

HIST 387/CONF 399: Peace in World History

Spring 2021

Instructor: Peter N. Stearns
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Class Info: Posted to your Blackboard account

Office Hours: Office hours: by appointment (email to schedule). My office is East Building 207A in case it ultimately proves possible to meet in person.

Class Schedule: T and Th at noon. In-class meeting on T, synchronous Blackboard Collaborative Ultra session on Th. Additional, short lectures will be posted each week.

Required Textbooks

A few additional readings will be posted on Blackboard, so please check the site regularly.

Mazower, Mark, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea, 1815 to the Present*. Penguin Books, 2013.

Stearns, Peter N., *Peace in World History (Themes in World History)*. Routledge, 2014.

Course Objectives and Goals

This course will discuss ideas and policies concerning peace through world history, with emphasis on recent issues and developments, and with a global focus. The kinds of questions involved include: human nature, is humankind naturally warlike and what's the evidence from early history? What is the relationship between the major religions and peace, and are there key differences? Why are some regions more peaceful than others? What's the U.S. take on peace, and should it be revisited? Is war declining, and what are some possible reasons? Are we and should we be reconsidering the global framework for peace and war? The course will emphasize discussion, including some student panels, and a paper that combines research and interpretation. Skills development includes writing and problem analysis.

Academic Honesty and Collaboration

The integrity of the University Community is affected by the individual choices

made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple practices to follow at all times are that: 1) all work submitted be your own; 2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and 3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct.

Assignments

Grades will be based on five components:

1. Each week, students will be given a *participation question* based on the major topic, with answers to be emailed to the instructor. Answers can be short but at least 250 words. Students who complete at least 10 question satisfactorily will receive an A for this segment, which counts for 25% of the final grade. There is opportunity for extra credit by participating in the Discussion Board.
2. During the first week, students will pick from a list of topics dealing with religion and peace, for a short (1000 word) exploratory paper due in week 4. Several students will work on each topic and can coordinate information, though each paper is to be individually written. 5% of grade
3. Three other short (500-wordsish) papers, on issues in the readings. Some will be “reaction papers”, short summaries of relevant reading and brief assessment. 10%
4. A **8-12 page paper** on a peace topic, historical or contemporary; some additional reading will be required. The topic must be approved by the instructor by the end of Week 5. The final paper is due May 1. Drafts may be submitted in advance for comment. 35%
5. A **final take-home exam**. 25%

Assignment Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
Week 1 Tuesday, Jan. 26 th	Definitions and Current Issues What would you expect from a history of peace course? Is peace better than war, and why? Are we paying enough attention to peace issues?	Stearns, pp. 1-9; Negative Peace/Positive Peace essay on Blackboard
Thursday, Jan. 28 th		Assignment: pick a current peace problem, write a paragraph description, and be prepared to discuss in class.
Week 2 Tuesday, February 2 nd	Human Nature and Early Societies: motivation for war and peace	Stearns, pp. 9-23; Fry and Soderburg article on Blackboard; Joshua Mark article on first peace treaty, on Blackboard

Date	Topic	Assignment
Thursday, February 4 th	Role of Agriculture and Civilization: why did war become more common?	What were the main reasons for war in the “agricultural age”?
Week 3 Tuesday, February 9 th	Greece, Rome and China	Stearns 23-34; Graham Alison article on Thucydides trap; Sun Tzu excerpt Reaction paper due on the Alison article
Thursday, February 11 th	Rome as model: pax romana compared to pax Americana; the challenge of overexpansion	Pax Romana compared to Pax Americana; the challenge of overexpansion
Week 4 Tuesday, February 16 th And Thursday, February 18 th	The Role of Religions and discussion of the major “world” religions	Stearns, pp. 35-68 **Exploratory paper due at end of week
Week 5 Tuesday, February 23 rd and Thursday, February 25 th	Contemporary issues: what are the leading challenges to peace and how serious are they	Updates on current events, including issues in American foreign policy Reading: NY Times OP ED by Wertheim https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/15/opinion/america-global-power.html Note: paper topic proposal due
Week 6 Tuesday, March 2 nd	The Early Modern Period	Stearns, pp. 69-90
Thursday, March 4 th	Westphalia and Tolerance	Excerpts from <i>Tolerance in World History</i> , pp.85-9
Week 7 Tuesday, March 9 th and Thursday, March 11 th	Industrialization, Imperialism and Peace The Treaty of Vienna and the “peaceful” 19 th century	Stearns, pp. 91-114
Week 8 Tuesday, March 16 th and Thursday, March 18 th	New Ideas about Peace and their impact; the problem of nationalism	Mazower, pp 3-115; reaction paper due
Week 9 Tuesday, March 23 rd	World War I, Versailles, the League and Isolationism	Stearns, pp. 115-138; Mazower, pp. 116-188 discussions of paper, with instructor
Thursday, March 25 th	The Interwar Period and Pacifism	
Week 10 Tuesday, March 30 th	Recent Global Patterns	Stearns, pp. 139-159; Mazower, pp. 244-304; Comparing the decades since WWII with the decades after 1815
Thursday, April 1 st	World War II: settlement and the global framework. Key question: has it worked fairly well?	Short paper due (500 words): has the UN been significantly more helpful in promoting peace than the League was? Two reasons for your answer.

Date	Topic	Assignment
Week 11 Tuesday, April 6 th	Nuclear Weapons, Mutually Assured Destruction, and Disarmament	
Thursday, April 8 th	Demilitarization and Other Regional Patterns	Stearns, pp. 160-182; Mazower, pp. 343-428 Reaction paper due.
Week 12 Tuesday, April 13 th and Thursday, April 15 th	American Policy and the role of militarism	Mazower, pp. 305-342; Adolph and Astori articles (on Blackboard)
Week 13 Tuesday, April 20 th and Thursday, April 22 nd	Peace Studies and Conflict Management	Bartoli and Allen articles
Week 14 Tuesday, April 27 th and Thursday, April 29 th .	A Future of Peace?	Stearns, pp. 183-204; Mazower, pp. 343-428; Pinker, pp 248-68 (on Blackboard) Term paper due
(TBD)	<u>Take-Home FINAL EXAM</u> due	

Appendix with citations for additional essays, articles, and book chapters:

Grewal, Baljit S. "Johan Galtung: Positive and Negative Peace," School of Social Science, Auckland University of Technology, August 30, 2003.

http://www.activeforpeace.org/no/fred/Positive_Negative_Peace.pdf

Fry, D. P, and P Soderberg. "Lethal Aggression in Mobile Forager Bands and Implications for the Origins of War." *Science (American Association for the Advancement of Science)* 341, no. 6143 (2013): 270–273.

Mark, Joshua. "The Battle of Kadesh & the First Peace Treaty." *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, January, 18, 2012. <https://www.ancient.eu/article/78/the-battle-of-kadesh--the-first-peace-treaty/>

Allison, Graham T. *Destined for War : Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017.

Tzu, Sun, and Lionel Giles. "Waging War" In, *Art of War*. (Open Road Media, 2014).

Bello, Walden. "Pax Romana versus Pax Americana: Contrasting Strategies of Imperial Management." *Institute for Policy Studies*. May 1, 2003. https://ips-dc.org/pax_romana_versus_pax_americana_contrasting_strategies_of_imperial_management/

Stearns, Peter. *Tolerance in World History*. (Milton: Taylor and Francis, 2017) Pg. 85-89.

Pinker, Steven. *The Better Angels of Our Nature : Why Violence Has Declined* (New York: Viking, 2011) pg. 248-268.

Bartoli, Andrea and Charles Gardner. "Dialogue and Mutual Recognition: The Practice of Interreligious Encounters" In, *Peacebuilding through Dialogue: Education, Human Transformation, and Conflict Resolution*. (George Mason University Press. December 2018).

Allen, Susan. "Modes of Peacemaking Dialogue" In, *Peacebuilding through Dialogue: Education, Human Transformation, and Conflict Resolution*. (George Mason University Press. December 2018).

Wertheim, Stephen. "America Has No Reason to be so Powerful." *The New York Times*, October 15, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/15/opinion/america-global-power.html>

Topics for the exploratory paper (due week 4):

1. Militant Japanese Buddhism during Japan's feudal period
2. Nature of the concept of jihad
3. Peace of God/Truce of God
4. Impact of Constantine on Christian pacifism
5. Emperor Ashoka and peace
6. Principles of Islamic rule in Cordoba (Spain)
7. Muhammad's views on peace
8. Principles of the Treaty of Tordesillas