### New York University

### Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

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Religion, Conflict Transformation, and the Future of Democracy UPADM-GP 249

# Spring 2024

Wednesdays, 2:00am-3:15pm

7 East 12th St Room 124

Professors Chelsea Garbell & Melissa Carter

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## Office Hours:

Professor Carter: By appointment

### Professor Garbell: Thursdays 12-1pm, and by appointment

# Course Description and Objectives:

A 2022 [NPR/Ipsos poll](https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/seven-ten-americans-say-country-crisis-risk-failing) found that 64% of Americans believe U.S. democracy is "in crisis and at risk of failing." What is our role in preventing that failure, and how can we reimagine public service and conflict negotiation in order to transform and uphold the country and the world that we want to live in? This class will explore ideas around religious and civil conflict, intergroup relations, conflict negotiation, restorative justice, belonging, and boundary drawing. Students will learn about the ever-expanding public sphere, the limits of tolerance, and the possibilities of emergent leadership while gaining crucial real-world skills for public service.

**Shared Agreements:** We approach each class, student, and topic as an invitation to be present with candor, curiosity, compassion, and care. Please join us in this invitation.

# Course Requirements

***Required texts***

Nhất Hạnh, Thich, et al. *Being Peace*. Berkeley, Parallax Press, 2005.

All other readings will be listed in Resources on Brightspace or sent via email. Our class discussions will be based on the assigned readings and will be much richer if you come prepared.

## Weekly Readings & Responses

Each week students will post a response to the readings and a question for further consideration in the Discussion Section of Brightspace

## Assignments

* **About Me**
  + Submit a paragraph letting us know a bit about yourself or anything you’d like us to know. You can submit as a written response and/or 2-3 minute video. Both uploaded via Brightspace.
* **Midterm Paper** 
  + To be discussed in class. 3-4 pages in length.
* **Final Project**
  + To be discussed in class. 3-4 pages in length.

# Assignments and Grading

Class Participation/Attendance 40%

Midterm Paper 30%

Final Project 30%

# Attendance Policy

It is of utmost importance that students attend class consistently, and this is reflected in the grading rubric. If you need to miss class for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible, and we will discuss reasonable accommodations. Regular unexcused absences will have an impact on your final grade.

## Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

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## NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays and/or observances that might coincide with exams, assignments, or class times to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

## Wellness Resources:

As a University student, you may experience a range of issues that can interfere with your

ability to perform academically or impact your daily functioning, such as heightened stress,

anxiety, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbance, strained relationships, grief and loss,

personal struggles. If you have any well-being or mental health concerns please utilize the Wellness Exchange. You can call the 24-hour hotline at **(212) 443-9999**, chat via the Wellness Exchange app anytime, [make an appointment](https://www.nyu.edu/content/nyu/en/students/health-and-wellness/services/counseling-services/counseling.html), or arrange a [same-day Urgent Counseling session](https://www.nyu.edu/content/nyu/en/students/health-and-wellness/services/counseling-services/counseling/urgent-counseling.html) to speak with a certified counselor about any day-to-day challenges or health concerns, including medical issues, stress, depression, sexual assault, anxiety, alcohol or drug dependence, and eating disorders. Furthermore, please approach me if you feel comfortable doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources or accommodations that I can.

# Course Outline:

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| **Date** | **Class Topic** | **Readings (Due by corresponding class)** |
| 1/24 | Introduction | * Review of Syllabus * Mallory Newall, et al. “[Seven in Ten Americans Say the Country Is in Crisis, at Risk of Failing](https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/seven-ten-americans-say-country-crisis-risk-failing) ...” *Ipsos*,  * [Mindfulness for this Moment](https://timesevents.nytimes.com/mindfulnessforthismoment) |
| 1/31 | American Democracy | * Erin Baggot Carter, et al. “[American Democracy Is Still in Danger: How to Protect It From Enemies Foreign and Domestic](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/american-democracy-still-danger)” (2023) * Blake Hounshell, “[Is American Democracy Built to Last?](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/29/us/politics/us-democracy.html?unlocked_article_code=cYscVVhC7_j9JvDDOuhj12glwwGwYLz1ls-d2w6_nY97G4FZ4zmF1cchqXw5xi4r9IBjfY7FpL7WRRUeTReNz2payaa2kojkP2zi42YMkhhsHouo8JhxbBYPcAoviyDrxyKHCxFk_6uc1WAPrrn7Big2lMsm1AiKCt_YiM64ES1Kib7i0yFQXD2M5EJlfPEbprnKyaqKQ9yjCsw7vMZZfamdlNjgKuo8DoTf1g3Park2uXv4X-R983P5dUpHM2kqH6NDG0vbpOWkAoNWjvAW0xlTD9IJmsalOE2oD40MnnXjGuziXSumUCp0bV-uYmFXvMjcl2Nz5Flyfw&smid=share-url)” (2022) * NYT “Run-Up Team”, “[The Republic](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/22/podcasts/run-up-elections-midterms-democracy.html?)” (2022) * **Assignment Due: About Me** |
| 2/7 | American Religion | * Putnam and Campbell, *American Grace*, pp 1-133 (2012) |
| 2/14 | The Public Sphere & The Limits of Tolerance | Janet Jakobson and Ann Pellegrini*, Love the Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious Tolerance,*, Ch. 2 (2004)  * Stephen N. Feldman, “A Christian America & the Separation of Church and State” * Jürgen Habermas, *The Public Sphere* |
| 2/21 | Religion & Violence | * William T Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence: Secular Ideology and the Roots of Modern Conflict,* (Introduction & Chapter 1) (2009) |
| 2/28 | Boundaries & Fear | * Sara Ahmed, “The Organization of Hate”(2001) |
| 3/6 | Rupture & Repair | * Simran Jeet Singh, *The Light We Give*, Part II (2022) * [Beloved Community](https://thekingcenter.org/about-tkc/the-king-philosophy/) (The King Center) * Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (1999) * Melissa Carter, [Finding Truth in Loneliness: A Case for Beloved Community](https://youtu.be/t0rVUY18sl4) |
| 3/13 | What is Peace?  (Asynchronous Class) | * Youssef Mahmood, *Whose Peace Are We Building?: Leadership for Peace in Africa*, pp. 17-34 (2021) |
| **3/20** | ***Spring Break*** | ***Spring Break*** |
| 3/27 | Interreligious Peacebuilding Part I | * Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Conflict Resolution, Culture, and Religion: Toward a Training Model of Interreligious Peacebuilding* (2001) * Dubensky*, Peacemakers in Action*, (selected cases) (2016) * **Midterm paper due** |
| 4/3 | Negotiation 101 | Guest Speaker: Dr. Thomas Hill, Clinical Professor and Director, Peace Research and Education Program, Center for Global Affairs, NYU |
| 4/10 | Restorative Practices | * Fania E. Davis, *The Little Book of Race and Restorative Justice: Black Lives, Healing, and US Social Transformation* (Chapters 1-2) (2019) * Stacey Miller and Christina Olstad, *The Offspring of Restorative Justice: Understanding the Power of Restorative Practices in Residential Communities* (2012). * [What is Restorative Justice?](https://youtu.be/VhJU69bplYM) * [What Restorative Justice is Not](https://youtu.be/SKKhlCaf6ZQ) * [Restorative Practices Explained](https://www.iirp.edu/restorative-practices/explained)   Guest speaker: Dr. Rafael Rodriguez, Associate Vice President and Dean of Students |
| 4/17 | Interreligious Peacebuilding | * Thich Nhat Hanh, *Being Peace* (1987) |
| 4/24 | Community Organizing as Peacebuilding | * adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*, Ch. 6-7 (2017) * Smith, B., & Johson Reagon, B, Coalition Politics: Turning the Century from *Home girls: A black feminist anthology*, pp. 356–368 (2000)  [The success of nonviolent civil resistance: Erica Chenoweth at TEDxBoulder](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRlU34w) |
| 5/1 | Closing | **Final Project Due** |