

Plan of Study

Master's Degree programme in Peace and Conflict Transformation at the University of Tromsø

Language of instruction: English

Duration: 2 years (120 ECTS credits), full time campus study.

Objective

The objective of the MPCT programme is to provide education and skills relevant to conflict mediation in a variety of settings.

The Master's Programme analyses the problem of violence and violence reduction, via a rigorous and scholarly approach to the study of conflict, violence, conflict resolution and peace at different levels of society or human coexistence. Understanding and analysing international and intercultural relations and communication is emphasised in the programme, but so are skills in conflict management and mediation. The programme provides a theoretical base, in conjunction with practical opportunities for specialisation. This is accomplished through:

- Core courses addressing a wide range of topics related to conflict, violence, conflict management and peace.
- Theoretical and methodological specialisation toward different research fields directly or closely related to conflict and peace.
- Theoretically and/or empirically oriented thesis.

Problem-based Learning

The pedagogical approach is problem based, continually supporting the development of important and relevant topics of interest. The students' academic enterprise should be organised as a recurrent cycle of study, discussion, instruction, research, academic production, and publication. Theoretical work should develop as a response to their engagement and interest in problems facing humanity today. The programme facilitates the development of pertinent questions concerning conflict, violence and peace, and a versatile, problem-solving capacity. All aspects of the students' academic progress will be subject to standards commensurate with a graduate level of study.

Admission requirements

Students must hold, at minimum, a Bachelor of Arts, Cand.mag. degree or equivalent education of at least three years duration within social sciences, humanities, health sciences, education, or law.

All lectures are given in English. An above average and functioning knowledge of English is essential. To be eligible, students who are not Nordic citizens must fulfil the English Proficiency requirements described at the university web page

[English Proficiency](#)

Entry into the programme is competitive and based on

1. Academic qualifications (educational background)
2. Documented professional experience
3. Stated purpose

Applicants must enclose an essay of approximately 2 pages stating previous professional experience within this field and purpose of and interest in taking this Master's degree. Those who know Norwegian may write in Norwegian, others are asked to write in English.

Number of places is restricted and a certain number of student places will be reserved for Non-Nordic applicants.

Course management

A board appointed by the Faculty of Social science manages the programme. An international adviser assists in the guidance of students and co-ordination of the programme.

Examination and grading system

The type of examination is specified for each course. The programme follows the grading system A-E, F = fail.

Summarised plan of study

Course programme:

Year 1: SVF-3021, SVF-3022, SVF-3024, SVF-3023

Year 2: SVF-3023, SVF-3901 (Master's Thesis) 2 electives, each 10 credits, 2nd and 3rd semester.

Code	Course Name	Credits	Type of exam / Grading system	Semester
SVF-3021	Integrated peace and conflict studies	20	Essay+ oral exam, grades A-F	1
SVF-3022	Culture, conflict and society	10	Essay + oral exam, grades A-F	1
SVF-3024	Conflict resolution and conflict transformation	20	Essay + oral exam, grades A-F	2
SVF-3023	Specialisation methodology with	10	Project Proposal, Pass/Fail, Essay, Grades A-F	2 and 3
SVF-3901	Master's thesis	40	Grades A-F + oral exam	3 and 4
Electives	Individual choices among the courses offered by other departments	10 + 10	Depending on choice of courses	2 and 3

COURSE PROGRAMME

SVF-3021: Integrated peace and conflict studies, 20 credits.

First semester, 20 credits, about 40 hours of lectures and seminars.

Examination: Essay, written within a period of 10 days.

Evaluation is based on the grading system A-E, F = fail.

The Peace studies programme has the dual objective of analysing problems associated with conflict(s), violence and war, and searching for ways to solve or transform conflicts and reduce violence. This objective is presented in the table below, balancing elements of analytical and constructive/ future oriented work.

	FOCUS ON CONFLICT	FOCUS ON VIOLENCE / PEACE
PROBLEMS	CONFLICT THEORY	THEORY OF VIOLENCE
REMEDIES	CONFLICT SOLUTION	PEACE THEORY

As a primarily problems-oriented course, 'Integrated Peace and Conflict Studies' gives a broad introduction to, followed by analysis of, conflict and violence, their origins, context and forms. Philosophical perspectives on war and peace, human rights and international law are emphasised as well as structural and cultural violence and associated issues of direct (intentional) and indirect (unintended) violence. The course-material is divided into two distinct but related components:

1. Peace Studies: Philosophy, Theory and Epistemology
2. The Western Global 'Order' in Philosophical, Historical and Theoretical Perspective

SVF-3022: Culture, conflict and society, 10 credits

First semester, 10 credits, about 20 hours of lectures and seminars.

Examination: Essay, written within a period of 10 days.

Evaluation is based on the grading system A-E, F = fail.

SVF-3022 employs anthropological, religious and psychological perspectives on conflicts, peace and conflict transformation. The focus is on conflict and violence as human experience – cultural and psychological. The associated complex issues of cultural difference form a critical backdrop to efforts to understand conflict and violence in their various manifestations.

SVF-3023: Specialisation with methodology

Second and third semester, 10 credits, about 20 hours of reading-course and seminars.

Examination: Project description for individual master's work/ thesis, research-paper of up to 6000 words.

Evaluation: Project description: Pass/ Fail, research-paper: A-E, F = fail

The project description must be approved before May 15th.

This informal and low-intensity course starts by agreement with a thesis supervisor in the second semester and runs towards the end of the third semester. The students choose a research topic and select a supervisor or research group within one of the following fields (topics will be elaborated at the beginning of the 1. semester):

- Social medicine
- Political economy
- Law
- Social science
- Political science
- History
- Integrated peace studies
- Psychology

The course integrates the research topic with the methods of research relevant for each field/ project. During the course, students will develop an individual project description for their master's thesis, the process of which is supported through a combination of lectures and supervision. The project description shall define the empirical basis of the proposed work (literature, fieldwork, data collection) and discuss the theoretical and methodological framework and choices for the thesis.

SVF-3024: Conflict resolution and conflict transformation, 20 credits

Second semester, 20 credits, about 40 hours of lectures and seminars.

Examination: Essay written within a period of 10 days + oral examination. Evaluation is based on the grading system A-E, F = fail.

SVF-3024 examines in greater depth the political and social dimensions of conflict, violence and peace, and a range of highly divergent strategies for managing, resolving

and/or transforming conflict. The course consists of two distinct but related components:

- (i) Social and political violence
- (ii) The pursuit of peace: Conflict management and resolution.

The focus, particularly in part (ii), is on constructive measures to avoid or reduce violence (negative peace), to solve or transform conflicts in creative, less- or non-violent ways, and to enhance the capacity to do so (positive peace). This entails a consideration of strategies, organisations, agencies and means to reduce violence and create more sustainable peace at different levels; from UN/International law via Governments and NGO's, to individual faculties of conflict mediation and conflict management, including an opportunity to train individual skills.

SVF-3901: Masters thesis, 40 credits

Third and fourth semester, 40 credits, 40 hours of supervision.

Examination: Submission of thesis approximately May 15th, and an oral examination approximately June 15th.

Evaluation of the thesis by a committee and is based on the grading system A-E, F = fail.

The students can choose either to write a theoretically or an empirically based master's thesis. Students must begin collecting the data material (quantitative and qualitative) during the summer session between the second and third semester. Field work/ data collection is to be finished by Oct. 1st in the third semester.

Elective 1 and 2: 10 + 10 credits

Second and third semester

Elective courses will vary from semester to semester. The students can choose individually between approved courses (mostly at the 3000-level) offered by other departments.

It is required that one of the electives be chosen from the courses offered in the area of methodology (except under special circumstances and by special agreement with the programme director and the thesis supervisor)

Examination: Depending on the individual choice of course. Evaluation is based on the grading system A-E, F = fail.

SEMINAR GROUP

During the first and second semester a seminar group will be convened to facilitate continued discussions of topics from lectures, literature etc. First and second semester, no credits. 120 hours seminar. No examination.