

Building a Culture of Peace

PEAC3000 (3 credit)

Colombia: Building a Culture of Peace

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 term to term.

Course Description

Colombia is recently emerging from decades of conflict and today provides an excellent setting in which to examine the forging of a culture of Peace. This course examines the various measures, strategies, programs, and projects that have been put in place by international, national, and community organizations to mitigate the impact of conflict and to rebuild, reconstruct, and revive fractured relations and displaced communities. The course provides students with an opportunity to learn from and participate with a community based approach to post-conflict reconciliation and resettlement. Based in the Caribbean coast city of Cartagena the course will expose students to the social dynamics of reconciliation and peace building. Students will have opportunities to learn outside the classroom, thus deepening their understanding and analysis of the issues discussed and read about.

Learning Outcomes

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

- *Demonstrate* understanding of how conflict and post-conflict has shaped the social, political, and cultural realities in Colombia;
- *Understand and discuss* the core elements of a Culture of Peace and the Colombian Peace Accords and the Process of Implementation;
- *Analyze* Colombia specific community-based practice and theories of peace building;
- *Comprehend and articulate* the complexities of reparations, reintegration, and reconciliation within the Cartagena, Colombia context.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in Spanish and English, with readings, lectures, and discussions happening in either or both languages depending on the context.

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.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:

Participation: Every student is expected to come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings, to listen attentively to any lectures, to seek to understand the perspectives of their peers, to share thoughts and opinions about the topics of the course, and to otherwise engage in healthy exploration of the course themes in order to contribute to the collective learning of the group. (10%)

Facilitation: In pairs or small groups, students will be responsible for facilitating discussion on an assigned topic once during the course. Students are responsible for meeting with the instructor prior to the discussion to review their proposed process for facilitation. (10%)

Culture and Media Analyses (2): Follow Colombian news and media for the first three weeks of the summer program in the urban setting of Cartagena. Provide visual evidence and an analysis of the issues in the news and media. How would you describe the issues in the news and media as it related to building a Culture of Peace? Please include insights from Colombians from your homestay family members or any adult acquaintances and elicit their views about your observations. Include their views in your analysis, which can be presented in a poster or other visual presentation or a 7-10 page essay. A second Culture and Media Analysis will be due at the end of the rural stay in Sincelejo. (20% each= total 40%)

Final Project: Each student will choose a final project for this course that examines a topic related to grassroots community efforts in building a culture of peace in Colombia. This will be presented during the final days of the program. The final project must be approved by the instructor and may take the form of a short research paper, a polished presentation based on research, a photo/video project, or a significant art project. Collaborative group work with other students is possible, if there are shared interests) and all final projects will include oral presentations with the community stakeholders. (40%)

Assessment:

Participation	10%
Facilitation	10%
Culture and Media Analysis –Urban	20%
Culture and Media Analysis –Rural	20%
Final Project	40%

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.

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

Expectations and Policies

- 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).
- 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.

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 [Library resources and research support](#), [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 lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.*

Module I: The History of Conflict in Colombia, the Peace Accords and the Process of Implementation

This module introduces the students to the history of conflicts in Colombia and in particular in the Caribbean Coast regions. Culture of Peace theory is introduced and students visit different groups working in peace building in Cartagena. In-depth analyses of the Colombian Peace Accords and the process of implementation of the accords is provided from both academic and a practitioner perspectives. The challenges and limitations of reparations, reintegration and reconciliation are discussed.

Sessions 1-4: These sessions will cover the general history of conflicts in Colombia and the history and consequences of prolonged warfare in the Caribbean Coastal Region of Colombia.

Sessions 5-8: Introduction to theories and practices of peacebuilding as well as the core elements of a Culture of Peace.

Sessions 9-12: These sessions will focus on the Colombian Peace Accords and the beleaguered processes of implementation in regards to reparations, reintegration, and reconciliation

Required Readings:

Castiblanco, Jaime M. *Medios de Comunicación y Construcción de Paz*. Fundación Universidad de Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano Carrera 4 N° 22-61 - pbx: 242 7030

Céspedes-Báez, Lina M., and Enrique Prieto Rios. *Utopía u oportunidad fallida: análisis crítico del Acuerdo de Paz*. Editorial Universidad del Rosario, 2017

LaRosa, Michael, and P. Germán Mejía. *Colombia: a concise contemporary history*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

Lederach, John Paul. *The moral imagination: the art and soul of building peace*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

Module II: Capacity Building with SembrandoPaz

In this module the students will learn about and participate in community-based peace building activities with a non-governmental organization in the community of Sincelejo, Sucre, called SembrandoPaz. Students will have the unique opportunity to meet with peacemakers, state institutions, human rights defenders, victims, advocates, church workers, community activists, social movement leaders, and guerrilla ex-combatants, among others as well as visit rural communities that were directly affected by the armed conflict. Students will experience, first hand, how Colombians are living a historic moment in a unique peace process. Students will see how victims of the conflict are registered for reparations, and meet with new political leaders from the ex-guerrilla group, the FARC, which is now a political party.

Sessions 1-4: These sessions will introduce the students to SembrandoPaz and their capacity building program as well as a historical overview of Sincelejo and the surround communities.

Sessions 5-9: In these sessions students will participate in Alternative to Violence and meeting with grassroots peacebuilding organizations of educators, youth, women, afro-decedents.

Sessions 9-10: during the final week in Sincelejo with SembrandoPaz students will carry out a Culture of Peace practicum in the grassroots community organization of their choice.

Required Readings

N. (2018, February 15). Colombia necesita educadores para la paz. Retrieved March 06, 2018, from <https://www.las2orillas.co/colombia-necesita-educadores-para-la-paz/>

McEvoy-Levy, Siobhán. *Troublemakers or peacemakers?: youth and post-Accord peace building*. University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.

Mujeres constructoras de paz, un espacio para el liderazgo. (n.d.). Retrieved March 06, 2018, from <http://www.oim.org.co/news/mujeres-constructoras-de-paz-un-espacio-para-el-liderazgo>

Ramírez, M. C. (2011). *Between the guerrillas and the state: the cocalero movement, citizenship, and identity in the Colombian Amazon*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Module III: Prospects for Building a Culture of Peace in Colombia

In the concluding module of the course, students will examine possibilities for Colombia's peace process. The course discussions and lived experiences will be synthesized. Ethical, philosophical, and practical questions will be at the center of this module. Presentations will be made of the Culture and Media analyses with the class and students will be invited to articulate actions, in their own communities, that will promote a culture of peace. The sharing of the final project with the grassroots and community stakeholders is also contemplated for this module.

Sessions 1-3: Students will present a synthesis of lessons learned and best practices learned from Colombian peace builders and through creative presentations give back to the communities that have hosted them and facilitated their learning.