Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland

CCCU Northern Ireland Semester Program, Spring 2018

Professor: William Stevenson, M.A.
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Required texts:
Barton, Roche, The Northern Ireland Question (Palgrave Macmillan); ISBN: 978-0-230-20380-8
Tonge, Comparative Peace Process (Polity); ISBN: 978-0-7456-4290-1
Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, Miall, Contemporary Conflict Resolution (Polity) ISBN: 978-0-7456-8722-3
Mitchell, Making Peace (Knopf) ISBN: 052-0-225236
Other readings as assigned.

Course introduction:
Our world is full of conflicts. Who is best commissioned and equipped to respond to these conflicts than the Christian? The Bible states, ‘blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the sons of God.’ It is imperative that we as children of God understand the scriptural foundations for the Christian in peacemaking and reconciliation. This course, therefore, will enable students to construct a Christian vision for contemporary peacekeeping in areas of conflict using the rich and tragic historical/cultural setting of Northern Ireland as its laboratory.

Course objectives:
• To provide students with a scriptural foundation for Christian peacemaking and reconciliation.
• To explore the history of the Irish conflict through Belfast as a living case study.
• To critically analyze contested sites and artifacts in contemporary Ireland and Northern Ireland.
• To inspire students with a vision to bring peacemaking and conflict transformation skills to areas of conflict and around the world.

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:
• Understand scriptural foundations, theological imperatives, ministry of reconciliation and a vision for reconciliation as a Christian vocation.
• Articulate ideological differences and perspectives on the conflict in Northern Ireland.
• Identify key moments in the historical development of the conflict in Northern Ireland.
• Construct a personal vision for contemporary peacekeeping in an area of conflict.

Experiential learning opportunities include:
• Belfast’s street and building murals
• Centre for Migration Studies
• Derry/Londonderry
• Film Industry and the Troubles
• Gardens of Remembrance in Belfast and parade locations
• Maze Prison
• Police Service of Northern Ireland training unit in Antrim
• Stormont
• The Crumlin Road Gaol
• Titanic Museum (differing narratives of Belfast)
- Ulster Museum Troubles Exhibit
- Visits to key churches in downtown Belfast (Clonard, St. Anne’s, New Life City Church)

**Course Policies:**

**Academic Integrity:** As a Christian Institution of higher education, we seek to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Violations of these standards will result in substantial penalties. Violations are defined as plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and facilitating academic dishonesty. Any instance of violating the academic integrity of this institution will result in a zero for the assignment and a report submitted to the CCCU.

**Documented Disabilities:** Students with documented disabilities who need academic accommodations should make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible. Students without documented disabilities who feel they may have difficulty with this course are also encouraged to make an appointment with the instructor to discuss what steps need to be taken to be successful.

**Late Papers:** To incur no late penalty, all assignments (and your presence) are due during the class period. Late assignments will not be accepted. Excused absence (Medical leave) with valid documentation will incur no penalty.

**Final Research Presentation:** Students must present their final research at the specified time.

**Attendance:** All course lectures and associated field trips are required activities.

**Assignments:**

- Reading quizzes (to be given at the beginning of class) 15%
- Active and prepared class discussion 15%
- Field Trip Reflection assignments 30%
- Research Project (directions will be distributed in Lecture 2) 30%
- Final Research Presentation 10%

**Grading Scale:**

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Course Calendar

Lecture 1: Introduction to Ireland and Conflict Studies
- Introducing Ireland: Ireland and its rich history are interwoven with the theme of conflict
- Key Vocabulary
  - The Vocabulary of Irish Studies
  - The Language of Conflict: conflict transformation versus conflict resolution
- Major issues/overview of the course:
  - Understanding a history divided
  - Recognizing current contested sites and artifacts
  - Understanding and applying conflict transformation in a global context
- Importance of the Course

Module 1: Understanding a History Divided

Lecture 2: History of Irish Conflict From Reformation to Partition:
- Irish conflict through history
- The uneasy partition in the first decades of the 20th Century
- Sources of the conflict: colonial, economic, religious, ethnographic

Lecture 3: Late 20th Century Conflict (The Troubles)
- A history of the Troubles and cycles of violence
- Terrorism in the Troubles

Lecture 4: 21st Century Resolutions
- Influence of USA in the peace process
- Contemporary polarized politics in Northern Ireland
- Approaches to governmental power sharing
  - Conversation and dialogue between opposing parties (and the importance of conversation to the peacemaking process)

Lecture 5: Institutions
- The Law
  - Police
  - Government/political leaders, judges, and lawmakers
  - The military and its role in past and present Ireland
- The Prisons
  - Prison experiences in Ireland
  - Continuing conflict over prisons
- The Church
  - The church in Ireland and its connections to violence and repair
  - Religion and its role in conflict worldwide
Module 2: CONTESTED SITES AND ARTIFACTS IN CONTEMPORARY NORTHERN IRELAND

Lecture 6: The Politics of Memory
- The murals and the peace wall as symbols of contested history
- Contested museum heritage in Ireland
- Parades and marches and their role in the ongoing process of violence and peacemaking in Ireland
- Art and Culture in Conflict
  - Conflict expressed in art
  - Conflict and culture: music, literature, etc.

Lecture 7: Youth, Education, and Sports
- Impact of conflict on youth and children
- Educating children on conflict: perspectives on the Irish conflict as told through textbooks and classrooms
  - Article: “Teens and Territory in Contested Spaces: Negotiating Sectarian Interfaces in Northern Ireland”
  - Primary School Program teaching children in Derry/Londonderry about contested spaces
    http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/CentreforSharedEducation/Programmes/ContestedSpacesProgramme/ (possible field trip?)
- Sports, conflict, and reconciliation: contested spaces and the possibility of reconciliation through sports

MODULE 3: APPLYING PEACEMAKING IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

Lecture 8: Conflict Transformation
- Defining conflict transformation
  - Best practices in conflict transformation
  - Dialogue in conflict: conversations and their importance in peace building
- Student movements and practical steps towards peace that everyone can take
- Technology in peace building: the power of social media and technology in contemporary peacemaking

Lecture 9: Global Perspectives on Conflict
- Case studies around the world
  - South Korea/North Korea, the Middle East and the Israel/Palestine border and the Syrian conflict, Sri Lanka, Ukraine and Russia, race studies in the US
  - See, for example, this photo gallery of contested spaces worldwide:
- Peace in this classroom: Peace doesn’t mean changing others’ opinion or beliefs; peace can be achieved even in the midst of different perspectives.

Lecture 10: The Church and Peace
- The role of Christians and the Church in peacemaking around the world
- The Church and individual Christians’ role in healing wherever they are
- Peacemaking and the Bible