Peace Studies Major (BA)

A Bachelor of Arts Degree consists of 30 credits of Core Curriculum and at least one Major (36–60 credits), for a total of 120 credits.

The Peace Studies program prepares students to work as local and global change agents by cultivating curiosity, compassion, and courage, and developing the knowledge and skills to foster a more just, equitable, and sustainable world. The 36-credit Peace Studies major offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of peace, conflict, and transformative action, engaging students in service, research, and creative projects that take them into the community and bring the community into the classroom.

Faculty design and promote active learning environments, encouraging independent and collaborative projects that reflect students' personal passions and commitments. The program approaches the study of peace and conflict holistically—with attention to personal and social transformation, to the needs of individuals, communities, and the global commons. From introductory to advanced courses, the program creates opportunities for students to integrate and apply their learning.

The Peace Studies major includes primary and cross-listed courses in education, environmental studies, psychology, and religious studies. Students complete an internship and a senior project as part of the major.

Program Vision

The Peace Studies program offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of peace and conflict that takes students into the community and brings the community into the classroom. Faculty and students work together to create dynamic learning communities that cultivate compassion and to develop the knowledge and skills to engage complex, real-world issues.

Peace Studies Major Requirements

Required Courses

Gateway

• PAX250 Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies (3)

Milestone

• PAX327 Law, Human Rights, and Social Change (3)
• PAX335 Socially Engaged Spirituality (3)
• PAX340 Conflict Transformation: Theory and Practice (3)
• PAX360 Global Studies Seminar (3)

• Themes in Peace & Conflict Studies
  Choose 3 credits
  • EDU352 Poverty Matters (3)
  • ENV355 Environmental Justice (3)
  • PSYB359 Learning from Trauma: Understanding Its Effects and Building Personal Resources (3)

• Peacebuilding Skills
  Choose 3 credits
  • PAX345 Skills for Peacebuilding: Leadership, Restorative Justice, and Dialogue (3)
  • PAX370 Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship (3)

• Interdisciplinary Explorations
  Choose 9 credits
  • EDU245 Multicultural Education and Contemplative Critical Pedagogy (3)
  • EDU452 Poverty Matters (3)
  • ENV215 Sustainability (3)
  • ENV253 Environmental Economics (3)
  • ENV260 Introduction to Permaculture (3)
  • ENV318 Deep Ecology (3)
  • ENV342 Permaculture Design (3)
  • ENV355 Environmental Justice (3)
  • ENV370 Ecopsychology (3)
  • INTD210 Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies (3)
  • INTD310 Feminist and Queer Methods of Inquiry (3)
  • INTD490 Special Topics Seminar (3)
  • PAX370 Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship (3)
  • PSYB359 Learning from Trauma: Understanding Its Effects and Building Personal Resources (3)
  • PSYB373 Social Psychology (3)
  • REL212 Queer Theory, Feminism, and Religion (3)
  • WRI380 Writing Workshop: Eco-Poetics (3)
  • Choose 2 credits: Summer Writing Program (2)

Capstone

• PAX450 Internship (3)
• INTD480 Capstone II: Thesis Research and Writing (3)

Total Credits 36

Course Listings

PAX250
Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies (3.0)
Key questions in the field of peace and conflict studies are investigated: What are the causes and conditions of violence and the conditions that foster peace and social justice? What is the difference between negative and positive peace? How do ordinary citizens, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations contribute to peacebuilding? What are the ethical values and practical tools of peacebuilders across cultures and traditions? The aim of the course is to deepen understanding of peace research and initiatives as well as the root causes of violence.

PAX327
Law, Human Rights, and Social Change (3.0)
Selected aspects of U.S. law, legal institutions, and traditions are surveyed, with a view toward understanding how they respond to and effect social change. The course examines landmark court cases, such as Miranda v. Arizona, Roe v. Wade, and Brown v. Board of Education, that demonstrate how the judicial branch
PAX335
Socially Engaged Spirituality (3.0)
A study of varied traditions and ways of articulating socially engaged spirituality from historical and contemporary perspectives. The lives and work of Gandhi and King are used as reference points, and examples from around the globe engage students in understanding the dynamics of socially engaged spirituality in different settings and in their own lives. As they investigate the relationship between personal and social transformation, students develop a personal dialogue with selected peacemakers and justice seekers. Assignments encourage students to clarify their own ethical principles and commitments, deepening the inquiry through shared exploration. Source material may range from autobiography and biography to literary texts and film. Methods include individual and group contemplative practices, community-based fieldwork, and creative expression.

PAX340
Conflict Transformation: Theory and Practice (3.0)
An exploration of theories and practices of conflict transformation in a range of settings and locations. The course examines interpersonal and structural dynamics of conflict, building skills to work effectively with individuals and small groups, and studying attempts to end cycles of violence, revenge, and trauma at the national and international level. We investigate our own assumptions about conflict, the potency of cultural and religious differences, the complexities of intervention, and the possibility of transformation. We consider the role of curiosity, creativity, and the moral imagination in peacebuilding. Students in this course write and produce original digital stories and acquire beginning level skills in mediation. Prerequisite: COR113 or COR130.

PAX345
Skills for Peacebuilding: Leadership, Restorative Justice, and Dialogue (3.0)
An exploration of the principles, practices, and ethical foundations of community leadership, restorative justice, and dialogue. The course examines historical and contemporary models of leadership, gleaning insights students can apply to their own lives. We approach restorative justice as a philosophy and a practice, with special attention to local restorative justice initiatives. As we investigate theories and practices of dialogue at the local, national, and international level, students gain practical experience in designing, facilitating, and evaluating dialogues. Methods may include small group discussion, experiential activities, and community service on local restorative justice panels. Each student completes an individual or group leadership project. Prerequisite: COR113 or COR130.

PAX360
Global Studies Seminar (3.0)
This course introduces students to theoretical approaches and key concepts to illuminate contemporary global issues. Topics will vary from semester to semester but may include globalization, geopolitics and nationalism, international food politics, gender equity, human rights, and humanitarian intervention and refugees. Using a case study approach, we will explore themes in regional contexts, which will vary depending on current hot spots and the areas of specialization of the instructor.

PAX370
Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship (3.0)
This interdisciplinary seminar introduces students to the emerging field of social entrepreneurship through readings, case studies, guest lectures, films, and field trips. As we examine the history and methods, challenges, and opportunities of local and global social entrepreneurs and innovators, we elicit our own bold visions for the future. We engage the local community as an incubator of social innovation, exploring the role of creativity, collaboration, courage, and compassion in social entrepreneurship. Students in this course build practical skills, developing business plans and models for ventures that address social challenges in education, health care, human rights, and food security, among others. Students from all disciplines who seek to build capacity as visionary, pragmatic change agents are welcome.

PAX450
Internship (3.0)
The internship provides students with opportunities to deepen their understanding of the practical means of working for social change by working on projects that require a range of skills: grassroots organizing; coalition building; lobbying; policy research; grant-writing; and fund-raising. Students may pursue internships that build on prior experience or pursue a new direction. Internship placements range from community-based media to restorative justice initiatives and to educational organizations working on issues of social justice, peace, human rights, and environmental sustainability. The internship culminates in presentations in which students bring back new knowledge and skills to the Naropa community. Prerequisites: COR115, COR 220, COR130, and COR150 or COR113.

PAX499
Independent Study: Peace Studies (0.5-4.0)
This course offering is an opportunity for students to engage in in-depth, concentrated study with a particular faculty member for a semester. The design of study and course work are decided upon by the student and faculty member. Independent Studies will count for a standard 3 credits. If a variable credit (0.5-4 credits) Independent Study is desired, a student must receive additional approval. See the Independent Study Application for further details.