

PAX 583: Understanding Psychosocial Trauma

Spring 2012

Center for Justice and Peacebuilding

Eastern Mennonite University

Hartzler Library Room 121

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Course Description

The course will examine trauma, its causes and means of healing or transforming its symptoms at individual, community and societal levels. A thorough overview will be given of the complexities of trauma and psychosocial factors as a result of war, natural disaster and other acts of violence—both current and historical. Identity/identity threat and dignity will be examined as ways of understanding how trauma happens and is constructively transformed. Individual and community assets and resilience will be studied as important means of transforming trauma and enhancing psychosocial well-being. Psychosocial trauma healing and indigenous healing methods will be analyzed through case studies and presentations by guest speakers and class presentations. The importance of narrative and the arts as ways of addressing loss and pain and other aspects of a traumatic experience will be investigated, as will the importance of self-care in trauma awareness and transformation work. Peacebuilding theories of change will be used as the framework for this course.

Course Objectives

- To give a thorough overview of psychosocial trauma and how it is transformed at individual and collective levels.
- To critically examine various trauma healing and psychosocial frameworks and tools to understand how trauma is transformed.
- To review an essential segment of the literature about trauma awareness and transformation and its theories and practices.
- To provide participants an opportunity to begin to explore specific areas of interest in the area of trauma healing and psychosocial-well being.

Meeting Time and Place

PAX 583 will meet in the Hartzler Library classroom HL 121 Wednesdays from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Required Reading

Herman, Judith L., *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*. Basic Books, New York, 1992.

Yoder, Carolyn, *The Little Book of Trauma Healing*. Good Books, Intercourse, Penna. 2005.

McNair, Rachael, *Perpetration-induced Traumatic Stress: The Psychological Consequences of Killing*. Psychological Dimensions of War and Peace. Praeger Publishers, 2002.

Rothschild, Babette, *Trauma Essentials: The Go-To Guide*. W.W. Norton & Company, New York. 2011

Hicks, Donna, “The Role of Identity Reconstruction in Promoting Reconciliation,” in *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy, and Conflict Transformation*. Helmick and Peterson (eds), Templeton Foundation Press, 2001. (This article will be posted on Moodle.)

Hicks, Donna: *Dignity: The Essential Role it Plays in Resolving Conflict*. Yale University Press, New Haven. 2011

Williamson J. & Robinson, M. “Psychosocial intervention, or integrated programming for well-being.” (This article will be posted on Blackboard.)

Audergon, Arlene, “Daring to Dream: Learning about Community Trauma, Accountability and Building the Future in Post-War Forums in Croatia.” In *Peacebuilding in Traumatized Societies*, Hart, B. (ed). University Press, 2008. (This article will be posted on Blackboard.)

Denham, Aaron, “Rethinking Historical Trauma: Narratives of Resilience,” *Transcultural Psychiatry*. <http://tps.sagepub.com>

McNair, Rachael, *Perpetration-induced Traumatic Stress: The Psychological Consequences of Killing*. Psychological Dimensions of War and Peace. Praeger Publishers, 2002.

Ayindo, Babu, “Arts Approaches to Peace: Playing Our Way to Transcendence?” in *Peacebuilding in Traumatized Societies*. Hart, B. (ed). University Press of America, 2008 (This article will be posted on Blackboard.)

Fox, Judith, “Attachment Theory: Relational Elements of Trauma and Peacebuilding,” in *Peacebuilding and Trauma Recovery: Integrated Strategies in Post-War Reconstruction*, University of Denver Conference Proceedings, December 2007. (This article will be posted on Blackboard.)

(Throughout the semester, other readings will be assigned and placed on Blackboard)

Course Requirements

- 1. Full participation in class.** Regular attendance is essential.
- 2. Reading all assigned material.** Total pages: 1000-1,500 for 3 credit students. 500 – 1,000 pages for 2 credit students. All required reading related to class discussion for 1 credit students.
- 3. Book/Article Review:** Three credit students will ‘review’ 3 articles and/or book chapters. Two credit students will review 2 articles and/or book chapters; and students taking the class for 1 credit will review one article *or* book chapter. These articles and chapters should be vetted with the instructor beforehand, but can be selected from the reading list (other than assigned readings) or from other sources. For our purposes, please develop a 5-7 page double spaced paper for each review. It should give an overview of the text, summarizes its components and provides a critical interpretation and evaluation of the text. If you have questions about this assignment, please consult the instructor or use online resources that further explain this type of review process.
- 4. Group Project:** The assumption of this class is that peacebuilding includes important psychosocial trauma components. To help transform conflict and build a just peace, there needs to be theory development and practical mechanisms (analytical tools, methods and processes, etc.) that address trauma and psychosocial well-being at all levels of the society in post-conflict situations. The instructor will select a case where the group’s task is to determine the “nature and efficacy” of these theories and mechanisms (which exist explicitly or implicitly within each case), to determine their role in the transformational process toward social change. To do this, the group will develop an *intervention strategy* that specifically includes the theories, analytical tools, methods and processes that facilitate psychosocial trauma transformation. For the second case, the group will *select* and *research* a case and apply what you learned from the previous case and course readings. The cases will be presented in class. Each one is worth 20% of the final grade or 40% of the final grade. (All students will be asked to do both cases.)
- 5. Reflective Paper *or* Arts/Social Media Presentation:** The paper should capture either an overall reaction to the course materials and your journey through them or a specific course topic that changed your way of thinking as well as how you practice peacebuilding. Alternatively, you may use an arts/social media approach to convey elements of the above. The latter requires a classroom or “other space” presentation.

Student Evaluation

Class Participation	15%
Literature Review	20 % (See Course Requirements above)
Group Project (Case studies)	40% (Full participation by <u>all</u> students)
Final Reflection Paper or Arts/Media Project	25% (10 double-spaced pages for 3 credits; 8 spaced pages for 2 credits; and 6 double-spaced pages for 1 credit.) Arts/Media project will be negotiated with the Instructor.

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,” 2011-12 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 or call the Academic Support Center on the 3rd floor of the Sadie Hartzler Library or by accessing WOnline on myEMU portal.

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.

Writing Standards –Graduate Level (Grid Version)

Criteria	A excellent	B minimal expectations	C below expectations	Comments
Content <i>(quality of the information/ideas and sources/details used to support them)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shows clarity of purpose - shows depth of content - applies insight and represents original thinking -demonstrates quality and breadth of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shows clarity of purpose - shows substantial information and sufficient support - almost always represents original thinking - uses quality resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shows clarity of purpose - lacks depth of content and may depend on generalities or the commonplace - represents little original thinking - uses mostly quality resources 	
Structure <i>(logical order or sequence of the writing)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is coherent and logically developed - uses very effective transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is coherent and logically developed - uses smooth transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is coherent and logically (but not fully) developed - uses some awkward transitions 	
Style <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"> - is concise, eloquent, and rhetorically effective - composes varied sentence structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - displays concern for careful expression - composes some varied sentence structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - displays some personality but lacks imagination and may be stilted - composes little varied sentence structure - frequently uses jargon and clichés 	
Conventions <i>(adherence to grammar rules: usage, mechanics)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - composes well-constructed sentences -makes virtually no errors in grammar and spelling - makes accurate word choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - almost always composes well-constructed sentences - makes minimal errors in grammar and spelling - makes accurate word choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - usually has well-constructed sentences - makes several errors - makes word choices that distract the reader 	
Source Integrity <i>(appropriate acknowledgment of sources used in research)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cites sources for all quotations - composes credible paraphrases, cited correctly - includes reference page - makes virtually no errors in documentation style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cites sources for all quotations - composes credible paraphrases, usually cited correctly - includes reference page - makes minimal errors in documentation style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cites sources for all quotations - composes mostly credible paraphrases, sometimes cited correctly - includes reference page - makes several errors in documentation style 	
<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>				Grade

Approved by University Faculty April 28, 2004
Revised by the Writing Committee April 2008
Updated March 2009