



ITSS
International Team
For the Study of Security
Verona

Summer School Track: Modern conflict & Human Rights: war, peace and atrocity prevention in the 21st Century

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Module Description

War, conflict, and the mechanisms we use to address them have changed dramatically in the 21st century. In the wake of world wars and decolonization processes, we have been attempting to move towards a system of world governance that abides by human rights principles. Yet violence – from genocide to intra-state conflict or even human trafficking – remains unresolved. This course is intended for those interested in both theoretical and practical approaches to questions of war, peace, and addressing violence through human rights frameworks. With insight into regimes of international human rights law and gender in conflict, this track will utilize a case-study method to prepare you to analyze and propose measures and policy responses to the great conflicts of our time.

Aims

Through dynamic lectures and seminars, this course foregrounds intersectional views of modern conflict and human rights as analytic lenses to highlight and question the interrelations between violence in the 21st century. In order to do so, it will utilize extensive case studies and explore a variety of the world's most pressing types of conflicts and threats to human rights. Students will be exposed to the specific problematics, histories, and contexts of these cases, but will also be encouraged to think critically and question the underlying narratives of each topic. With this aim, seminars will be a nexus between theory and practice, where students are encouraged to apply the ideas to actual cases, past and present.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, participants will be able to demonstrate the following:

Knowledge and understanding of:

- Contemporary dilemmas surrounding approaches, solutions, and causes of violent conflict and human rights abuses
- The definitions, characteristics, and core concepts of new types of warfare – particularly proxy, hybrid, and surrogate warfare
- Human rights law, comprehensive of its criticalities
- Historic regional identities and their role in the present day, both in conflict and peace
- Trigger points and resolution methods for conflict
- Core issues for peace, related to equality, diversity, and inclusion

Skills (specific to the module):

- Case exploration of the conflicts in the 21st century (dynamics, changing nature, etc.)
- Mind map summarizing characteristics, components, implications, consequences of warfare
- Identification and application of measures against conflict escalation and human rights abuses

Transferable/employability skills (through the seminars):

- Communication and presentational skills
- Case study analysis methodology
- Negotiation and conflict resolution

Teaching arrangements

The module is divided into **eight lessons** spread across **four weekends** on Friday morning and afternoon, equalling **12 hours total**. Teaching sessions will be delivered remotely. Lessons feature **frontal lectures** (1 hour) and **short seminars** (30 minutes). Images, videos, and online material will facilitate interactive and practical lectures. Seminars gravitate around one or two pivotal questions that naturally arise from the underlying themes. **Participants are encouraged to engage**, contribute to scholarly debate, defend their arguments and, ultimately, share potential solutions to concrete problems.

Hence, this is how the module is specifically divided:

Friday, June 10th, 2022

Lesson #1: “Contemporary conflict & war”

This course will provide an introduction to the dynamics of conflict in the 21st century. By exploring the changing nature of war over the last few decades, Freddy Laker (KCL) will delve into how war transforms social and political orders, how it has been instrumentalized, and what the greatest conflicts that await us will be.

Lesson #2: “Intra-state conflicts: regional separatism and micronationalism in Europe”

The early twenty-first century has seen the return of regional separatism on a scale not seen in decades. This course will introduce students to new frameworks for thinking about regional identity, using the European continent as a case study (Basque Country in Spain & the Venice region in Italy). Using these case studies, we will explore questions like: What is a nation? What trends in governance have historically pushed regions towards separatism? Are regional independence movements constructive or destructive towards the international system? In this session, Sarah Toubman (ITSS Verona) will help students will develop an ability to look past traditional borders and notions of the state, and approach international affairs with more nuanced views of nationality, identity, and self-governance.

Friday, June 17th, 2022

Lesson #3: “Proxy Warfare and Hybrid Warfare”

We will examine the types and characteristics of Proxy and Hybrid warfare through different case studies (Kashmir Conflict, Syrian War, Afghan Mujahideen & Hezbollah). In this session, Arslan Sheikh and Mariam Qureshi (ITSS Verona) will shed some light on why these conflicts occur, how they are fought, and what their implications are for international security.

Lesson #4: “Genocide & Mass atrocities”

This course provides an introduction to the study of genocide. We will explore the definition, origin, and evolution of what has come to be considered humanity's worst crime, introducing core cases & modalities of genocide, understanding the way International Law and the Genocide Convention have sought to prosecute these crimes, and the long-term consequences these campaigns have on the reconstruction and development of states and the building of nations. In this session, Esther Brito (ITSS Verona) will introduce the basis of genocide, and through an interview with Seila Muhic and Emilija Davidovic (Bergamo University) we will further help students critically understand the lived experiences of genocidal violence, its recent history in Europe, and the way we respond to continuing instances collective violence.

Friday, June 24th, 2022

Lesson #5: “Human Rights: are they truly universal? ”

Human rights law is a relatively recent accomplishment. By inquiring on its historical roots and the functioning of its core frameworks – in particular, UN and regional related treaties, such as the European Convention on Human Rights – we will explore its successes, failures, and developments in addressing modern conflict. In this session, Luca Mattei (ITSS Verona) will offer an overview of the foundational elements of human rights law.

Lesson #6: “The problem of child soldiers”

In conversations about global conflict, we often only mention non-state actors – but global security is increasingly being defined by transnational threats led by criminal and terrorist organizations. In this course, Cecilia Polizzi (CRTG) will offer an overview of the use of child soldiers by these organizations, exploring the human rights challenges this phenomenon poses for the rights of vulnerable communities in conflict.

Friday, July 1st, 2022

Lesson #7: “Gender, Security, and Human Rights”

This course provides a critical examination of gender as a defining element of peace and security issues across conflict and post-conflict contexts. To do so, we delve into the realities of gendered and sexual violence in conflict (Comfort women, Bosnia, Bangladesh, etc.) and explore the implications of the UN Women, Peace & Security Agenda. In this session, Esther Brito (ITSS Verona) leverages feminist theory and practice to evidence how

violence is differentially perpetrated, interpreted, and responded to in international conflict.

Lesson #8: “Social equality and Inclusive Peace”

In this course, we close our track by exploring the pathways to peace available through discussions and practice surrounding equality and social movements (antiracism, gender, decolonization, LGBTQ+, and indigenous affairs). In this session, Julia Hodgins (ITSS Verona) presents key terms like equality, diversity, social capital, inclusion, and integration as related to policymaking and inclusive peace efforts.

Module requirements

There are no formal requirements for this module. Everyone with an interest in the aforementioned topics is welcome.

Referenced sources/Supplemental materials

A full list of reading/viewing materials will be provided in due course. Some literature used by professors of this track can be found below (non-obligatory to consult or read).

- Payne, S. G. (1991). Nationalism, regionalism and micronationalism in Spain. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 26(3), 479-491.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. (1992). *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*. Cambridge university press.
- Bercovitch, J., Kremenyuk, V., & Zartman, I. W. (Eds.). (2008). *The SAGE handbook of conflict resolution*. Sage.
- Duffield, M. (2014). *Global governance and the new wars: The merging of development and security*. Zed Books Ltd..
- Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H., & Woodhouse, T. (2011). *Contemporary conflict resolution*. Polity.
- Strachan, H. (2007). *Clausewitz's On war: A biography*. Grove Press.
- Cockburn, C. (2004). *The Continuum of Violence: A Gender Perspective on War and Peace* (pp. 24-44). University of California Press.
- Kirby, P., & Shepherd, L. J. (2016). The futures past of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. *International Affairs*, 92(2), 373-392.
- Buss, D., Lebert, J., Rutherford, B., Sharkey's, D., & Aginam, O. (2014). Sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict societies.
- Davies, S. E., & True, J. (Eds.). (2018). *The oxford handbook of women, peace, and security*. Oxford University Press.
- Enloe, C. (2014). *Bananas, beaches and bases*. University of California Press.
- Sjoberg, L. (2014). *Gender, war, and conflict*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Power, S. (2013). *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide*. Basic Books.