

# PAX 552

**SPI 2008**

*Eastern Mennonite University  
Conflict Transformation Program*

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## **Course Objectives:**

- Learn the history of how nonviolent strategies have worked in varied contexts.
- Understand the philosophy of nonviolence.
- Learn to create strategies for increasing power and waging conflict nonviolently.

## **Key question:**

- How do people overcome violence without using violence?

## **Books:**

*Waging Nonviolent Struggle* by Gene Sharp

*A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics* by Lisa Veneklasen

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*  
pamphlet - available in book store

*Subverting Hatred: The Challenge of Nonviolence in Religious Traditions*, edited by Daniel Smith-Christopher

# Strategic Nonviolence: Activism & Advocacy

## **Course Description:**

Building peace requires a wide range of approaches. Social movements play a key role in raising awareness about important issues of justice and conflict as well balancing power between groups so that negotiations can be more successful in addressing the root problems. Social movements work best when they are planned strategically with an eye to planning long-term, including all relevant stakeholders, and building important alliances and coalitions with others.

Strategic nonviolent action is an essential element in peacebuilding. Both violence and nonviolence are strategies to balance power and raise awareness in conflicts that are not ready for verbal forms of negotiation, mediation, or dialogue. They both intensify conflict to 'force' or persuade people to change their behavior. Violence usually spirals into a cycle and creates new victims. Waging conflict nonviolently through advocacy and activism ideally ripens the conditions for transforming relationships and structures while stopping the cycle of direct and structural violence.

This class places the use of violence and nonviolence within a larger context of social movements and peacebuilding, and identifies the ways advocacy and activism complement other peacebuilding activities. Unlike many approaches to activism and advocacy, it stresses the need to focus on non-adversarial, relationship-based approaches. The course introduces the philosophy of nonviolence. The course examines the strategy and methods of activism and advocacy. Students will learn to reflect critically on social movements and learn to create nonviolent forms of power, identify tactics and design plans for social movements.

**Pre-Course Reading:** A Force More Powerful--see excerpts at the following website:

<http://www.aforcemorepowerful.org/films/pdfs/studyGuide-en.pdf>

## Strategic Nonviolence Class Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
Thursday May 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Syllabus, Introductions, Expectations, sign up sheets</li> <li>■ Definitions and scope of the class</li> </ul> The origins of Waging Nonviolent Struggle Video: A force more powerful: South Africa Video: A force more powerful Chile	Chapters 1-4, 7-8, 11, 14, 16, 17, 19 in <i>Waging Nonviolent Struggle</i>
Friday May 16	European Case Studies Video: A force more powerful Poland & Denmark	Read Chapters 10, 18, 23, 27 in <i>Waging Nonviolent Struggle</i> <b>Reading Reflection Due</b>
Friday Evening 7:30-11pm	<b>Showing of the film “Gandhi”</b> If you are not able to attend, please watch the movie on your own.	
Monday May 20	Video: MLK and Civil Rights Movement Dynamics of Nonviolent Struggle	Chapter 20-34 in <i>Waging Nonviolent Struggle</i> Read Martin Luther King Jr. pamphlet
Tuesday May 21	Strategic Planning	Part 4 of <i>Waging Nonviolent Struggle</i> pp 433-524 <b>Reading Reflection Due</b>
Wednesday May 22	Introduction to Advocacy	Part 1 in <i>A New Weave...</i> <b>Letter Project Papers Due</b>
Thursday May 23	Planning Advocacy	Part 2 in <i>A New Weave...</i> <i>Appendix A in Waging Nonviolent Struggle</i>
Friday May 24	Doing Advocacy	Part 3 in <i>A New Weave...</i> <b>Advocacy Campaign Design Papers Due</b>