



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

6,317: Responding to Crisis and Building Peace

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Written work, Digital, Group work group grade (60%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (40%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[6,317,1.00 Responding to Crisis and Building Peace](#) -- English -- [Albani Martin](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

A solid interest in international affairs and peacebuilding is needed. In the weeks prior to the course students are expected to closely follow ongoing crisis responses through the media in order to better understand the main concepts of the course.

A basic understanding of international institutions (in particular the United Nations and the European Union) is helpful, but not mandatory.

Learning objectives

By the end of the course, students will have acquired a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of violent conflict and the international response to this global challenge. In particular, students will learn to:

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of situations of crisis and conflict
- Understand and be able to discuss the main aspects of international crisis response and peacebuilding interventions, including conflict dynamics, the main justifications for intervention, the strengths and weaknesses of the main international actors in peacebuilding and the available tools
- Analyse and critically reflect on real-life cases of peacebuilding and international interventions. Draw conclusions and lessons-learned from these cases.
- Be able to independently develop a response to a real-world crisis and peacebuilding challenge and synthesize it in a policy brief
- Have an overview of career perspectives in peacebuilding and the main international organisations

Course content

Syria, Libya, Yemen, or the Central African Republic: The last years have seen a host of new conflicts *within* states spring up. Their consequences include enormous suffering of the civilian population, loss of decades of development and an increasingly fragile state. This can lead to mass migration and form a fertile breeding ground for terrorism.

The international community struggles to respond to this global challenge of humanitarian catastrophes and threats to international peace and stability. Drawn between the requirements and constraints of international law, a "responsibility to protect", as well as geopolitical and foreign policy interests, the response of major international actors often oscillates between the two poles of direct military intervention or inaction. Nevertheless, a host of other options for support and intervention exists.



This course will provide an introduction to the theory and, in particular, the practice of international responses to internal violent conflicts, with a particular focus on peace building.

It will cover the following topics:

Understanding violent conflict and the rationale for intervention: The course will start by covering the different types of modern-day internal conflict and will propose the conflict cycle model as analytical tool to better understand conflict dynamics. It will cover the relevant norms and texts of international law and discuss the most prominent political and moral arguments used to justify a conflict intervention.

The main international actors in crisis response and peace building: The course will present the specialised structures of the main international organisations active in crisis intervention and peace building, in particular the United Nations and the European Union, but also the OSCE, the African Union, and NATO. In doing so the class will discuss the particular strengths and weaknesses of the relevant international organisations and their characteristic approach to resolving violent conflict.

The tools of peacebuilding: Subsequently the course will showcase the various tools for intervention as well as their sequencing and integration. These include inter alia conflict prevention, diplomacy and sanctions, military intervention, peacekeeping and security and justice sector reform.

Lessons learned from recent peacebuilding case studies: Lessons learned, best practices and striking failures from real-life cases from around the world will be presented and discussed.

The course will therefore combine sound theoretical foundations and conceptual analysis with exposure to real life cases. It will examine these cases from a variety of perspectives, including international law, political theory and philosophy, international relations theory, and macroeconomics. The lecturer will also draw on his own experience managing crisis interventions for the European Union to give students a realistic understanding of building peace and resolving violent conflict in today's world.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course will start with a short online kick-off session during the semester. This session will introduce the main course concepts as well as the course examination format, including allocation of presentation topics to students.

Subsequently, the course will take place during three days in the semester break in block format.

The course is designed in an interactive format. It will include presentations by the lecturer as well as groups of students. Furthermore, students will discuss key concepts within the class and in small groups. Active participation of students in these discussions is required.

Both independent study and group work are expected of students, as they will be required to:

- complete all required readings prior to the start of the class sessions (journal papers, case studies and online resources)
- give a group presentation on key topics of the course (further information will be given in the kick-off session)
- write a group paper, applying lessons learned in international crisis interventions to a case study and synthesizing them in a policy brief (further information will be given in the kick-off session)

Course literature

Key literature for the respective course topics will be presented in the kick-off session. In general preparation for the class, a selection of the following reading is recommended:

Boutros-Ghali, Boutros: An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping, in: International Relations, 11 (1992): pp. 201 - 218



European External Action Service 2016, Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe - A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy, pages 7-12 (executive summary) and pages 28-32 (integrated approach to conflict and crisis)https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf

Galtung, J. (1996): Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization. International Peace Research Institute Oslo; Sage Publications, Inc., pp. 1-8.

Harland, David 2018, The lost art of peacemaking. Oslo Forum Paper.<https://www.hdcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/The-lost-art-of-peacemaking.pdf>

Krause, Keith/Ju "tersonke, Oliver (2005): Peace, Security and Development in Post-Conflict Environments. In: Security Dialogue, 36 (4), pp. 447-462.

Schneckener, Ulrich (2016): Peacebuilding in Crisis: Rethinking Paradigms and Practices of Transnational Cooperation. London New York: Routledge, pp. 1-17.

Wuuff Moe, Louise, Finn Stepputat, Finn, Peacebuilding in an era of pragmatism, in: International Affairs, Volume 94, Issue 2, 1 March 2018, Pages 293-299

Additional course information

CV lecturer

Martin Albani

Mr Albani is a diplomat at the foreign service of the European Union (European External Action Service). He is specialized on conflict resolution and peace building. Mr Albani was responsible for the coordination of the EU's integrated approach to the crisis in the Central African Republic as well as the Lake Chad crisis, covering political, security, development and humanitarian aspects. He currently works as advisor on international conflict resolution and crisis response projects, in particular in the Middle East.

Before joining the EEAS Mr Albani worked as civil servant for the European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments where he was crisis response planner for stabilisation projects in North Africa and South-East Asia. As foreign policy advisor in the European Parliament he covered the international intervention in Libya 2011 and subsequent EU response. Mr Albani has more than ten years' experience working in international affairs and development cooperation.

In addition to his diplomatic career, Mr Albani teaches and holds workshops on peacebuilding and conflict negotiation at Sciences Po, University St. Gallen, and Oxford University. He holds a M.Sc. in International Relations from the London School of Economics and has studied political science at Sciences Po Paris and Freie Universität Berlin.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	60%
Duration	--



Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

--

Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

--

2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	40%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

--

Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

--

Examination content

Group presentation: Students will as a group (two to five students) give an oral presentation of a recent crisis situation and international response to it or other aspects of the course curriculum. The exact topics and the composition of the group will be communicated by the lecturer in the kick-off session. The presentation will last a maximum 15 minutes and will include a power point presentation of 8-12 slides. This examination format contributes to the learning objective of analysis and critical assessment of key issues of crisis response and peacebuilding.

Group paper: In this part of the examination students will as a group (two to five students) apply what they have learned during the course to a case study of a violent conflict. They will analyze the case and design a comprehensive crisis response



strategy for the EU or UN to end violence and build peace in the crisis zone. They will present the strategy in form of a succinct policy brief of no more than 6000 words, excluding annexes. This part of the examination contributes to the learning objective of being able to develop a response to a real-world global challenge. The topic of the group paper and the make-up of groups will be communicated by the lecturer in class. Deadline for submission of the paper is six weeks after the end of the class.

Examination relevant literature

There is no required textbook. The lecturer will provide recommended references, including academic journal articles, on relevant topics via Canvas/Studynet. All materials will be uploaded before the end of the lecture period (at the latest).

Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).