Conflict and the Future of Peace in Europe
PEAC-3000 (3 credits)

Serbia, Austria, and Hungary: Comparative European Perspectives on Conflict and Democracy

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

With the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, changes in Europe raised hopes for the future of peace, social change and a better future. Yet a number of wars were fought in Europe since, with a large number of human losses, missing people, demographic changes, socio-economic devastation, and remaining open wounds and existing societal divisions. With the fading away of the consensual type of politics from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, global as well as local divisions are growing wider.

This course will trace the developments in conflict as well as peace and change in Europe since the end of the cold war to the present. From the violent break-up of Yugoslavia to the current war on Ukraine, students will be using lenses of critical peace and conflict studies to comparatively explore themes of post-liberal peace, everyday peace, feminist peace and security, as well as justice, narratives, and contested memories after conflict.

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Use complex reasoning and engage critically with the current academic discourses and frameworks of analysis in peace and conflict studies;
- Define political affiliations for different regions in today's Europe regarding post-cold war conflicts and peace, frozen conflicts, and peacebuilding efforts;
- Analyze country-specific knowledge about war and post-war related dynamics of change: state-sponsored and bottom-up civic action in Serbia;
- Apply comparative methods to analyze the politics used by regions and countries in Europe (south-north, west-east, EU, non-EU member states) in their approach to war in Europe in the 21st century;

- Evaluate frameworks for civic engagement, peace from below and actions for peace in the Balkans (Serbia), Central Europe (Hungary) and EU led initiatives (in Austria).
- Critique current geopolitics of borders shaping contemporary Europe and the way in which different regions in Europe shape their policies in relation to war and peace.

Language of Instruction
This course is taught in English.

Instructional Methods
SIT's teaching and learning philosophy is grounded in the experiential learning theory developed by Kolb (1984; 2015) and informed by various scholars, such as Dewey, Piaget, Lewin, among others. Experiential learning theory recognizes that learning is an active process that is not confined to the formal curriculum; "knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 2015, p. 49). Learning involves both content and process. Learning is holistic and happens through various life experiences upon which students draw to generate new ways of knowing and being. Learning involves a community and is a lifelong endeavor. Learning is transformational. The suggested four step-cycle of a concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation embedded in the experiential learning model is not linear and might not always happen in that specific order, as any learning is highly context dependent. These stages of taking part in a shared experience; reflecting on that experience by describing and interpreting it; challenging their own assumptions and beliefs to generate new knowledge; and ultimately applying new knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes in a variety of situations and contexts are important for students to engage in to become empowered lifelong learners. The methodological approach will be participatory, and experiential, and will aim to help the student develop a multidimensional understanding of, political and social expressions of regional independence movements, regional identities, institutional and societal adaptation to autonomies, and the ongoing interpellation to XX century consensus such as representative democracy.

Required Texts

Woodhouse, T., Miall, H., Ramsbotham, O., Mitchell, C. (2015). *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Mac Ginty, R. (2014). Everyday Peace: Bottom-up and local agency in conflict-affected societies. *Security Dialogue,* 45(6), pp. 548-564.

Mac Ginty R. and Alpaslan Özerdem. (2019). (Eds.). *Comparative Peace Processes.* New York: Routledge. Selected chapters.

Assignments and Evaluation
Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth, and argumentation, presentation of evidence and use of comparative perspective.

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1) Text Analysis (30%)
Students choose two required texts from the list in Module 1 and engage with the main arguments in each text. The text analysis should demonstrate the student's capacity to synthesize arguments, integrate data collected through class lectures and field visits, and provide critical insights into how issues dealt with in the two texts could be approached from a policy or legal perspective. The paper should be 3-5 pages long and will allow students to demonstrate familiarity and understanding of the current academic discourses and frameworks of analysis in the field of peace and conflict studies and its relevance in today's Europe. Students may choose to analyze one of the following themes: post-liberal peace, the local turn in peacebuilding and everyday peace, feminist perspectives on war and peace, or memory politics after conflict.

2) Student Presentation (20%)
Students will be required to present orally and creatively at the end of the thematic seminar highlighting the most relevant and important issues discussed in class and on the different excursions. Students will choose one comparative aspect in relation to the regional differences in Europe and more specifically about perceptions, policies and practices as related to post-conflict transformation processes and elaborate on how course lectures, readings, and field visits have supported their understanding and viable approaches to the issue at hand.

3) Comparative Reflective Essay (40%)
The comprehensive reflective essay will consist of a 5 to 8-page essay which should demonstrate the student's capacity to synthesize and engage critically with main impacts and challenges the war on Ukraine has raised for peace in Europe. Students are expected to engage critically with content covered through lectures, readings, or field visits throughout the course. Students will be provided with two essay questions to choose from.

4) Class Attendance and Participation (10%)
Attendance during the thematic seminar is mandatory and your grade will reflect your involvement in class and during other activities and excursions. This includes active involvement in lectures, readings, discussions, and excursions using the following criteria:

- Attendance - promptness to class and positive presence in class.
- Active Listening - paying attention in class and during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm (this includes body language), entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes.
- Involvement in Class Discussions - either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge. This means challenging yourself to speak up if you usually don't, and also means allowing others to speak if you are a person who tends to dominate class discussions.
- Group Accountability – positive participation in the group during field excursions and classes; not keeping others waiting.
- Displaying Respect – culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, SIT program staff, SIT lecturers and communities.

Assessment

Text Analysis	30%
Student Presentation	20%
Comparative Reflective Essay	40%
Class Attendance and Participation	10%

Attendance and Participation

Due to the nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in each and every class session, attendance at all classes and for all program excursions is required. Criteria for evaluation of student performance include attendance and participation in program activities. Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed with the academic director or other designated staff person. Absences impact academic performance, may impact grades, and could result in dismissal from the program.

Late Assignments

SIT Study Abroad programs integrate traditional classroom lectures and discussion with field-based experiences, site visits and debriefs. The curriculum is designed to build on itself and progress to the culmination (projects, ISP, case studies, internship, etc.). It is critical that students complete assignments in a timely manner to continue to benefit from the sequences in assignments, reflections and experiences throughout the program.
Example: Students may request a justified extension for one paper/assignment during the semester. Requests must be made in writing and at least 12 hours before the posted due date and time. If reason for request is accepted, an extension of up to one week may be granted at that time. Any further requests for extensions will not be granted. Students who fail to submit the assignment within the extension period will receive an 'F' for the assignment.

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64	F

Program Expectations

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.
- Storing Your Work: Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will always be available to despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not excuses for late, missing work.
- Personal Technology Use: Cell phones and other personal electronics can be used for taking notes and other class activities. Off-task usage is not acceptable. You may be marked as absent for habitually using them for something other than classroom activities.
- Content Considerations: Some texts and activities you will encounter in this course delve into sensitive topics that may be emotionally and intellectually challenging. Our classroom is a space where we can engage with challenging ideas, question assumptions, and navigate difficult topics with respect and maturity. As possible, I will flag content and activities that are especially graphic or intense, so we are prepared to address them soberly and sensitively. If you are struggling to keep up with the work or participate in the course because of the nature of the content and activities, you should speak with me and/or seek help from counseling services.
- Classroom recording policy: To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.]

SIT Policies and Resources
Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as

, Disability Services, Counseling Services, Title IX information, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion resources.

Course Schedule
Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lectures' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

Module 1: Introduction to Critical Peace and Conflict Studies

This module introduces students to theoretical frameworks in critical peace and conflict studies. The module will equip students with analytical frameworks to critically explore themes of post-liberal peace, the local turn in peacebuilding, everyday peace, feminist peace and security, as well as memory politics after conflict. The module will allow student to immerse themselves in current academic discourses on conflict and peace, and particularly the range of top-down actions and policies, as well as bottom-up engagement in peacebuilding.

Sessions may include:

- Turning points and world order in the 21st century
- Post-liberal peace: challenges and disputes
- The Local turn in Peace Building: from conflict transformation to peace formation
- Everyday peace
- Feminist perspectives on War and Peace
- Memory Politics after conflict

Required Readings

Mac Ginty, R., and Richmond, O. P. (2013). 'The Local Turn in Peace Building: A Critical Agenda for Peace', *Third World Quarterly* 34(5), pp. 763-783.

Mac Ginty, R. (2014). Everyday Peace: Bottom-up and local agency in conflict-affected societies. *Security Dialogue,* 45(6), pp. 548-564.

Wibben, A. (2016). 'Introduction: Feminists study war.' In Annick T.R. Wibben, ed. Researching War: Feminist Methods, Ethics & Politics (pp. 1-16). London: Routledge.

Fridman, O. (2022). *Memory Activism and Digital Practices after Conflict: Unwanted Memories*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press (Introduction Chapter).

Recommended readings

Dragović-Soso, J. (2010). Conflict, Memory, Accountability: What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean? In W. Petritsch and V. Džihić (Eds.) *Conflict and Memory: Bridging Past and Future in [South East] Europe.* Baden-Baden: Nomos, 29-46.

Listen to Open lecture with Cynthia Enloe: Is there room for feminism in a time of militarization? Swedish Defense University September 19, 2022
https://www.fhs.se/en/swedish-defence-university/events/2022-08-31-open-lecture-with-cynthia-enloe-is-there-room-for-feminism-in-a-time-of-militarization.html

Module 2: War and Peace in Southeast Europe After the Cold War
This module introduces students to the consequences and aftermath of the fall of communism and the end of the cold war in in Southeast Europe. Students will learn about the new successor states that have emerged after Yugoslavia, as the exist today on the map of Europe. Students will explore the transitions that took place in the aftermath of the wars of the 1990s, and learn about today's issues related to war and peace in the Balkans, in relation to existing frozen conflicts, peace formation initiatives, memory politics, and memory activism.

Sessions may include:

- The making and breaking of Yugoslavia
- Serbia after 2000: Continuation and change
- Memory politics and memory activism in Serbia
- Civil society in Serbia and in the Western Balkans
- Frozen conflicts and disputed territories in Europe: the case of Kosovo-Serbia relations
- Responsibility as a political category
- A Feminist critique of Neo-Liberal approaches to peacebuilding:

Required Readings

Jović, D. (2001). The Disintegration of Yugoslavia. A Critical Review of Explanatory Approaches. European Journal of Social Theory, 4, 1, 101-120.

Gordy, E. D. (2013). Tracing Dialogue on the Legacy of War Crimes in Serbia. In D. Žarkov & M. Glasius (Eds.), *Narratives of Justice in and Out of the Courtroom* (pp. 111-130). New York: Springer.

Fridman, O. (2022). *Memory Activism and Digital Practices after Conflict: Unwanted Memories*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press (chapter 1).

Lončar, J. (2021) "Civil Society in Serbia." In Spasojević D. (ed.). *Undermining Democracy: Processes and Institutions in Serbia 2010-2020* (pp. 189-213). Belgrade: CRTA.

Ejdus, F. (2019). *Crisis and Ontological Insecurity: Serbia's Anxiety over Kosovo's Secession* (pp. 127-159). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Duhaček, D. (2006). The making of political responsibility: Hannah Arendt and/in the case of Serbia. *Women and citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe* (pp. 205-224). Aldershot: Ashgate.

Recommended Readings

Mlinarević, G. and Porobić, N. (2021). *The Peace that is not: 25 Years of Experimenting with Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Feminist Critique of Neoliberal Approaches to Peacebuilding*. Geneva: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. https://www.wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/WILPF_The-Peace-That-is-Not_final.pdf

Subotić, J. (2009). Introduction: The importance of dealing with the past. *Hijacked justice: Dealing with the past in the Balkans* (pp. 1-37). Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Spasić, I. (2003). Civil Society in Serbia after Milošević: Between Authoritarianism and Wishful Thinking. *Polish Sociological Review*, pp. 445-461.

Simić O. and Volčić Z. (2013). "Localizing Transitional Justice: Civil Society Practices and Initiatives in the Balkans." In Simić O. and Volčić Z. (Eds). *Transitional Justice and Civil Society in the Balkans* (pp. 1-17). New York: Springer.

Ker-Lindsay, J. (2009). *Kosovo: The Path to Contested Statehood in the Balkans*. London: I. B. Tauris. (Introduction, Chapter 1, pp. 1-25)

Module 3: The European Union (EU) as an Engine for Peace? Enlargement and Divisions
This module introduces students to geopolitical as well as local changes in central Europe, the EU policies of enlargement in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin wall, and the EU role in the Western Balkans. The module introduces students to the case of Hungary, and other post-communist societies and the question of European identity and belonging. This module explores the question of Europeanization of the Balkans, its implications to war and peace policies and current and future divisions.

Sessions may include:

- The creation of the EU and enlargement policies
- The EU as a peace engine: diplomacy and soft power
- Approaches to wars and peace: EU member states and policies
- Citizenship and identity in Europe
- EU enlargement in the Balkans: the case of Slovenia and Croatia
- Serbia between China, Russia and the European Union
- Comparative Peace Processes: from Northern Ireland to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo and Northern Macedonia
- Europeanization and memory politics in the Western Balkans

Štiks, I, (2015). *Nations and Citizens in Yugoslavia and the Post-Yugoslav States: One Hundred Years of Citizenship*, Bloomsbury, 2015, Chapter 3 and 4, pp. 55-99.

Mac Ginty R. and Alpaslan Özerdem. (2019). "Introduction: why compare peace processes?" In Mac Ginty R. and Alpaslan Özerdem (Eds.). *Comparative Peace Processes* (pp. 1-17). New York: Routledge.

Milošević, A. and Trošt T. (2021). "Introduction: Europeanisation and Memory Politics in the Western Balkans." In Milošević, Ana and Trošt Tamara (Eds). *Europeanisation and Memory Politics in the Western Balkans*. Palgrave macmillan.

Module 4: Peacebuilding Bottom-up Efforts and Civic Engagement in the Western Balkans

This module introduces students to bottom-up efforts and initiatives claiming peace, justice and change. It will feature everyday peace and peace from below in frozen conflicts, civil society cooperation, youth engagement and activism, peace education, civic engagement in attempts to combat historical revisionism in Europe and memory activism. The module will also engage critically with questions related to the war legacies, from the work of international tribunals to political apologies, as part of reconciliation practices.

Sessions may include:

- Peace formation from below: civil society cooperation in the Kosovo-Serbia frozen conflict
- The Next Generation: Youth in Serbia and the Recent Violent Past?
- #hashtag Memory Activism: digital practices for social change
- History textbooks and history teachers: the role of Education in Peace and Conflict
- International courts and the legacy of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)
- Political Apologies after Conflict: from post-WW2 Germany to the Post-Yugoslav space

Required Readings:

Fridman, O. (2020). "Peace Formation from Below: the *mirëdita dobar dan!* Festival as a Challenge to Everyday Nationalism." *Nations and Nationalism* Vol. 26 No. 2.

Jovanovic, R. (2020). Intercultural Education in Post-Conflict Societies: Historical Narratives of the Breakup of Yugoslavia in Serbian High School History Textbooks in Pica-Smith, C., Veloria, C. N., Contini, R. M. (Ed.) Intercultural Education: Critical Perspectives, Pedagogical Challenges, and Promising Practices, Nova Science Publishers, Inc., New York.

Stojanović, Dubravka. 2009. 'Slow Burning: History Textbooks in Serbia 1993-2008'. In *'Transition' and the Politics of History Education in Southeast Europe*, edited by Augusta Dimou, pp. 141–158. Gottingen: V&R Unipress.

Hola, Barbora and Olivera Simić. 2018. 'ICTY Celebrities: War Criminals Coming Home'. *International Criminal Justice Review 28* (4): pp. 285–290.

Dragović-Soso, J. (2012). 'Apologising for Srebrenica: the declaration of the Serbian parliament, the European Union and the politics of compromise'. *East European Politics 28* (2): pp. 163–179.

Recommended readings:

Fridman, O. (2022). *Memory Activism and Digital Practices after Conflict: Unwanted Memories*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press (Chapter 3 & 4).

Šuica, Marko, Ana Radaković, and Slobodon Rudić. 2020. 'Where and How do Pupils in Serbia Learn about the 1990s Yugoslav Wars?' In *Nationhood and Politicization of History in School Textbooks: Identity, the Curriculum and Educational Media*, edited by Gorana Ognijenović and Jasna Jozelić, pp. 127–154. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Petrović, Vladimir. 'The ICTY Library: War Criminals as Authors, Their Works as Sources'. *International Criminal Justice Review 28* (4): pp. 333–348.

Module 5: European Perspectives on the War on Ukraine
This module explores the current policies and debates in the aftermath of the Russian invasion to Ukraine. From the question of sovereignty to the sanctions on Russia, the role of NATO in Europe, to the European far right: what are the responds and discourses regarding the war, and the future of peace in Europe?

Sessions may include:

- NATO in Europe and the Balkans
- The role of international sanctions
- Frozen conflicts in todays Europe
- The far Right in Europe and the War on Ukraine
- EU non-EU perceptions and policies at times of war

Required Readings:

LSE Policy Briefing. Is a peace deal possible with Putin? On the problems of peacemaking in the Russian war on Ukraine

Podcast: Democracy in Question
Conversation with Mary Kaldor
Conversation with Masha Gessen

Required readings:

Snyder, T. (2019). *The Road to Unfreedom: Russia, Europe, America*. London: Vintage. Selected chapters.

Gessen, M. (2017). *The future is History: How Totalitarianism reclaimed Russia*. New York: Riverhead books. Selected chapters.