

Eastern Mennonite University  
Center for Justice and Peacebuilding  
Graduate Program in Conflict Transformation  
*Research Design*  
PAX 520  
Spring, 2011

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*The class meets Wednesday mornings from 8:30 to 11:30 in the CJP Classroom in Hartzler Library (HL 121). The instructor's office hours are Wednesday afternoons from 1:30 to 4:30, and outside of these hours by appointment.*

**Course Description:**

The conflict transformation field abounds with theories and the restorative justice field with principles, but few of those theories and principles have been tested with empirical research. This course will walk participants through the process of designing a research project that aims to answer significant questions of interest both to the broader field and to the student. Students will be exposed to both quantitative and qualitative methods, with a particular emphasis on qualitative. During the semester students will conduct a literature review, develop a research question, select a research approach, gather preliminary data and conduct an initial data analysis. At the end of the semester, students will present at least preliminary findings to course participants.

**Course Objectives:**

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

- 1) Understand the basic *stages of a research project*, from identifying a topic to presenting findings.
- 2) Read and comprehend *research literature* representing a broad range of research methodologies.
- 3) Possess skills and processes for integrating research into future peacebuilding *practice*.
- 4) Critically examine peacebuilding *theory in light of empirical research*, and/or propose adaptation of existing theory or new theory informed by research results.

## Course Requirements:

*Participation:* Students are expected to attend and actively participate in all scheduled sessions. If there is an unavoidable absence, the student is requested to inform the instructors prior to the missed class and develop a strategy to complete any missed work.

*Readings:* Students are asked to complete the required text readings prior to class and come prepared to discuss the readings in class. Most weeks an original research article will also be discussed in class.

*Assignments:* Students will be expected to produce four papers in the course of the semester. The three initial papers will constitute the bulk of your final paper. (Students are encouraged to work together in pairs. Papers can be jointly submitted, with both authors earning the same grade.)

- 1) A one-page **topic proposal** indicating what you plan to study this semester and why you are interested in this topic. The paper should also indicate where you will begin to look for appropriate literature on your topic. (Due February 2)
- 2) A five to seven page **literature review** on the topic of your choice. This paper will include your **research question** or **purpose statement** in light of the literature review. (Due March 2)
- 3) A copy of the **research instrument or methods proposal** that you will use to collect data. (Due March 30)
- 4) A 15 to 20 page **final paper** that includes your topic, literature review, methods section, findings and implications. (Due April 27)

## Course Grade:

Your grade will be based on the following components:

Class Participation—10% (based on preparation for class and active participation in the Attachment Conference on March 31/April 1)

Topic Proposal—10%

Literature Review Paper—20%

Methods Proposal—20%

Final Paper—40%

## Required Readings:

Creswell, John W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approach (3rd Edition)*. Sage Publications.

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene Nagy and Leavy, Patricia (2011). *The Practice of Qualitative Research, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Sage Publications. (Note: This is shown as “HBL” in the Course Schedule)

## Course Schedule:

- January 19: Introductions, Course Overview, Research Experiences, Selecting a Topic
- January 26: Research Considerations (Chapters 1 of both Creswell and HBL)
- February 2: The Research Process/Lit Reviews (Chapters 2 of both Creswell and HBL)  
*Please bring your **Topic Proposal** paper to class.*
- February 9: Writing a Literature Review and Ethical Considerations (Chapters 4 of Creswell and HBL)
- February 16: Relationship of Theory and Research (Chapters 3 of Creswell and HBL)
- February 23: Introduction, Purpose Statement, Research Questions/Hypotheses (Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of Creswell)  
*Please come prepared to discuss how your topic has evolved into a specific research question or research hypothesis.*
- March 2: Choosing a Method: Quantitative, Qualitative or Mixed Methods Basics of Quantitative Research (Chapters 8 – 10 of Creswell and Chapter 11 of HBL)  
*Please bring your **Literature Review and Research Question**.*
- March 9: Spring Break (No Class)
- March 16: Qualitative Methods: Interviews (Chapter 5 of HBL)
- March 23: Qualitative Methods: Oral History and Focus Groups (Chapters 6 and 7 of HBL)
- March 30: Qualitative Methods: Ethnography and Content Analysis (Chapters 8 and 9 of HBL)  
*Instrument and **Methods Proposal Due***
- March 31/April 1: Attachment Conference (Schedule Distributed in Class)<sup>i</sup>
- April 6: Case Study Research (Chapter 10 of HBL), Small Group Discussions of Methods Proposals/Instruments, and Verbal Reports on Attachment Conf.
- April 13: Conducting Pilot Tests (Instructor Provided Reading)
- April 20: Analyzing Your Results; Writing a Proposal (Chapters 12 & 13 of HBL)
- April 27: Student Presentations  
***Final Paper Due***

**Stages of the Research Design Process**  
**Center for Justice and Peacebuilding**  
**Eastern Mennonite University**  
**David Brubaker**

*Research has been defined as a “systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.” (www.research.psu.edu). Research Design is “a plan of what data to gather, from whom, how and when to collect the data, and how to analyze the data obtained.” (www.usdoj.gov). Key to successful Research Design is the ability to follow stages of a design process that have proven effective for other researchers. The following stages are offered as one model for Research Design.*

**1. Choose a Topic**

- a. What are the areas in your field about which you would like to know more?
- b. Are there particular “problem areas” that need further study or consideration?

**2. Review the Literature about the Topic**

- a. What research has already been conducted on this topic? In what areas is there consensus, and in what areas are there still disagreements?
- b. What theoretical claims have been made about this topic that you would like to test, or where does the theory seem underdeveloped?

**3. Refine your Research Question(s) or Hypothesis(es)**

- a. In light of your literature review, what is it that you most want to know about your topic?
- b. Are you prepared to offer a general hypothesis, or does it seem more reasonable to frame one or more research questions?

**4. Choose a Methodology to Explore your Research Question(s)**

- a. Is your research question or hypothesis best explored through experimental or non-experimental means? Would a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods approach be most effective?
- b. Who will be the participants in your study, and what instrument might you need to develop to gain their perspective?

**5. Collect and Analyze the Data**

- a. After field-testing your instrument or your research method, collect the data.
- b. Use the mechanisms described in your methods proposal to analyze the data collected.

**6. Record your Results**

In light of your literature review, research question, methods, and data analysis, what did you find?

## Supplemental information for CJP graduate course syllabi:

Approved 3/20/06; updated 1/11

### **Writing Guidelines:**

*Writing* will be a factor in evaluation: EMU has adopted a set of writing guidelines for graduate programs that include four sets of criteria: content, structure, conventions and style (see below). It is expected that graduates will be able to write at least a “good” level with 60% writing at an “excellent” level.

For the course papers, please follow the APA style described in CJP’s *GUIDELINES for GRADUATE PAPERS* (see student handbook or request a copy from the Academic Program Coordinator).

### **Academic Integrity Policy (AIP):**

EMU faculty and staff care about the integrity of their own work and the work of their students. They create assignments that promote interpretative thinking and work intentionally with students during the learning process. Honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility are characteristics of a community that is active in loving mercy, doing justice, and walking humbly before God. EMU defines plagiarism as occurring when a person presents as one’s own someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. (Adapted from the Council of Writing Program Administrators). [Taken from “Academic Integrity,” 2010-11 Undergraduate Catalog.] This course will apply EMU’s AIP (see catalog, pp. 16-19) to any events of academic dishonesty. For more information see <http://www.emu.edu/academic-support/writing/academicintegritypolicy03-09.pdf> If you have doubts about what is appropriate, one useful website is <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>

### **Grading Scale & Feedback:**

*Grades* will be based on an accumulation of numerical points that will be converted to a letter grade at the end of the course. Each assignment will receive a score expressed as a fraction, with the points received over the total points possible (e.g. 18/20). The following is the basic scale used for evaluation. *Points may be subtracted for missed deadlines.*

95-100 = A outstanding	90-94 = A- excellent
85-89 = B+ very good	80-84 = B good
75-79 = B- satisfactory	70-74 = C passing
Below 70 = F failing	

Graduate students are expected to earn A’s and B’s.

A GPA of 3.0 is the minimum requirement for graduation.

*Regarding feedback on papers/projects:* Students can expect to receive papers/assignments back in a class with faculty feedback before the next paper/assignment is due. This commitment from faculty assumes that the student has turned the paper in on the agreed upon due date.

**Institutional Review Board:**

All research conducted by or on EMU faculty, staff or students must be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board to assure participant safety: <http://www.emu.edu/irb/>

**Academic Support Center & Disability Support Services:**

If you have received services in the past related to a learning disability or attention deficit disorder and/or you feel you may have such a problem in this course, please make an appointment to speak with the faculty member or with the Coordinator of Student Disability Support Services in the Academic Support Center, third floor of the Hartzler Library (432-4254).

Please take advantage of the free individual tutoring from writing tutors. Writing tutors are strong writers who hold scheduled one-on-one sessions with students and are an excellent resource for writers at any level or at any stage in the writing process. Please remember that writing tutors do not provide editing or proofreading services. They will help you put what you learn into practice and will work with you to improve your own proofreading and editing skills. To make an appointment, please visit the Academic Support Center on the 3rd floor of the Sadie Hartzler Library.

**Class Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all class meetings. If unusual or emergency circumstances prevent class attendance, the student should notify the professor in advance if possible. Multiple absences from class will result in lower grades. The student is responsible for the material presented in classes missed. (EMU Graduate Catalog)

Students should be aware of the importance of regular class attendance, particularly in the case of CJP classes that meet weekly or over several weekends. Being absent for more than one class leads to a student missing a large portion of the class content. In addition to consistent class attendance, students should make every effort to arrive to class on time out of respect for the learning process, fellow students and faculty.

**Course Extensions and Outstanding Grades:**

For Fall and Spring semesters, all coursework is due by the end of the semester. If a student will not be able to complete a course on time, the student must submit a request one week before the end of the semester for an extension (up to 6 months) using a course extension form provided by the Academic Program Coordinator. If the request is granted the student will receive an "I (incomplete) for the course which will later be replaced by a final grade when the work has been turned in on the agreed upon date. If the request for an extension is denied, the student will receive a grade for the work that has been completed up until the time the course was expected to have been completed. If no work has been submitted, the final grade will be an F (or W under certain circumstances).

Extensions will be given only for legitimate and unusual situations. Extensions are contracted by the student with the program for up to a maximum of 6 months after the deadline for the course work. PLEASE NOTE: If the outstanding course work is received within the first 6 weeks of the extension, no grade reduction will be imposed;

after 6 weeks any outstanding coursework will be reduced by ½ letter grade. If the extension deadline is not met, the student will receive a final grade for the work completed.

Under exceptional circumstances, an additional 6-month extension may be granted by special petition to the CJP academic committee. To receive this additional extension, a letter of petition is expected with full rationale for the reason unable to finish to this point and a practical plan on how the student will actually finish if this extension is permitted. This must be submitted at least 1 week before the end of the first extension. A student is encouraged to use this only when absolutely necessary.

**Writing Standards –Graduate Level (Grid Version)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>A excellent</b>	<b>B minimal expectations</b>	<b>C below expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Content</b> <i>(quality of the information/ideas and sources/details used to support them)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- shows clarity of purpose</li> <li>- shows depth of content</li> <li>- applies insight and represents original thinking</li> <li>-demonstrates quality and breadth of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- shows clarity of purpose</li> <li>- shows substantial information and sufficient support</li> <li>- almost always represents original thinking</li> <li>- uses quality resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- shows clarity of purpose</li> <li>- lacks depth of content and may depend on generalities or the commonplace</li> <li>- represents little original thinking</li> <li>- uses mostly quality resources</li> </ul>	
<b>Structure</b> <i>(logical order or sequence of the writing)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is coherent and logically developed</li> <li>- uses very effective transitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is coherent and logically developed</li> <li>- uses smooth transitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is coherent and logically (but not fully) developed</li> <li>- uses some awkward transitions</li> </ul>	
<b>Style</b> <i>(appropriate attention to audience: effective word choice, sentence variety, voice; appropriate level of formality for academic writing vs. informal text messages and email)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is concise, eloquent, and rhetorically effective</li> <li>- composes varied sentence structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- displays concern for careful expression</li> <li>- composes some varied sentence structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- displays some personality <u>but</u> lacks imagination and may be stilted</li> <li>- composes little varied sentence structure</li> <li>- frequently uses jargon and clichés</li> </ul>	
<b>Conventions</b> <i>(adherence to grammar rules: usage, mechanics)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- composes well-constructed sentences</li> <li>-makes virtually no errors in grammar and spelling</li> <li>- makes accurate word choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- almost always composes well-constructed sentences</li> <li>- makes minimal errors in grammar and spelling</li> <li>- makes accurate word choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- usually has well-constructed sentences</li> <li>- makes several errors</li> <li>- makes word choices that distract the reader</li> </ul>	
<b>Source Integrity</b> <i>(appropriate acknowledgment of sources used in research)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cites sources for all quotations</li> <li>- composes credible paraphrases, cited correctly</li> <li>- includes reference page</li> <li>- makes virtually no errors in documentation style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cites sources for all quotations</li> <li>- composes credible paraphrases, usually cited correctly</li> <li>- includes reference page</li> <li>- makes minimal errors in documentation style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cites sources for all quotations</li> <li>- composes mostly credible paraphrases, sometimes cited correctly</li> <li>- includes reference page</li> <li>- makes several errors in documentation style</li> </ul>	
<p>The weighting of each of the five areas is dependent on the specific written assignment and the teacher's preference. Plagiarism occurs when a person presents as one's own "someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source" (adapted from Council of Writing Program Administrators).</p>				<b>Grade</b>

*Approved by University Faculty*

*April 28, 2004*

*Revised by the Writing Committee*

*April 2008*

*Updated March 2009*

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<sup>i</sup> *Campus wide conference, Conversations on Attachment, March 31-April 2, 2011*  
*This semester we have the unique opportunity to focus together as a whole campus community on a theme that has relevance to each of us, no matter what our discipline/major. Anne Marie Early (Counseling) writes, "Attachment theory is a lens. It provides a way to see and understand behaviors that otherwise might not make sense, bringing reparation and healing at all levels of relating. For the individual, couple, family, community and society, attachment theory provides an exciting next step for understanding yourself, your work, your relationships and the larger world."* <https://emu.edu/blog/attachment/>

Attachment Theory represents a relatively rare example in the social sciences of a well-developed theory that has also been thoroughly tested and refined through the use of empirical research. A part of your participation grade will be assessed on your own attendance in at least some aspect of the campus wide conference, and a verbal report in class the following week regarding your learnings from the conference.