

## **The Psychology of Peace**

MDES/PSYC 3500 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
**Jordan: Geopolitics, International Relations,  
and the Future of the Middle East**

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

### **Description**

This interdisciplinary seminar addresses theory and practice of peace psychology, the psychological causes of violence and nonviolence, nonviolent struggle, non-violence and social change, the role of emotions in peacebuilding, negotiations of political disputes, and the impact of exiled and displaced populations on the psychology of peace and conflict resolution. The seminar also assesses applications of human psychology to the study of international politics. Psychological analyses of foreign policy and decision making, international conflict, and conflict resolution greatly contribute to the understanding of international relations. Students study the psychology of diverse actors of international relations, international relations and foreign policy decision making, role of biases, role of emotions in political decision making, and other psychological factors contributing to better understanding and explanation of international relations and politics. Through field visits with NGOs working in psychological services, health institutions, and discussions with academics, diplomats, and peace negotiators, students learn about the psychology of peace as it impacts conflict resolution and peace processes in Jordan and the Middle East.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of key components of the psychology of peace and international politics;
- Describe the conceptual and empirical frameworks of the psychology of international negotiation and diplomacy;
- Explain peacebuilding and conflict transformation from a psychological perspective;
- Apply psychological perspectives in the analysis of geopolitics in the Middle East;
- Produce a research paper using psychological theory to assess the future of peace in the Middle East.

## Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English. Students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

## Course Schedule

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

### Module 1: The Psychology of Peace, Conflict, and Security

This module introduces main conceptual and theoretical frameworks for the analysis of psychological approaches to peace and international conflicts and conflict resolution. The focus is on peace psychology and the psychology of conflict resolution.

#### Session 1: The Psychology of Peace: Theoretical Frameworks

This session provides an overview of peace psychology and psychological approaches to conflict resolution. The session also addresses the role of emotions in peace negotiations.

##### *Required Readings:*

MacNair, Rachel (2012) *The Psychology of Peace: An Introduction (2nd Edition)*. Santa Barbara, California: Praeger.

Halperin, Eran (2016) *Emotions in Conflict: Inhibitors and Facilitators of Peace Making*. New York and London: Routledge.

#### Session 2: The Psychology of Conflict, Conflict Resolution, and Reconciliation

This session will provide an overview of the psychological understanding and explanations of international conflicts. Students learn how psychology conceptualizes international conflicts and factors contributing to them. This session also exposes students to psychological foundations of international conflict resolution and psychological components of reconciliation efforts that help resolve international conflicts and create and maintain reconciliation among nations and governments.

##### *Required Readings:*

Cottam M., Mastors E., Preston T and Dietz B. (eds.) (2016) *Introduction to Political Psychology*. NY and London: Routledge (Chapter 13, the Political Psychology of International Security and Conflict and Chapter 14, Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation).

Huddy L, Sears D and Levy J. (2013) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Chapter 28, the psychology of intractable conflicts: eruption, escalation, and peacemaking).

Fitzduff, M., & Stout, C. E. (Eds.). (2006). *The Psychology of Resolving Global Conflicts: From War to Peace*. (Vol. 3). Praeger Publishers (Chapter 4, Creative Approaches to Reconciliation).

### Module 2: Psychology in International Relations

This module addresses the role of psychology in international relations. The focus is on psychological factors impacting international relations, in particular emotions, biases, and stereotypes.

#### Session 1: An Introduction to Psychology in the Context of International Relations

This session provides students with introductory concepts and key elements of psychology within different international relations' domains. This session also analyzes the link between psychology and international relations main theories. Students will also discuss psychological dimensions and

factors that play significant role in the field of international relations. Students learn about how psychological factors might affect international relations.

*Required Readings:*

- Goldgeier, J.M. and Tetlock, P. E. (2001) Psychology and International Relations Theory. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4:67–92.  
<http://faculty.haas.berkeley.edu/tetlock/vita/philip%20tetlock/phil%20tetlock/1999-2000/2001%20psychology%20and%20international%20relations%20theory.pdf>
- Erisen, Elif (2012) An Introduction to Political Psychology for International Relations Scholars. *Perceptions*, XVII:3, Autumn, pp. 9-28.
- Lopez A., McDermott R., and Petersen M. (2011). States in Mind: Evolution, Coalitional Psychology, and International Politics, *International Security*, 36:2, 48-83.

Session 2: Psychological Factors Affecting International Relations

This session addresses cognitive/mental processes, biases, prejudices, discriminations, stereotypes, and emotional states and the role they play in the international relations arena. The focus is on how these may contribute positively or negatively to the field of international relations field.

*Required Readings:*

- Renshon, J. and Lerner, J. (2012). *Decision-Making: The Role of Emotions in Foreign Policy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Cottam M., Mastors E., Preston T and Dietz B. (eds.) (2016) *Introduction to Political Psychology*. NY and London: Routledge (Chapter 3, Cognition, Social Identity, Emotions, and Attitudes in Political Psychology).

**Module 3: Psychology and Foreign Policy**

This module analyzes the role of psychology and decision making in the context of foreign policy. Students learn about various mental and cognitive processes of decision making and the psychological of political leadership.

Session 1: Psychology of Political Leadership

This session explores political leaders and their main psychological qualities and characteristics. Students learn the major psychological attributes that make a good politician and/or have characterized main politicians.

*Required Readings:*

- Rhodes, R. and Hart, P. (eds.) (2014) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Leadership*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Chapter 8, “Political Psychology” by M. Hermann).
- Cottam, M., Mastors E., Preston, T., and Dietz, B. (eds.) (2016) *Introduction to Political Psychology*. NY and London: Routledge (Chapter 5, The Study of Political Leaders).

Session 2: Psychology of Foreign Policy Decision Making

This session analyzes the mental/cognitive processes of decision making related to political context. Students will be introduced to the process of political decision making from a psychological perspective.

*Required Readings:*

- Levy, J. (2013) Psychology and Foreign Policy Decision Making. In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, 2nd ed. Edited by Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears, and Jack S. Levy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Renshon, J. and Renshon, S. (2008) The Theory and Practice of Foreign Policy Decision Making. *Political Psychology*, 29:4, 509-536.

#### **Module 4: The Psychology of International Negotiation**

This module is focused on the analysis of the role of psychological factors in the negotiation process. Students learn about the role of emotions and in peace negotiations.

##### Session 1: Psychology of International Peace Negotiations

This session will focus on the international peace negotiation process. It will highlight the relationships between international players and psychological factors that might contribute to the negotiation processes. Students will learn negotiation skills and strategies designed through the psychology lens. This session also analyzes the psychological elements that play significant roles in peace-specific international negotiations.

##### *Required Readings:*

Garling, T., Kristensen, H., Backenroth-Ohsako, G., Ekehammar, B., and Wessells, M. (2000) Diplomacy and Psychology: Psychological Contributions to International Negotiations, Conflict Prevention, and World Peace. *International Journal of Psychology*, 35:2, 81- 86.

Aquilar, F. and Galluccio, M. (2008) *Psychological Processes in International Negotiations: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives*. New York: Springer Science.

De Dreu, C., Beersma, B., Steinel, W., and Van Kleef, G. (2007) "The Psychology of Negotiation: Principles and Basic Processes." <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232513754>.

##### Session 2: Psychology of Emotions in Negotiation

This session will focus on the role of emotions and how they can be used as negotiation strategy in the field of international negotiations. Students will learn about the main emotions and main emotional states that are known to psychology and their importance in the negotiation process.

##### *Required Readings:*

Wong, S. (2016) Emotions and the Communication of Intentions in Face to Face Diplomacy. *European Journal of International Relation*, 22:1, 144-167.

Kelly, Edward and Kaminskiene, Natalija (2016). Importance of emotional intelligence in negotiation and mediation. *International Comparative Jurisprudence*, 2:1, 55-60.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.icj.2016.07.001>

#### **Module 5: The Psychology of Diplomacy**

This module is focused on the psychology of diplomacy and preventive diplomacy. Students learn about impact of psychology on political communication and meet with diplomats to discuss their experience in the field of diplomacy.

##### Session 1: Psychology and Diplomatic Activity

This session analyzes the psychological factors that play significant role in diplomatic activities, and how these psychological contributions might be used by diplomats to better conduct their diplomatic activities.

##### *Required Readings:*

Garling, T., Kristensen, H., Backenroth-Ohsako, G., Ekehammar, B., and Wessells, M. (2000) Diplomacy and Psychology: Psychological Contributions to International Negotiations, Conflict Prevention, and World Peace. *International Journal of Psychology*, 35:2, 8-86.

Kussainova, A. (2012) Psychological Aspects of Diplomatic Activity. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 20, 58-61.

Langholtz, H. and Stout, C. (2004) *The Psychology of Diplomacy*. Westport, Connecticut and London: Praeger (Chapter 1, "The psychology of Diplomacy).

### Session 2: Psychology of Political Communication

This session analyzes political communication skills based on psychologically sound communication skills. Students study communication skills that psychologists advise politicians to use while communicating politically and communicating political content.

#### *Required Readings:*

Houghton, D. (2015) *Political Psychology: Situations, Individuals, and Cases*. NY and London: Routledge (Chapter 13, "Psychology of Political Communication, Persuasion, and the Mass Media).

Head Quarters, US Department of the Army. (2005) *Psychological Operations, Field Manual*. Washington D. C.: Marine Corps Distribution (Chapter 1, "Introduction to Psychological Operations).

### **Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

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

### **Description of Assignments:**

Students will be assessed in this course through the following dimensions:

#### Group Work and Discussion: 25%

Student-led discussion of a pre-assigned lecture topic: including emphasis on assigned readings, preparation of discussion questions, and presentation of supplemental materials on the topic (interviews, articles, discussions with lecturers, etc.) After the lecture, students will be divided into groups to discuss the thematic lecture and place emphasis on the readings and the main points made during the lecture for 20 minutes. Each group will choose a presenter to present the work of the group for 5 minutes. The presenter will play the role of group facilitator and coordinator to lead the group discussion. The evaluation will be for the presenters. There will be different groups and different presenters for each lecture.

#### Lecture Analysis Paper: 25%

A 2-3 page paper completed by the presenters in tandem with the Group Work and discussion assignment and focused on the following:

1. Based on your readings and the lecture for which you led the discussion, identify the main themes and issues raised in the lecture.
2. In what way does the theme contribute to the concept of psychology of peace?
3. What aspects of the lecture facilitated cross-cultural exchange or understanding?
4. What lessons can be learned and applied from this lecture and accompanying readings to your semester in Jordan and/or your ISP topic?

#### Comparative Case Study: 25%

In 5-8 pages, present a comparative analysis of the various aspects of psychology of peace in Jordan and the Middle East. In your analysis, cover three of the following areas:

- Psychology of peace building and conflict resolution
- Psychology of international relations
- Psychology of foreign policy
- Psychology of negotiations
- Psychology of Diplomatic activity

### Field Journal: %15

During your badia homestay experience, keep a journal analyzing Bedouins' perspectives on the themes of psychology of peace. Compare the Bedouins' perspectives to Urban perspectives (based on your experience with your host family in Amman), and compared to the UAE.

### Participation and Attendance: 10%

Attendance during the thematic seminar is mandatory, and your grade will reflect your involvement in class and outside class.

Students are responsible for the timely reading of materials assigned for each session. In addition to readings, it is also your responsibility to keep up to date with current events. At a minimum, you are required to read the *Jordan Times* newspaper (in hardcopy form or online <http://www.jordantimes.com>). It is also recommended that you read a daily newspaper available online in English (for example, *Ammon News* at <http://en.ammonnews.net/>)

### Assessment:

Discussion Leadership	25%
Lecture Analysis Paper	25%
Comparative Case Study	25%
Field Journal	15%
Participation and Attendance	10%

### 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

### **Expectations and Policies**

- Show up prepared. Be on time. Have your Reading 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 according 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 (those of classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits, etc.). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

**Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook** for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

**Disability Services:** Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at [disabilityservices@sit.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@sit.edu) for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.