global scale. What approaches made the most sense to you? Which ones moved you the most and told you, "try this one, here?"

Also, please, include your thoughts after listening to Paul Chappell’s ideas on peace and war?

How would you begin to make peace?

Essay Due by Monday, May 9.

***Post Projects on May 2 in the “Presentations” Forum.***

Week 14: Week of May 2: Catch-up and projects. Comment on your classmates’ projects this week and final’s week.

**Post Final Essay Monday, May 4**

***All work must be in by May 13.***

This Syllabus is subject to change.