

Geography 515 - Fall 2022
Contemporary Dilemmas in International Development:

Peacebuilding, Development and Mediation

**2:35-5:25 Monday
Burnside 429**

Instructors:

Professor: Jon Unruh, Department of Geography
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Office hours: By appointment

Professor of Practice: Michael Brown, Institute for the Study of International
Development (ISID)
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Office bourse: By appointment

Course Description

This is a graduate level seminar course on issues pertaining to contemporary dilemmas in international development. For this class we take ‘dilemmas’ to mean ‘no easy answer’. The course is intended to facilitate the development of critical thinking and writing on the current topic (peacebuilding, development and mediation) and along the interests of individuals in the class.

Students are expected to select topics, engage in readings, provide presentations and write term papers that have value to them beyond the end of this class, i.e., an aspect of a research, policy, or application interest in international development.

Following initial presentations and discussions by the instructors, the interests of the students in the context of peacebuilding, development and mediation will govern which specific dilemmas are addressed further.

To facilitate the pursuit of student interests, each student will have an opportunity to select topics and lead class discussion. Discussion leaders will distribute to the class one week prior to their discussion, a minimum of three academic papers or book chapters or documents from the grey literature, or webpages. These readings will provide background to the rest of the class regarding the specific topic to be discussed the following week. The rest of the class will then need to do the readings prior to coming to class and be ready to discuss them.

Each discussion should begin with the student discussion leader of the day briefing the class, as to what particular aspects of the issue at hand the student would like class discussion to focus on.

Discussions should elicit from the class, thoughts, opinions, and critiques on method, hypothesis, and conclusions, as well as the specifics of the issue(s). If you would like to explore an idea on which little or nothing has been published, please provide papers that describe the components or aspects that contribute to the idea. Discussions are held in an informal and cordial manner.

Through these discussions, this class is the place to float novel, new, innovative, untried, and provocative ideas, get feedback and talk about the different prospects and possibilities for how the international development, peacebuilding and mediation world works.

Apart from reading selected papers and discussion, there will also be presentations and a term paper, and the topics of the presentation and the term paper should be the same. The presentations will take place toward the end of the course and be approximately 20 minutes in length with 10 minutes for questions (along the lines of presentations in an academic conference). Feel free to use media in your presentations.

Class Material

Readings are provided by the students leading discussion in the following week. Discussion leaders are responsible for providing copies for the class or for emailing the readings to the rest of class. This is in place of any textbook.

Class Grading

Leading class discussion: 15 percent; Class participation in discussion: 35 percent; Presentation: 10 percent; Term paper: 40 percent.

Class Policies

Attendance Students are expected to attend class. Class discussion is worth 35 percent of the final grade.

Term papers are due by 5 pm on the last day of class. These can be emailed to Jon.unruh@mcgill.ca

Accommodation for religious observances are dealt with according to McGill policy

"McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information). (approved by Senate on 29 January 2003)

"L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)."

“In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.” (approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.)

"Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue)."