FROM CONFLICT RESOLUTION TO PEACE BUILDING

An Instructor's Guide

CHARLES HAUSS

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General Thoughts on Teaching

As it turns out, it's harder to study peace than you might think.

--Molly Paxson

I assume that you are teaching a course in peace and conflict studies at least in part because you want to create what the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation calls "a more just, peaceful, and verdant world." I assume, too, that many of your students signed up for the course because they share at least some of those same goals and therefore want to learn more about how we deal with conflict or build peace. I assume, finally, that you picked up this instructor's guide because you have some questions about how you could or should teach such a course to that group of reasonably committed students.

I wrote this short guide to help you figure out how you can best teach that kind of a class. As I will argue in more depth a bit later, what follows is not a conventional instructor's manual, replete with chapter outlines, PowerPoint™ slides, and a test bank. Even though I've written those kinds of manuals for books on comparative politics, that kind of IM makes little or no sense for courses in peace and conflict studies.

Read Me on a Screen

Many academics (and parents or, in my case, grandparents) worry about excessive screen time.

I have to admit that I don't get it since I spend the bulk of my days writing and reading on a desktop and iPad (which also doubles as my Kindle).

Not surprisingly, I wrote this guide on the assumption that you will read it on some sort of screen that is connected to the Internet. In particular, the links to external sites are all embedded in

Instead, I've written a long(ish) essay on the pedagogical issues that get raised whenever one talks about teaching courses in peace and conflict studies that also helped shape the way I wrote *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding*. While it is keyed to my book, I've written it in such a way that instructors who use other books could also find it helpful.

That starts with three simple points which are only implicit in the book itself. The first one reflects something I have been focusing on since I finished writing it. The other two are issues our students may not have to worry about but which will make their learning experience a lot more rewarding for all involved.

The first is to think of conflict resolution and peace building as an infinite game.[1] Neither is something one finishes and can mark off one's to-do list. While that may be true of some basic conflicts that lend themselves to simple, transactional win-win outcomes, that is rarely the case with the kinds of conflicts our students (or we) are most interested in. They lend themselves to seemingly never ending processes in which the best we can do is

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[1] Simon Sinek, *The Infinite Game*. (New York: Porfolio, 2019). For a more academic treatment, see James Scarse, *Finite and Infinite Games*. (New York: Free Press, 2011).

make progress toward a long term goal. There is no utopia or any place called peace. As I argue in the book, conflict is a fact of life and will be forever—or as close to forever as we can imagine.

Second, we should introduce as many young people as possible to peace and conflict studies as possible. At a recent meeting, my friend Doug Brookman talked about training two million young people a year in basic conflict resolution skills. By teaching this course, you will be making your contribution to that total. At the Alliance for Peacebuilding, we have focused primarily on graduate education. At George Mason University where I hold a research appointment, we focused initially on graduate education, too, only adding a flourishing undergraduate major twenty years after the program was created. I would make the case that we need to start even younger, a point I will return to later in this guide. Whether I'm right about that or not, undergraduates and high school students who are taking their first courses in conflict resolution and peacebuilding need to be at the heart of our work.

Third, much of what I say in this guide applies beyond peace and conflict studies. Indeed, I hope that those of you who teach courses in other fields will find that the material covered in the pages that follow helps you there, too.

Studying Peace is Harder Than You Might Think

I have spent fifty years as an activist and scholar. I've rarely been bored, but I've often been frustrated by how hard it is to understand conflict dynamics and to build peace.

I felt frustrated plenty of times while writing *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding*, most notably when I had to make decisions about what to include and leave out of the book. Surprisingly, I also felt frustrated when I sat down to write this instructor's guide and had a hard time figuring out why that was the case.

Then, I read Molly Paxson's new book, *The Plateau*.[2]

How Paxson Gets Us Started

Paxson started her career by studying communities in conflict. In writing this book, she decided to turn her attention to how "could there be communities that were somehow resistant to violence, persistent in decency?"

Paxson, of course, was not discussing learning about peace in the classroom. She worried about how you go about studying peace when you are designing and carrying out field research. Nonetheless, the more I read her remarkable book, the more I realized that the questions she posed had implications for what we do as teachers of peace and conflict studies, including

- What is the proper balance between stressing what George Lopez (see Chapter 1 of my book) called "gloom and doom 101" that infuses so much of peace and

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[2] Maggie Paxson, *The Plateau*. (New York: Penguin, 2019).

- conflict studies and offering plausible and hopeful future scenarios of the kind that led Paxson to the plateau?
- How much should we focus on activism rather than analysis?
- How can we build on isolated success stories like the ones she discusses to produce broader movements that can change public policy or even our dominant paradigms for conflict resolution?
- How much do one's own values affect what and how I teach?
- How much do I have to change myself in order to be an effective teacher or scholar when it comes to conflict resolution and peacebuilding?

My guess is that if you are even considering using *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding* you've already thought about some, if not all, of these questions. That's terrific.

Before going any farther in dealing with them, however, I need to make one thing clear.

This is not going to be like the instructor's manuals I have written those for all ten editions of my comparative politics textbook which covers a fairly cut and dried discipline. There, it made sense to provide chapter summaries, PowerPoint™ slides, and potential short answer questions to use in exams. None of that makes sense for a field that is as controversial *and* as fluid as peace and conflict studies. Still, given my experience as a textbook writer, my editors at Rowman and Littlefield urged me write an instructor's manual for this book, too. So, I chose to write this an instructor's *guide* that focuses on ways you can make teaching peace and conflict studies interesting, challenging, and rewarding.

Besides, I can't tell you how to teach. I don't know your or the environment you are teaching in. So, what follows are ideas to spur your thinking about your own course which are based on some assumptions that are based on my own experiences and what I've seen in classrooms I've visited in such distant places as East Jerusalem, Oberlin (Ohio), Fairfax and Quantico (Virginia), Bogota (Colombia), and Arezzo (Italy).

Making Your Job Easier (and More Fun)

This guide does have one thing in common with conventional instructor's manuals which was driven home to me a few years ago when I met with Shawn Dakin while I was writing the instructor's manual for the most recent edition of my comparative politics textbook. We met for other reasons, but while we were talking I remembered that Shawn had taken comparative politics from me in the late 1980s when I was beginning to write the first edition of that book *and* he today teaches a course on the use of social media at the business school at George Mason. So, I asked him what he was looking for in an instructor's manual and a textbook.

Like many adjunct faculty members who teach a course or two on top of their normal "day jobs," he was overwhelmed by the amount of material he had to cover and the lack of time he had to prepare class presentations that would engage his students. So, he said he always looked for pedagogical material what would "make my life easier." I went on to

talk about the features that my comparative publisher had always wanted, including those PowerPoint™ presentations, test banks, and the like. "No," Shawn said, "I need help in narrowing the subject matter down and focusing on what the students really need to know. And since they're coming to class at 7.00 at night after a full day at work, I have keep them awake, too!"

So, when I coincidentally had an email from Shawn after having read Paxson's book, this guide began to fall into place from his perspective, too. How could I help make the job of a peace and conflict studies teacher easier—and hopefully more fun, too? The answer to that definitely does not lie in PowerPoint™ slides or short answer exams but in thinking more carefully about how and what we teach.

User Friendly

Above and beyond Shawn's request to make the instructor's life easier, this guide is anchored in two themes that do not feature prominently in *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding* itself. First is design thinking which is an outgrowth of systems analysis and complexity science that has been central to the creation of devices like the iPhone and Pixar movies. Second, even though design thinking might make your life see more complicated at first glance, I draw on it to pose questions that will ultimately make teaching a course in peace and conflict studies more user friendly, which also happens to be the title of the best new book I've read on design in years.[3]

Where We Go From Here

In drafting this guide, I had an intellectual funnel in mind in which I started with three very general ideas and build toward three more specific topics.

Do you need a textbook? This is, of course, the most important question, which you could well answer in the negative. Not all courses need a textbook. Of those that do, not all instructors would be best served by choosing mine.

Four adjectives. I start the book by saying I want it to be unusual, interesting, challenging, and empowering. That string of adjectives was aimed at its student-readers, but they apply to those of us who teach these courses, too.

It starts with you. Teaching peace and conflict studies is challenging because the field also challenges you.

Design your course. How do those challenges mesh with what we know about pedagogy in general?

Engage your students. How can you make the changing nature of peace and conflict studies relevant, challenging, and even enjoyable for as many of your students as possible? How can you assess their work without resorting to classical test banks?

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[3] Cliff Kuang with Robert Fabricant, *User Friendly:How the Hidden Rules of Design and Changing the Way We Live, Work, and Play*. New York: Farrah, Straus and Garoua, 2019).

Change their lives. How can you use an introductory course to help propel at least some of your students toward more course work, a career, and, most importantly, a future in which what they learn in your course will come into play just about every today during the rest of their lives?

An Invitation

Before diving into that material, let me make and emphasize one last point. This document is not designed to provide definitive answers. As I also noted above, I almost certainly do not know you, and I certainly do not know your students. What I do know is that one of the key conclusions about local peacebuilding in the book also applies to teaching. Each course at each school is unique, and there are limits to the value of any instructor's guide precisely for those reasons.

So, I'm glad to talk about teaching the course. Just send me an email at chip@charleshauss.info. As you will see in the book, teaching about and working for peace has been my passion since I was an undergraduate (and there were no courses in peace studies for me to take). So, it would give me great pleasure to help you and your students figure out the best way to grapple with this challenging material.

To Text or Not to Text

I've made my living for the last twenty-five years mostly by writing textbooks. Until I was asked to write one in comparative politics, however, I had never used a textbook myself, and I had trouble seeing why it might make sense for an instructor to do so.

I quickly learned that textbooks are useful when and if there is a need to present some core factual and conceptual material *and* the book you choose empowers your students as well. That is true in any field in which faculty members have to turn students on to a field of study or point them toward a career that will continue after that particular course is over.

I didn't use one in comparative politics because none of the ones available at the time would allow me to "turn students on." The available books were dry and focused on academic theories, whereas my students got turned on when I brought the material to life in the classroom and showed how it might be relevant to what they did in the rest of their lives, which almost never involved a career in comparative politics.

When I started teaching peace and conflict studies in the early 1980s, the decision not to use a textbook was all but a no-brainer.   Most of the books available then and now fell far short of what I needed. Only a handful of them, for instance, did a good job of presenting the field as I knew it either as a practitioner or as a scholar. Few conveyed the excitement I felt every time I thought about peace and conflict. Last but by no means least, none of them talked either about the frustrations we face or the progress we've made.

That wasn't the author's fault. Instead, the books were all over the place because the field was all over the place. Indeed, one of the reasons Rowman and Littlefield asked me to write this book was the fact that I had spent more years than I care to admit as both an activist and a researcher. Therefore, my editors hoped I could define at least some of the

contours of the field for students, most of whom already have some interest and even some experience in peace and conflict resolution movements.

Dollars and Cents

We have done what we could to keep the price of this book as low as possible. Other textbooks (including mine in political science) are prohibitively expensive for students to purchase.

We did our best to avoid that trap here.

Also, all royalties I earn from sales of this book will go to the Alliance for Peacebuilding and George Mason's School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

It was actually easier to get me to agree to writing a book in peace and conflict studies because I could focus on themes that would empower my readers—as well as inform them. One editor described my other textbook as "comparative politics with a conscience." Any book that purports to be conflict resolution and peacebuilding without a conscience is doomed from the beginning.

So, *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding* is peace and conflict studies with a conscience—and on steroids. That doesn't mean that this is definitely the book for you. If, for instance, you want to focus on academic debates, you should definitely find another book. If, too, you want to emphasize what I call contentious politics, there are other books that might better serve your purposes.

Finally, I'm not convinced that you need to use a textbook. My friends at my beloved Oberlin haven't ever used one. Doug Irvin-Erickson, to whom this book is dedicated, mostly uses primary source documents.

There is no question that one can piece together a collection of readings that doesn't include a textbook. That's certainly easiest to do with a small class or with students who tend to be unusually self-directed and intellectually mature.

If, however, you do decide to use a textbook, this manual is written to help you design such a course whether you use my book or not.

Unusual, Interesting, Challenging, Empowering

In the first sentence of *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding*, I use four adjectives in describing my goals for the book:

- unusual
- interesting
- challenging
- empowering

There, I was speaking about what I hope the students will get out, not only of the book, but their engagement with peace and conflict studies in general.

That is most likely to happen if teaching the course is unusual, interesting, challenging, and empowering for you, too. That is why I wrote this instructor's guide and why I've issued the invitation that ended the introduction to this guide.

Given the amount of time I give those four words in the first few pages of the book, there is no need to dig into them in any depth here. Furthermore, I couldn't help you be unusual or interesting in the classroom even if I could spend a semester team teaching a course with you. One's quirkiness and one's unusual beliefs truly are one's own.

I can, however, talk to the need for making courses in peace and conflict studies challenging and empowering.

Teaching Peace and Conflict Studies

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.

<div align="right">

--Plutarch

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I never read Plutarch. However, while I was finishing this guide, I read Kelli Harding's *The Rabbit Effect*, which explores the relationships among physical and mental health on the one hand and the overall ecosystems of which we are a part.[4] She used Plutarch's statement (a few pages before she got to conflict resolution) to talk about education in general.

Her words are as telling for our discipline than it does for her own—medicine and public health. In our case, however, the challenge isn't to spark their interest. Most our students come to our classes with a fairly deep interest in peace and conflict studies. Rather, our challenge is to focus their attention and leave them with a desire for more— both in the classroom and beyond.

A Huge Challenge

For you (and perhaps your students), that means starting with one of the challenges I use to end *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding*. Although I don't use this particular phrasing in the book, I want to make it clear that I have laid out a huge challenge that you and your students will struggle to meet.

It can be presented visually in three photographs on the next page (also see p. 309 of the book) which were taken at Rondine, Citadel of Peace, whose photograph is on the cover of the book.

The distance between the thumb and my fingers in the first one depicts how limited our impact was when modern conflict resolution and peacebuilding began in the 1980s. You can barely see the gap—and don't blame whatever vision problems you might have if you can't make it out. The second one illustrates where we are now. There is still a gap between my fingers, but it is bigger which reflects a single point. Today, we do have *some* impact. Emphasis on some. The third one shows where I think we need to go. It also leads

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[4] Kelli Harding, *The Rabbit Effect*: Living Longer, Healthier, and Happier With the Ground Breaking Science of (New York: , Atria/Simon and Schuster, 2019), Kindle location 1447.

me to the conclusion that we can't make that kind of quantum leap using business as usual whether we are talking about addressing public policy issues or working with our students.

In the book itself, I used the images to lay the intellectual groundwork for what might—or might not—be called peacebuilding 4.0. Whatever the next phase of our work will look like or be called, it will build on what we have done in the last half century and go beyond the accomplishments of recent years and build broadly based movements that can shape public policy.

The same metaphor applies to your classroom. True, you won't have to build a movement and may not even want to broach that issue. However, because the scope of our field has grown so much, that does leave you with at least these four daunting challenges.

First, you have a lot to do. You have to introduce students to some concrete and basic material about peace and conflict resolution, which is what the first four parts of the book are all about. But, if I'm right, you will also have to discuss how they can be a part of those movements that seek to change the ways we all deal with conflict. At the same time, you will also have to strike a balance between the academic and applied sides of your course.

As with so much of this guide, I can't tell you how to do that. To some degree, that will reflect your own values and experiences. To some degree, too, it will reflect the interests and needs of your students which is why the rest of this guide devotes so much time to the use of design thinking in structuring your course.

Second, if my own experience is any indication, both you and your students are rather dissatisfied with the way we deal with conflict, whether that conflict occurs at the personal, local, national, or global levels. By that same token, both you and your students are probably impatient with the pace of change—or the lack thereof.

I know that I am. I jokingly refer to myself as an undergraduate as having majored in ending the war in Vietnam. By Thursday.

Much of my impatience remains. Many of the students I meet share it, although they leave Vietnam to their grandparents' generation which fought—or opposed—that war.

That impatience extends far beyond the classroom. To cite but one example, funders typically want to see quick results. However, as I argue in Part 4, it takes time to begin chipping away at the core values and assumptions that shape the ways we think and act today.

As is the case with everything else in this guide, I don't have a "cure" for impatience. However, I do know that it will come up whether you are dealing with a global issue like climate change or the investment policies of your college or university. It is my experience that their impatience and yours can be turned into some of those clichéd teachable moments when you can explore the roots of those frustrations and, together, begin charting alternatives by focusing on what I call forks in the conflict resolution road beginning in Chapter 2.

Third, your students should be able to better apply what they have learned in your course in the rest of their lives. Again, you may be more of a "pure academic" than I ever was and have little desire to improve peacebuilding work on the ground. Few of your students may be interested in careers in the field and/or come to you for advice. Still, your students are going to be dealing with conflicts for the rest of their lives, and your could and should help them do so constructively. In the context of this guide, this is why I've focused on some broader pedagogical questions that transcend peace and conflict studies, as you will see most clearly in the discussion of backward design beginning on p. 16.

Finally, in meeting those first three challenges, you have to be a lot more intentional than most of us are most of the time. Here, let me be blunt—and critical of myself.

Intentionality is a buzz word in peace and conflict studies, especially among those of us who concentrate on the interpersonal and intrapersonal sides of the field. From what I have seen, it is often honored in the breach, including by me more often than I care to admit. Indeed, I have mostly stumbled on to most of the design principles and personal growth issues I outline in the pages to come.

Over the years, I have learned, however, that the more one can build design and related principles into course preparation, the more satisfying your courses will be for your students. Focusing on a set of intellectual and professional goals that you want your students to reduce the list of topics you can cover but simultaneously point you toward pedagogical tools you can use in getting them to an unusual, interesting, challenging, and empowering experience.

Empowerment: Beyond Gloom and Doom 101

From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding covers a lot of intellectual ground and includes projects and analyses that have not worked as well as we might have liked at least in retrospect. Nonetheless, even they are anchored in an assumption that has guided my teaching, writing, and activism throughout my career.

Frankly, if you don't share that assumption, you should probably put this guide down and find a different book.

As I point out in Part 1, I was thrown for a loop when George Lopez described our field as Gloom and Doom 101 in his presidential address to the first annual meeting of what was then the Peace Studies Association in 1988. He was right. Most of us in the room that day had been drawn to peace studies out of a deep dissatisfaction with the status quo. As I put it in the less than elegant title of the first article I wrote on peace studies right after he uttered those words, we had to provide our students with "a rational basis for hope." In essence, as the two images on this page suggest, our challenge is to provide them with that "way out" of our dilemmas. Gloom and doom point us in less than constructive and often in conflicting directions as both figures suggest. Our challenge is to supply what the second one adds—a path toward recovery ahead.
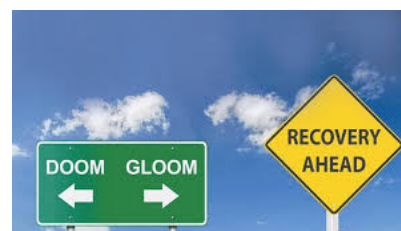
Of course, our students need to know about the problems the world faces. In those days, I had to spend time discussing apartheid, the arms race, the civil wars in Central America, and more. Today, your students probably have a lot to learn about the specifics of everything from climate change to implicit bias.

Meanwhile, I was hearing much the same thing from my own students. In the book, I discuss how a final exam question a student suggested—"The world is messed up. Discuss"—sent me back to the drawing board.[5] At about the same time, another student forced me to think about peacebuilding strategies that could appeal to conservative students like herself who had voted for President Reagan but also hoped to live in MacArthur's more just, peaceful, and verdant world.

The specifics have changed in the last thirty years. In the 2020s, you do have to explain the details of climate change or demonstrate how we all are subject to implicit bias. But, if that's all you do, your course is likely to fall flat—or worse for one simple reason. Your students are already absorbing analyses of what's wrong in their political science, sociology, psychology, environmental studies, or other courses.

Most of them come to you looking for a reason to be hopeful—rational or otherwise. A significant number of our students today come to our courses with a well-established interest and in the field, which is rarely the case when I teach about comparative politics. A smaller number of them are already activists who have considerable "skin in the game." Some are even looking to build careers in the field.

Getting beyond gloom and doom 101 comes with one additional challenge that I have not personally been able to overcome. As I suggested earlier, young people tend to be

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[5] He actually used a different verb, beginning with the letter "f." While I'm not opposed to using four letter words in academic prose, there was no need to quote him literally here. Messed up is good enough.

impatient. However, if we've learned anything in the transition to Peacebuilding 3.0, it is that lasting solutions to intractable conflicts never come quickly or easily.

You can see that in the drawing on this page that a narrative graphic artist drew at the launch of the +Peace campaign in 2019 (see chapter 13). She managed to include most of the key concepts in the field (and my book) that were uttered in the plenary sessions— collaboration, inclusion, the cessation of war, finding a common cause, justice and freedom, equality, understanding, collaboration, caring, a culture of peace, liberation, learning from mistakes, the ability to laugh, respect, diversity, the ability of laugh, and ….the cessation of war.

In other words, it is sometimes hard to convince students of any generation that we cannot reach its equivalent of ending the war in Vietnam by Thursday. The closest I've come to finding a solution that would satisfy any impatient person who wants to see tangible evidence of significant progress comes from the work of Debra Meyerson, most notably her work on tempered radicals which I only discovered recently.

Before she suffered a debilitating stroke at age fifty-three, Meyerson taught education and business at Stanford where she did research on people who sought radical change regarding issues of race and gender while working inside mainstream corporations. In it, she stressed the importance of identifying and then building on or leveraging what she called "small wins" that create the momentum for more dramatic change down the line. Much to her surprise—and, at times, chagrin, Meyerson found herself returning to the importance of small wins as she and her family went through years of recovery from the stroke to the point that advocacy for stroke victims has replaced corporate social change at the top of her personal and professional agenda.[6]

Meyerson's story of her personal recovery reminded me of an important point to stress however you structure your course. In terms used by some economists, conflict resolution and peacebuilding amount to an infinite game. We will never "win" once and for all. You students have to see that there is no equivalent of my youthful desire (and impatience) to

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[6] Debra Meyerson, *Rocking the Boat: How Tempered Radicals Effect Change Without Causing Trouble.* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2008) and Debra Meyerson with Danny Zuckerman, *Identity Theft: Reovering Ourselves After Stroke.* (New York: Andrews McMeel/Simon and Schuster, 2019).

end the war in Vietnam right away. In the words of Simon Sinek, successful conflict resolution and peacebuilding is part of an infinite game that evolves over time in a never-ending process and comes with its shares of "ups" and "downs." At the same time, when seen in those terms, peacebuilding becomes a lifetime goal against which we can measure progress and which can keep us inspired and fulfilled.

It Starts with You

This second point builds on the first one and leads to what I think of as the most important substantive section of this guide. Teaching peace and conflict studies demands at least as much of you as it does for your students.

Like almost everything else in this guide, I only came to see the importance of this point gradually. I decided to become an academic because I wanted to figure out how to make the new left of the 1960s even more effective. By the time I finished my course work in graduate school, my goals had mushroomed. Now, I was interested in how large scale social change could be achieved non-violently. In the process, my activist side faded as I built a conventional academic career.

I never seriously thought about teaching courses in peace or conflict studies. Instead, I focused on comparative politics with an emphasis on Western Europe and the former Soviet Union. While my courses always focused on social change, both my teaching and my writing were overwhelmingly analytical.

Even more importantly, my teaching and my writing rarely led me to question my own core values or even place them on center stages in what I was doing professionally. Then, that all began to change in the early 1980s when I was asked to start teaching courses in what would now be called peace and conflict studies because of my involvement in the Beyond War movement, which also rekindled my life as an activist.

All of a sudden, I found myself investing my heart and soul in what I was teaching. Now, I had a lot more skin in the game which was less obviously the case when I was teaching or writing about the various European health care systems—even though those discussions produced plenty of controversy, as they still would today. As you can see in a few places in *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding*, my students at the time wanted more of me.

In the thirty-five years since then, everything I've done has convinced me that everything from my pedagogical goals to my personal values had to change in ways that were consistent with what I was teaching in at least the three following ways.

The Big Picture

When I started teaching courses in peace and conflict studies, I focused on the threat of nuclear war and the issues that eddied around it during the 1980s as discussed in Part 2 of the book. At the time, I thought of what my students called "nukes with Chip" as a course I would teach from time to time on top of the comparative politics curriculum I had been hired to focus on. By the middle of the decade, my horizons had been expanded by a seminar at Harvard/MIJT, a lecture series I coordinated at Colby College, and, especially, by my involvement in the Beyond War movement.

Since then, my interests have expanded in ways that parallel the growth of the field. Personally, that started when I spent three years living and teaching in the UK in the second half of the 1990s, teaching young Palestinians in East Jerusalem, and joining the staffs at Search for Common Ground followed by the Alliance for Peacebuilding, and George Mason University's School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

What started as a minor supplement to my existing teaching load replaced comparative politics as I became a full time peacebuilder. Nonetheless, there has been one constant in my own history which I have also seen from watching my colleagues.

Teaching about peace and conflict resolution is not easy. For those of us who started our teaching careers elsewhere, it means learning about a subject matter that is outside of our field of expertise. You might think that political science and peace studies have a lot in common, but the fact of the matter is that there is precious little overlap between my original and my adopted fields. Teaching peace and conflict studies is also challenging for people with advanced degrees in conflict studies because it has to include material from so many academic disciplines and parts of the world. If anything, the number of intellectual "stretches" an instructor has to make has grown exponentially as the field has expanded.

Three Key Challenges

That leads to three main challenges we all face, including those of us who are primarily academic analysts and those who see themselves as applied activists.

First, as I have already suggested, ours is not an easy subject to teach. As I say early in the book itself, the subject matter of peace and conflict studies is not rocket science. But, building peace and resolving conflict in the real world may, in fact, be harder than rocket science.

Second, unlike many academic disciplines, there is no paradigm or even any conventional wisdom around which to structure a course. To see why that's important, think about an exercise my first comparative politics editor had me do. He asked me to look at the tables of contents in the dozen leading American politics textbooks. They were remarkably similar. The chapter titles may have been different, but they all covered pretty much the same material. Then, he asked me to do the same thing with the books that would be my competitors. Their tables of contents were all over the map, covering a bewildering number of concepts and a variety of countries to use as case studies.

There is even more variation in what my colleagues think should be covered in peace and conflict studies courses. The concepts range from the intrapersonal to the

international, while the case study material can be found everywhere from dysfunctional nuclear families to the dysfunctional family of nations.

Third, your students will challenge you in unusual ways. While writing this book, I also had to focus on a key difference between the students I routinely worked with in comparative politics versus peace and conflict studies courses. Comparative politics students typically take those courses as a step toward fulfilling a major and, in a few cases, toward building a career. The majority of peace and conflict resolution students are cut from a different intellectual cloth. They, of course, want to know about the concepts that structure our field and the peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives my colleagues around the world have been involved in. However, most of them want more. Most of them come to our classes looking for answers to some of the world's most pressing problems and for ways that they can do something about them.

Taken together, these challenges mean that you have to teach an inherently difficult course in which your students will learn more than they do in traditional social science courses. They will master new material and find ways of involving themselves in dealing with some of the toughest issues facing our planet today. And if all goes really well, you will learn a lot, both about the material itself and how you relate to it.

Own Your Course

I have made peacebuilding presentations at a number of military academies, war colleges, and its other "schoolhouses" over the years. Among other things, I've been surprised at how often multiple instructors use exactly the same syllabus to teach the same material in multiple sections of the same course.

I can't imagine doing that in peace and conflict studies.

Only a few institutions (like George Mason) have big enough enrollments to offer multiple sections of basic undergraduate or graduate level courses. More importantly, I can't imagine my colleagues agreeing on a common set of reading and course structure, let along a common teaching strategy.

It's not just the military. Wherever these is a commonly accepted paradigm or a departmental decision to coordinate all sections of an introductory course, individual classes look remarkably alike, whatever the personal styles and preferences of a given instructor.

For good or ill (and I think it is for the good), peace and conflict studies courses and their instructors are far too idiosyncratic for that. Our courses could and should be different and benefit from the different ways we were trained to our different values and everything in between.

In other words, it's largely up to you to define what you cover in your class, how you present the material, and how you assess your students' work.

This is one of the places where intentionality comes into play.

Both of those points lead me to one more simple statement. You have to own your own course.

Your course has to reflect your values, experience, pedagogical goals, and a whole lot more.

Explore Yourself

Our values permeate our teaching in ways too numerous to list—including those of us who aspire to be values neutral in the classroom. That's especially true of a field like peace and conflict studies that is controversial in and of itself and which attracts many students who care passionately about the topics you will be discussing.

Therefore, it is particularly important that you practice what you preach. With an emphasis of practice.

That's not an intellectual problem. It's a practical one. We are all works in progress when it comes to peacebuilding and conflict resolution. If you are going to teach peace well, you have to live peace well. And, that is a never-ending struggle.

I raise that issue for student-readers in chapter 14 of the book. It applies even more to those of us who teach these courses. As I note there, we can debate just how much our professed beliefs and our personal practices inside and outside of the classroom have to be congruent. My experience, however, is that the more they align in the ways the psychologist Carl Rogers had in mind when he talked about congruence, the more effective my own teaching has become, especially when it comes to its lasting impact on students well after the course itself is over.

WE CANNOT CHANGE, WE CANNOT MOVE AWAY FROM WHAT WE ARE, UNTIL WE THOROUGHLY ACCEPT WHAT WE ARE. THEN CHANGE SEEMS TO COME ABOUT ALMOST UNNOTICED.

Carl Rogers

Design Your Course

I alluded to peacebuilding and conflict resolution as an infinite game earlier because that concept should be included in the design of your course. As James Carse and Simon Sinek use the term, they are addressing issues whose solutions bring to mind the distinction I drew in the book between transactional and transformational outcomes.

As your students will have no trouble seeing, I'm convinced that the kinds of wicked problems we face in a VUCA world rarely lend themselves to transactional peace processes alone, although individual win-win outcomes are necessary steps along the longer and more complicated way. That's the case, because we will never achieve true peace or social justice or any other inspirational goal. However, if we don't have that inspirational or transformational goal in mind.

That means paying explicit attention to how you design *your* course.

Emphasis on yours.

If you think of conflict transformation and peacebuilding as something akin to an infinite game with an end point we can never reach, that has to be reflected in the way you structure and own your course. Therefore, this section starts with some key general design principles and ends with some specific questions to ask in structuring your course.

Systems and Design

Before we get to specific questions like whether it makes sense to divide the field into discrete periods, we first have to ask a more basic question. If conflict resolution and peacebuilding are, at best, long term goals that require long term commitments because we live in a world of wicked problems, how should that structure the way we teach?

As you will see in the book, I'm one of many peacebuilding practitioners who have come to stress the way systems thinking could and should underpin our work. That's not just true of the field as a whole. In fact, systems thinking should be at the heart of how we design our courses as well.

For many of my colleagues, this has been a recent discovery. In my case, however, I began using systems theory when I was an undergraduate and have been an advocate of its offshoots in network and complexity science since the creation of modern information technology systems in the 1980s, which is where it really comes into play for the purposes of teaching peace and conflict studies.

In particular, systems thinking has led me to pay a lot more attention to the way courses are designed than I ever did when I was a conventional academic. In other words, intentionality comes into play here, too, because systems thinking lends itself to thinking in terms of design and the overall "architecture" of your course—or anything else you do for that matter.

In this case, that means thinking less in terms of how you would use my book—or any other book—and concentrating more on what you want to accomplish in the course, especially when preparing your students for a lifetime of dealing with conflict, whatever they do professionally or politically. In fact, I truly wish I had learned about design in the 1970s when I began my career rather than in the late 2010s when I'm ending it.

As practiced by the likes of companies like IDEO or Pixar and taught at Stanford's Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (better known as the d-school), design is more than a snazzy set of tools for creating the next great technological device like the iPhone, which IDEO helped Apple create. Rather, it is an approach to creating or revising new products by going back to first principles and the clichéd drawing board.[7]

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[7] The literature on design thinking and IDEO is immense. In addition to Kuang, *User* Friendly, cited in footnote 6, the best way to start is with the book by its co-CEOs, David and Tom Kelley, *Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within us All*. (New York: Currency, 2013). For a more general view, see the book by my friend from graduate school days, Bruce Nussbaum, *Creative Intelligence: Harnessing the Power to Create, Connect, and Inspire*. (New York: HarperBusiness, 2013). To go beyond

I belatedly learned that IDEO, Pixar, and the d-school are probably not the places to begin. They are best known for creating new things more or less from scratch. That is not what teaching peace and conflict studies is all about, however. While we may not have a paradigm, our courses do rest on a body of knowledge and a set of concepts, some of which are decades and even centuries old. What's more, we rarely create new courses from scratch unless you are also building a new program.

Backward Design

As a result, I found design theory to be of only limited value for teaching until my fiftieth reunion at Oberlin College where Brian Alegant gave one of two faculty talks at our banquet.[8] Brian teaches music theory rather than peace and conflict studies. Nonetheless, the pedagogical innovations that made him the first musician to win the national professor of the year award apply here however different the two subject matters might seem at first glance.

This video Brian that made for the College is, in fact, about pedagogical concepts in music theory. If however, you go through the mental exercise of replacing music theory with conflict resolution and peacebuilding in what he says, you would find yourself with a great guide to the rest of this manual—without the cello of course.

He uses an approach known as backward design in which instructors start by defining what they want their students to master over the course of a semester or even a single course unit. Like design thinking as practiced by companies like IDEO, backward design is best done by including your students in structuring the class. In Brian's case, there are some core concepts in music theory that he knows he has to cover. It is not clear how to best get his students to understand them. As a result, he builds part of the course curriculum around the interests his students tell him about on the first day of class.

Few of us have the flexibility a small college like Oberlin provides or small enough classes that let you almost design a class on the fly. You probably have to make core decisions about what to include ahead of time—including choosing which books to assign. Moreover, Oberlin's Conservatory of Music is small enough (under 600 students) that Brian actually knows a fair number of his students before they enter his classroom. Still, many of the principles he uses in structuring his courses make sense for peace and conflict studies, too.


IDEO, the best and most enjoyable account is by the founder of PIXAR, Ed Catmull, *Creativity, Inc: Overcoming the Hidden Forces that Stand in the Way of True Insiration*. (New York: Random House, 2015).
[8] Yes, Oberlin has unusual reunions. Lots of talks and discussions. No golf tournaments.

His own teaching is anchored in the ideas of Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe whose research deals covers K-12 teaching.[9] However, their ideas also make perfect sense for those of us who have to design courses in peace and conflict studies for college students.

I didn't do everything wrong from their perspective, but I didn't focus on the most important questions in pedagogical design early enough when planning most of my courses. I would start with some vague idea of what I wanted to accomplish, break the semester into fourteen weeks, and then focus on the books I wanted to assign and the assessment tools I wanted to use.

Backward design, by contrast has us spend the bulk of our planning time on first principles, especially on the goals which its theorists believe have to be tackled in order as summarized in Figure 1, which you can see in this video that features McTighe.
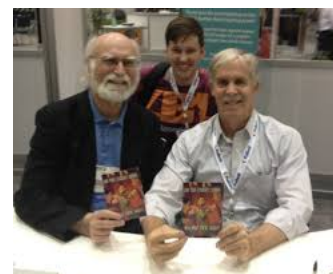
- What are your desired results?
- What do you want your students to be able to do by the end of the course?
- What would constitute acceptable evidence that they had mastered the material?
- How would they demonstrate that mastery by applying those concepts in other settings or with other examples that you might not have covered in class?

It is only in answer ing those questions that you are ready to design what and how you should teach. To see that, consider those points in a bit more detail. Once I've done that, I'll look at some of central concepts you could cover and teaching techniques you might consider, but only *after* you have made those basic design decisions. At that point, a discussion of teaching can effectively turn to specifics and the kinds of decisions that are implicit more in Figure 2. And, for the purposes of this guide, it is best done in the context of its next main section which focuses on ways of engaging your students.

Desired Results

In other words, the last thing you want to do in designing a course is to turn to your text book first. That's the case because any good textbook covers more material than you can emphasize in a given semester or term.

Therefore, you have to decide what you want your students to learn first. In a different video he made shortly before he died, Wiggins asked a group of student teachers to write a one sentence goal statement for the course they were teaching.

In our case, a single sentence and goal might be too simplistic. Instead, you probably will want your students to master a few key concepts (many of which can be found in the drawing on p. 12 because, as Wiggins and McTigue argue, the long term goal of any

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[9] Grant Wiggins and Jay McTigue. *Understanding by Design*. 2nd ed. (Alexandria VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005).

course in any subject is to give students concepts that they can apply in settings other than the ones you present in class.
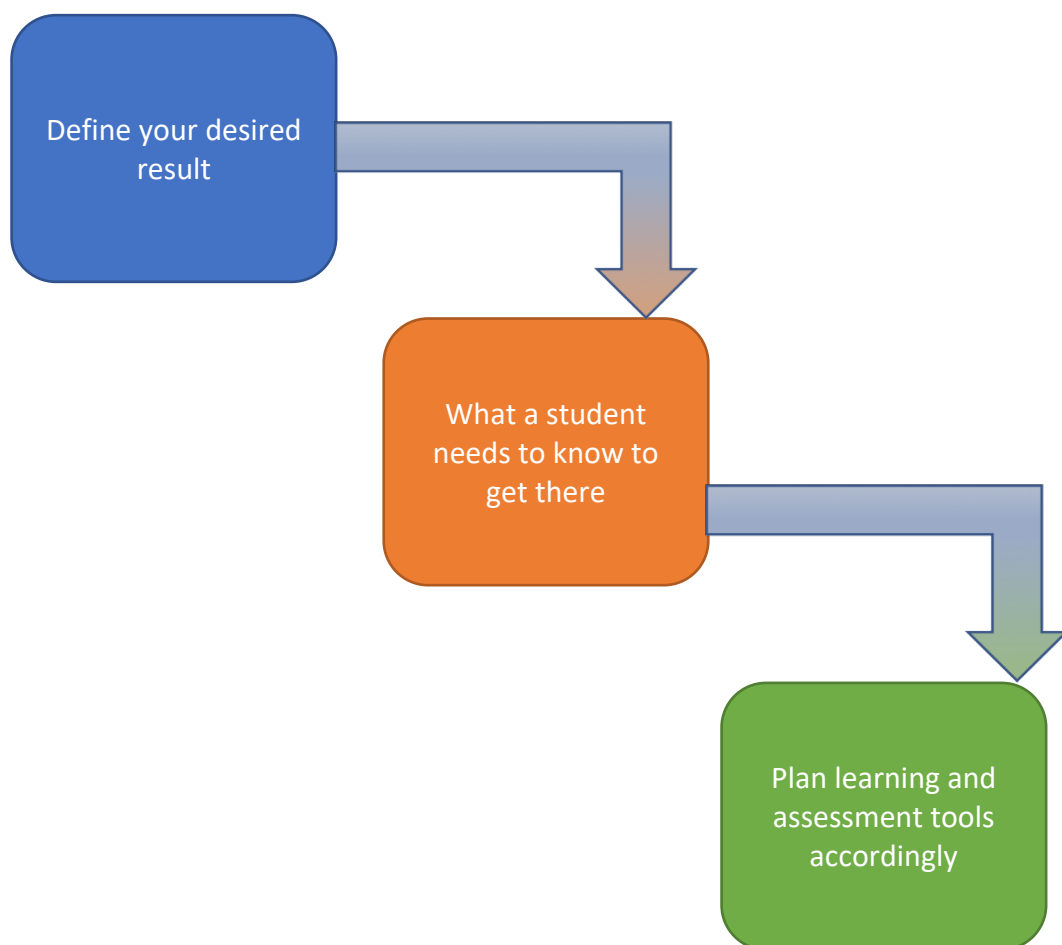

Figure 1
Backward Design Principles

Core Concepts

If Wiggins and McTigue are right, we should not make learning "the facts" a central component of any peace and conflict studies course.

To be sure, a student should know about the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Good Friday Agreement. The real value of the course, however, lies in learning a set of tools that a student can apply in new settings that emerge over the course of the rest of their lives.

That means the most useful courses focuses on concepts that students can use during the course and, especially, after it is over. As should be apparent in almost any field but is certainly true for one that lacks a commonly agreed upon paradigm, it is largely up to the instructor to decide which concepts to focus on.

The text of *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding* does suggest a few key concepts that clearly fall into the "core ideas" category of Figure 2—win/win conflict resolution, transformative v. transactional approaches to conflict, nonviolence, systems thinking, empathy, reconciliation, and more. However, I wrote the book in such a way that you can choose other key concepts to focus on and/or give short shrift to.

The choice is up to you. However, you do have to make some choices. Otherwise the course will lack focus and leave both you and your students less than satisfied.

Key Concepts are the Key

I used the word key twice in the title of this section for a reason. Identifying the most important concepts you want to cover and determining how to cover them are probably the most important features of backward design to apply to your own course. As I've suggested several times already, you can't give equal and quality time to all of the concepts I raise in the book and I cannot choose which concepts are the right ones for you to focus on.

However, the ones you pick should meet at least the following criteria. In the section on engaging your students,I will illustrate that with some of the concepts that I personally focus would have on were I designing a course in October 2019, which is when I wrote these words. For now, it is enough to see the importance of placing what you think are the core concepts at the heart of your set of desired results.
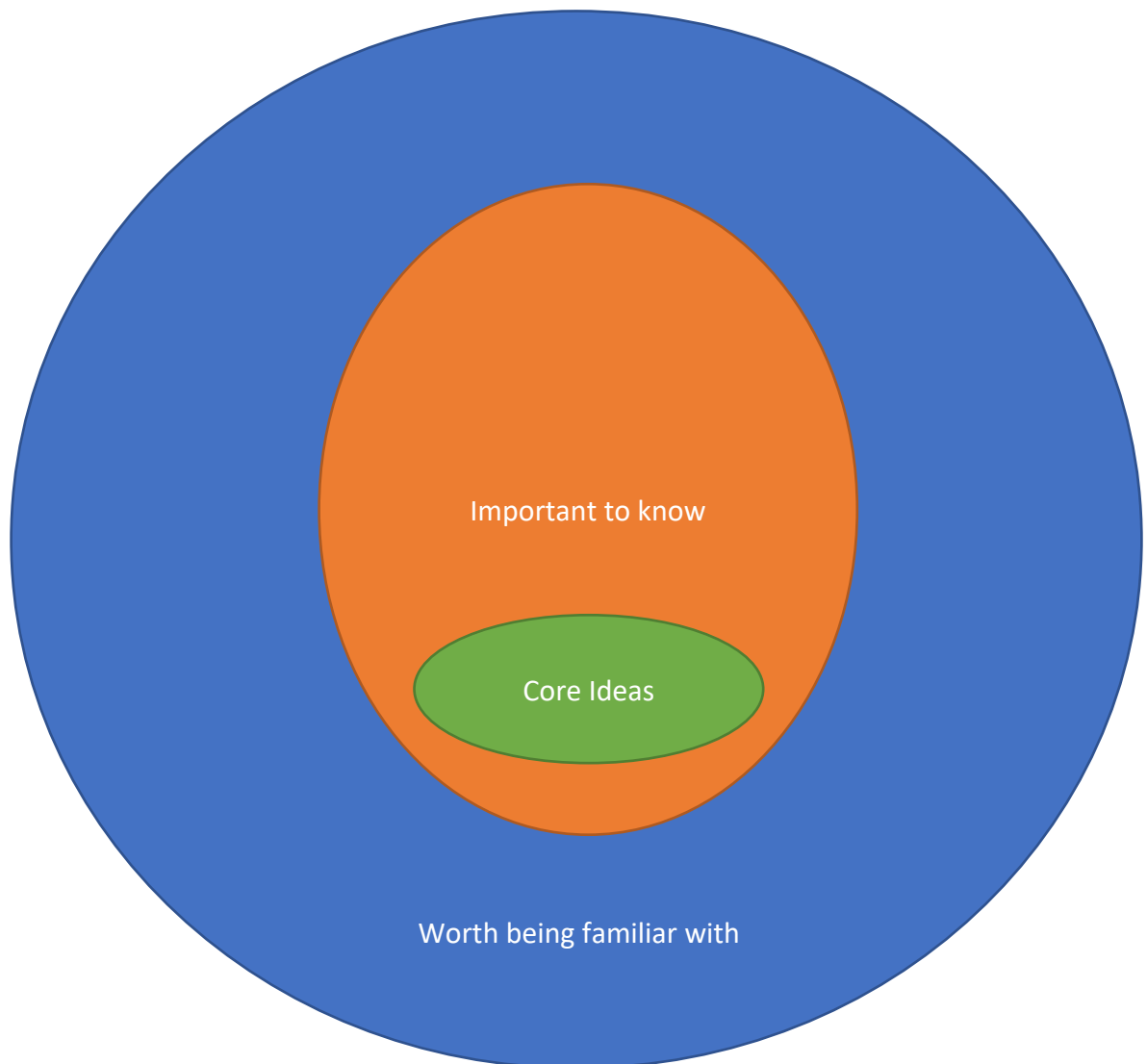
Important to know

Core Ideas

Worth being familiar with

Figure 2
Prioritizing Concept

Your students can easily see the concepts' implications. Recall that Brian Alegant teaches music theory which tends to conjure up images of abstract notions—and notations. But when I've watched videos of his classes, he brings those abstractions down to pieces of music the students know and presumably love. In this case, that means you should probably concentrate on conflicts your students have personally experienced or that are prominently featured in the news.

They can be integrated into active learning projects. Although I'll defer dealing with active learning until the next major section, you do need to bring concepts to life in ways the students can experience as close to first-hand as possible. You might, for instance, spend a lot of time talking about Syria while teaching in South Dakota. How can you find a way to make that conflict and key concepts associated with it like the multiple and overlapping causes of any dispute relevant to a student whose world view may not extend too far beyond the American Midwest?

They force your students to think because there are no easy answers to the issues they raise. Here, it might make sense to focus on concepts that hit particularly close to home for which students might have the kind of myopic blinders that Bina Venkataraman cautions us about in her new book, *The Optimist's Telescope*.[10] Most of the conflicts that you and your students are in are what I call wicked problems that do not lend themselves to simple or simplistic answers. Your challenge is to focus on the concepts that bring those complexities to the surface

The students can see how learning about the concept in one setting can be transferred to one or more other settings. In the end, this is the most important conceptual challenge and probably will call for the most idiosyncratic response on your part, given your own views, teaching style, and setting. However you do it, if you help your students see how empathy or reconciliation mattered in two or more settings you cover in class and you ask your students to apply those ideas in yet another setting in an assignment, then there is a reasonable probability that your students will find themselves using those concepts long after the course ends.

Eras

From my perspective, it makes sense to anchor a course around the way our field has evolved through four eras, including one that has not yet begun—the future.

Given my age and given the fact that my work as a political science also had a strong historical bent, it should be easy to see why I think it is important for students to see how peace and conflict studies has expanded. That said, I wrote the book on the assumption that instructors might not want to structure a course that way.

One can quibble with the argument that there are anything like discrete periods in the history of peace and conflict studies or the defining moments I chose. They certainly are only clear in retrospect.

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[10] Bina Venkatarman, *The Optimist's Telescope: Thinking Ahead in a Reckless Age.* (New York: Riverhead, 2019).

That should be clear in the way we came to use the Peacebuilding x.0 meme at AfP. We never talked in terms of Peacebuilding 1.0. AfP itself did not exist at the time. More importantly, we only began thinking in those terms after Tim O'Reilly began talking about Internet 2.0 once social media software and the Internet of Things began to take off early in this century when we were already into peace and conflict studies' third phase.

In fact, Peacebuilding 2.0 had already come to an end by the time AfP issued its Peacebuilding 2.0 report in 2013.[11] At the time, we were trying to figure out how our field had evolved. When I went back and read the report while writing this book, I realized just how behind the times its findings were given what was taking place in the field, if not in the academy.

Indeed, while my colleagues were writing that report, a group of us on the AfP staff and board of directors had already decided that we needed a Peacebuilding 3.0 that:

- paid attention to events after 9/11
- focused on systems and complexity which only a few of us had discovered before 9/11
- emphasized local peacebuilding projects
- but also focused on how we could take them to scale and have an impact at the national and global levels

Younger instructors who did not live through those earlier periods may decide that they need more background on how our understanding of conflict and its resolution developed. That is, in fact, easy to do. While I was beginning work on my own book, Rowman and Littlefield commissioned a reader edited by Sarah Cobb, Sarah Federman, and Alison Castel which was published a few weeks before my book was. Their *Introduction to Conflict Resolution* is an indispensable aid in getting ready to teach or write about the way our field unfolded. I know, because as the series editor, I had access to the drafts of their book while I was writing my own and regularly drew on their understanding of the three periods as well as the articles they included in their anthology.

Other Structures and Design Ideas

I can think of two ways of teaching a different kind of course using this book that would lead you toward other ways of presenting the material that would still let you focus on backward design and concepts.

Start at the present. This model would have you start with part 4 and give your students a sense of where we are today without worrying about the context to put it in at least at the beginning of the course. After that, you could loop back ti part 1 and emphasize the concepts that the students found most important you found most lacking in their discussions of the state of conflict resolution and peacebuilding today. In this scenario, you might well downplay the historical material in parts 2 and 3 and emphasize

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[11] https://allianceforpeacebuilding.org/2013/08/toward-peacebuilding-2-0/

only those that have had the most direct bearing on what peacebuilders are doing today. In this scenario, too, you would end the course with part 5.

Start with the future. If I was teaching a small class at a college with a long tradition of activism, like my beloved Oberlin, I would actually start with the future. Because I can assume that my students were reasonably sophisticated and highly motivated coming in, I would let them help design the course by starting with where they saw the field heading and how they saw themselves fitting into it. Only after a (presumably rousing) set of discussions to start the term would I determine (with them) the specific concepts and cases to focus on.

Engage Your Students

Now that you've begun thinking about basic design parameters, it is (finally) time to focus on the content of the course itself. Here, I should present a few more of my biases that might lead you to consider using a different core textbook if you don't share them.

You are not training academics. In other words, you should not be taking a 600 level course down to the 100 level by watering down what one would expect budding PhD students to know. Rather, you will have students who have a wide variety of goals and a wider variety of reasons for taking your course.

A few may go on to graduate school and become conflict resolution and peacebuilding professionals. Most will not. Still, you have to engage all of your students, whatever their future career goals, because they all will have to deal with conflict in the rest of their lives, whatever the choose to do professionally.

What's more, if my experience is any indication, you will have plenty of students who a lot like I was at that age—enthusiastic but unfocused. In other words, you will have the opportunity to not just teach about peace and conflict studies but to help many of your students find their intellectual footing.

That said, this is another one of those places in which I can only give you a limited amount of guidance because I don't know anything about the environment in which you teach which you can see from two constraints from my pedagogical past. I do know that the environment you teach in matters a lot.

I taught my first peace studies courses were taught at Colby College. They always enrolled about 100 students and, being a liberal arts college, we didn't have many rooms that fit that many students. To make matter worse, I taught in auditorium-style rooms which meat that I couldn't even move them around.

After I moved to George Mason, I taught in my peace and conflict studies courses in the political science department. More important was the fact that most of my students had full time jobs which meant that it was all but impossible for them to attend events outside of scheduled class time. Even group projects were hard to organize because of their schedules.

In the late 1990s, I taught for three years at the University of Reading in the UK. At the time, the only grades that mattered were the exams that students took at the end of their

three year degree program, which made them final exams in the literal sense of the term. Alas, that also meant that it was hard to get them to do much of anything during the courses or modules they took as part of their degree program.

I stopped teaching courses of my own in the early 2010s. Now, instead, I do a lot of guest talks/seminars and have been sitting in on Doug Irvin-Erickson's courses at George Mason University.

All of that has convinced me that there is no single approach to teaching peace and conflict studies—or anything else for that matter. How you teach has to reflect your social and political values, your pedagogical goals, and the nature and number of the students you are teaching, including the space you are teaching them in.

While I can't pretend to tell you what you should do under those circumstances, I can point in one key direction that applies not just to teaching but to all forms of leadership in a VUCA world. Simon Sinek put it well in describing leaders who run effective organizations in any infinite game. As he see it, they:

> Create an environment in which information can flow freely, mistakes can be highlighted, and help can be offered and received. [12]

While that is easier said than done, I (re)learned a useful lesson along these lines while I was writing this manual and that you will have to adapt to your own circumstances in order to find it useful.

Kiril's Sweet Spot

The is one thing you almost certainly won't have to worry about. Frankly, it is hard to make peace and conflict studies boring. However, you can make it both too simple or too challenging, something I learned from a most improbable source.

The night before I was going to write this section, I was sitting with my eight-year old grandson, Kiril, while he procrastinated. He had a difficult homework assignment that actually touched on empathy (a topic that had already been introduced by his third grade teacher). One of his options was to empathize with two characters in books he had read by writing an email introducing them to each other.

Since Kiril already knew what the word procrastination meant, we explored why he kept putting off doing the assignment. It stretched him a lot. Maybe more than he could go. I certainly don't know if it was more than he could do because I have spent my career teaching college students, not third graders. I do know that there are plenty of times when we ask our students to do things that they aren't ready for.

Kiril and I also realized that he gets bored and procrastinates when his homework is too easy. I confessed to him (to his mother's chagrin) that I often just didn't do that kind of homework. In Kiril's case, simple arithmetic problems that had him repeat adding and subtracting skills which he had already mastered also led him to procrastinate.

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[12] *Inifinte Game*. 129.

Then, we found a challenge that stretched him but he was able to figure out after a bit of effort. I asked him how he could multiply 18x24. He hadn't yet learned to multiply double digit numbers. But, he knew that multiplication was a fancy form of addition so he realized that he could get there by adding 18 24 times. Then, he realized that he could multiply 18 by 10, do so twice, add 18 four more times, and get the right total.

I didn't raise Kiril's third grade forays into empathy and multiplication because they are important, per se.

Rather, they raise an important point that any teacher faces.

How do I find the sweet spot(s) at which my students are challenged enough so that they are excited and not bored but not challenged so much so that they get overly frustrated. And, because Kiril is unique (not just because his Macedonian first name means he is the only Kiril in his school), you have to try to find the sweet spot(s) for every student in your class.

While you probably can't find it for your entire class (I certainly never did), backward design suggests that you have to find the best ways in which you can reach the key conceptual and other goals I've already discussed. That, in turn, means designing a course with a series of enjoyable and reachable challenges in the five main ways discussed in the rest of this section.

That sweet spot between not-too-easy and not-too-challenging will be different for each student you teach, each time you teach, and each subject that you teach about. You'll never "hit" them all. All this guide can do is help you get as close as possible as often as possible.

Keep Their Interest and Keep Them Focused

That leads to another short section on a topic you should at least have in the back of your mind as you put a course together—keeping your students involved. As I note in the book itself, most students come to the course with some interest and, in some cases, some experience in peacebuilding or conflict resolution, something I could not assume when I taught comparative politics.

In those courses, I would face lots of blank stares when I tried to convince the class that a parliamentary system. the structure of the Chinese Communist Party, or the shift from important substitution to structural adjustment mattered.

I rarely have to do that in peace and conflict studies. There are a few cases in the book whose importance may not be intuitively obvious to all of your students, most notably the attention given to Mozambique in Part 4. For the most part, however, you will not have to face a lot of blank stares.

You will, however, have two challenges.

The first is to keep the students focused as much as you can on the concepts and the ways that they can use them beyond the examples you cover in class. Second, you will often find it hard to get your students to dig deeply into the causes

of the problems they are studying or the difficulties one will encounter in forging solutions.

That has implications for how one teaches. This is another of those areas in which not knowing your pedagogical goals or the context you teach in keeps me from being able to provide much concrete advice. My experience suggests, however, that traditional lectures are rarely the best way to reach most pedagogical goals even if you have large classes as I often did. There are always ways to break a class into discussion groups even if only for a few minutes. The ease of finding and showing good short videos today means that it is easy to break up an hour (or in some of my courses two and a half hour) classes.

Using multiple formats also lets you focus on different things. I typically use videos when I want to appeal to students' emotions or convey the importance of empathy. I work with small groups when I know students need to grapple with tough concepts. I lecture (or, as my critics would say, tell stories) when there is basic factual material that students have to master. I even use PowerPoint to make certain that students see the logic of the lecture component of a class or to see how an entire session will hold together.

Critical Thinking and Active Learning

The bottom line is that you have to encourage as much critical thinking and active learning as possible on the part of your students—and, of course, yourselves. Critical thinking and active learning are among the most widely used and poorly used concepts in academic life today as you will see here and, later, in the next major section on specific tools you can use.

I'm convinced that they are poorly used because the assignments we give don't force our students to stretch themselves enough or ask them to question core analytical and other assumptions that they bring to the courses they take. All too often, we textbook writers provide them exercises that don't come close to reaching the equivalent of Kiril's sweet spot. Our questions typically call on them to memorize some facts and definitions and spit them back on an exam.

Effective critical thinking and other forms of active learning in a field that is as complex as peace and conflict studies can lead students toward mastering and using transferrable concepts. That may not be true of the kinds of basic mathematical skills my grandson is learning, but it is true of the concepts you will be teaching about. It may also not be true of many aspects of comparative politics, the other field I have spent my career studying.

In peace and conflict studies, however, you do have to keep asking questions that begin with "why" and "how." Otherwise, students will not get to see why understanding peace and conflict studies is not rocket science, but making progress on any related front can actually be harder than rocked science.

Take Them Beyond Peace and Conflict Studies

For someone of my generation, peace and conflict studies was inherently interdisciplinary. The first scholars and teachers I worked with had backgrounds in all of the social sciences, religion, engineering, physics, and environmental sciences. All were represented in the journals and anthologies that included my first publications in the field.

Even though there are obvious overlaps between my home discipline (political science) and peace studies, my years of training left me with huge holes and even some mistaken preconceptions that I had to shed when I made the transition. To cite but the most obvious example, political scientists at the time rarely even considered the possibility of win-win conflict resolution or any definition of power that did not revolve around one side's defeating the other.

I fear that as more and more of the people entering the field have been trained in peace and conflict studies, per se, we are developing a canon of our own that is reflected in our courses. In fact, one of the reasons Rowman and Littlefield asked me to write this book was because I had worked in most of the parts of the field and could presumably pull lots of them together.

I'm even more convinced now that I've finished the book that we have to return to our interdisciplinary roots, including—and perhaps especially—in our introductory courses. Part 5, in particular, suggests that the future—and perhaps even the present—of the field depends on our ability to go beyond peace and conflict studies from the first day(s) a student enters our classes.

When I was named Senior Fellow for Innovation at the AfP, no one quite knew what that meant, including me. After sending some time with Ann Pendleton-Jullian and John Seely Brown, we decided that I should function as what they would call a one person edge lab. Brown and John Hagel had created a [Center for Edge](#) at Deloitte in which they helped clients peer out into their broad environment looking to identify useful ideas to import back "across" the edge into their own community. That led me Singapore's remarkable Risk Assessment and Horizon Scanning (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOHpXvUgpcs)a initiative in which its government literally scans the horizons looking for innovative ideas it can use to deal with the many economic, demographic, and other dangers it faces.

I now does as much as I can to incorporate innovative ideas from issue areas that I'm particularly interested in. In my case, the list is broad and includes technology, organizational dynamics, social psychology, evolutionary theory, complexity science, and sports. Since I haven't had to have a full time "day job" in twenty-five years, I've been able to use my time to read voraciously.

Still, there are huge holes in my intellectual network. So, I'm at a loss for words when I sit in on my friend Doug Irvin-Erickson's classes and he talks about literary theory and philosophy. I'm usually speechless whenever his students talk about popular culture, since my media consumption revolves exclusively around news, sports, and classical music.

My point, thus, is not to mimic my interests, but to incorporate your "outside interests" into what you do in the classroom.

Putting Ideas into Practice

Do no read so much; look about you and think of what you see there.

--Richard Feynman

This next to last section of this guide begins bringing these often abstract ideas down to earth. For the reasons mentioned several times earlier, I can't give you concrete suggestions because I don't know you or the environment you teach in. However, I will come closer to that target in the four sections that follow.

As you read, keep this statement by the legendary (and very funny) physicist, Richard Feynman, in mind. There is only so much students can learn by reading any book, including mine. They have to make a living connection with the material so that the concepts and actions you discuss truly become useful to them in the rest of their lives.

And this comes from someone who reads two or three nonfiction books a week.

Core Concepts—The Case of Empathy

As the discussion of backward design suggested, concepts have to be at the heart of any overall teaching strategy. That holds especially true when you get to the nitty gritty of class preparation when it is easy for your students to lose sight of the transferrable ideas while they grapple with the often exciting details of a particular case study you want them to know about.

Work Inductively

My training as a political scientist and the work I would have done had I pursued my freshman pipe dream and become a physicist have hypothesis testing and deductive reasoning at their core. There are lots of times and places where the most progress is made when we follow these and related aspects of scientific orthodoxy.

Peace and conflict studies does not, however, lend itself to deductive research or hypothesis testing. There is not much of an orthodoxy as the lack of a paradigm suggests. At this point, the most we can say is that we are at a time when we are developing new ideas that could morph into a general theory or paradigm at some point. We aren't there yet. Without going into the details of scientific history and philosophy, pre-paradigmatic research takes us the farthest when it is more inductive than deductive. Under those circumstances, we are most likely to reach useful general conclusions if we start with the data and work inductively toward those broadly applicable theoretical statements, which is one of the reasons I find systems and complexity theory so helpful in ways I lay out in Chapter 3.

Luckily, that meshes with what we know about hiw most undergraduate learns. Without going into the literature on best pedagogical practices, let me simply assert that

most students (and perhaps most people in general) assess new ideas the most fully when they build "up" to the from concrete examples. In the simplest possible terms, the intuition that is involved in theory building seems to make it easier for newcomers to see all aspects of a new idea.

Nonetheless, I first starting teaching peace and conflict studies at about the same time that I discovered Chris Argyris and his work on ladders of abstraction.[13] From his perch at the Havard School of Education and with his years of work in organizational learning, Argyris frequently talked about ladders of inference in which we move from limited bodies of data in reaching general conclusions as you can see in this video-- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XA94chykm-c. Although this video doesn't use the phrase itself, Argyris always used what he called the inelegant question, "of what is this an instance?" so that students and other learners can move "up" the ladder.

In the process, I always tried to include a mixture of four types of concepts, including ones that are:

- Core to the field like win-win or non-violence
- Useful for challenging students to think beyond peace and conflict studies field
- Open the door to heated and constructive discussions as happens whenever you consider broad coalitions with strange political bedfellows
- Will be relevant long after the course was over, most notably reconciliation, climate change, or social justice.

Empathy

If I had to choose one concept to use in illustrating what this section is all about, it would be empathy because it fits into all of the bullet points in the preceding section. In fact, it is easy for students to grasp the basics of empathy in a lecture or from a book because it is such a buzzword these days.

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[13] Argyris was one of the first scholars to include systems thinking and the idea of a learning organization to corporate life along with his long-time colleague, Peter Senge. Chris Argyris, *Knowledge for Action: A Guide to Overcoming Barriers to Organizational Change*. (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1993).

However, it takes hard work on their part and yours if they are going to see all of its nuanced implications. Therefore, I would create a set of learning tools that would supplement a lecture.

Empathy is a tool and a skill most conflict resolution and peacebuilding professionals rely on. However, it is not a simple concept whose definition one can simply memorize for at least three reasons that are at the heart of critical thinking. They could take a number of pedagogical forms, but all active learning exercises for exploring empathy have to be centered on actual cases

First, you and your students will have to explore why empathy is important for all parties to a dispute. What happens when disputants lack empathy? Why was it in short supply in the period before any conflict was resolved? How did the "pool" of empathy expand—assuming it did? What role did peacebuilders and others play in that process?

Second and perhaps more importantly for your students who want to go on in the field, empathy itself is a critical thinking skill that they will have to practice. Understanding what empathy includes is one thing but practicing it in your daily life is quite another. As a result, in late 2019 when I most encounter students (and others) who despise President Trump, I do everything I can to help them see why he believes what he does. If you work with students who like Trump, ask them to do the same thing for President Obama or someone else whom they presumably dislike.

Third, understanding empathy to the point that a student can use it opens the door to many of the other transferable concepts you will probably want to focus on, ranging from reframing a dispute to having compassion for the powerless.

So, when I work with young people, I almost always introduce something like this statement from the scholar who got most of us interested in paradigm shifts, Thomas Kuhn, who once claimed:

> When reading the works of an important thinker, look first for the apparent absurdities in the text and ask yourself how a sensible person could have written them.[14]

In this case, the empathy is not that of the scientist but that of the activist who struggles to understand why someone could have voted for President Trump (or anyone else the activist dislikes) which is often linchpin to almost every key concept in peace and conflict studies.

For good or ill, paradigm shifts have entered our lexicon in ways that often obscure what they are all about or make people think they are relatively easy to pull off, both of which I read into the first of the cartoons on the page. To counter those misleading impressions, I normally work through a concrete example of a paradigm shift, usually the shift to the Copernican model as shown in the second cartoon.

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[14] Cited in *Understanding by Design*, 98,

Then, I can get to the real importance of empathy. If we build our conflict resolution or peacebuilding systems around empathy rather than treat it as a peripheral feature, our approach to conflict changes dramatically. In other words, empathy is important to us both as an analytical concept and as a tool most of us use most of the time when we actually try to resolve conflict at any scale. Seeing that, in turn, requires going beyond what my grandmother would have called "book learning."

Neuroscience research is beginning to provide convincing evidence that empathy is not simply a new-age feel-good factor. Although the causal mechanisms are far from clear, we know that feelings of empathy trigger the brain's right supramarginal gyrus. When that happens we are less likely to either think in terms of stereotypes or act rashly. Putting yourself "in someone else's shoes" may not change your core beliefs, but more understand can lead to more compassion and more concern for the fate of others.
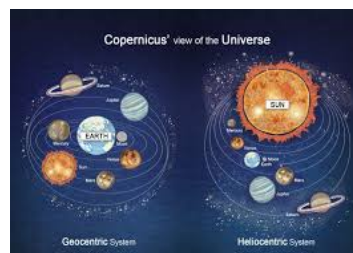
In short, a full exploration of empathy can be built around seeing that its real value comes not only when you understand why someone things the way she or he does but also how that can change yourself, which is what my colleague Bjorn Krondorfer is getting at when he uses the term "unsettling empathy."[15] You not only have to understand why someone you disagree with thinks the way he or she does, but you also have to take into account how that understanding changes or unsettles your own belief system.

And, as Krondorfer and so many other researchers have shown, people can improve their empathic skills. Without ending up like Commander Deanna Troi in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, the more empathetic we are, the better we also are at analyzing and resolving conflict.

As with everything else in this guide, there is no single way to help students (and their instructors) improve their empathetic skills. However, as I was writing this guide, I stumbled across two tools which suggest that there are dozens of enjoyable and instructive ways of doing so.

Gary Harrington's Video. My friend Gary Harrington is an active member of the Comanche tribe and an attorney who practices Native American law. He also makes short films.

He and his family were visiting when the story of President Trump's phone call with Ukrainian President Volodomir Zelensky broke. At some point, we were having dinner with my grandson Kiril (who is also Gary's great-nephew) when Kiril mentioned he had been talking about it in his third grade class that week.[16]

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[15] Bjorn Krondorfer, *Unsettling Empathy*. (Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield), forthcoming.

[16] Gary and I are not related, however. We are connected as part of a large and very blended family in which we have had ample time to improve our conflict resolution skills.

For reasons I could not now reconstruct, I remembered that Gary had made a short video, *Welcome*-- https://youtu.be/JT8UQSCQyAk. Ten years before Trump and his wall, Gary had made *Welcome* to reflect how Native Americans might have responded to the arrival of the Pilgrims *if* they had views on immigration that had a lot in common with White prejudices in 2009 (or today). So, he hired a few White actors (plus an infant) to play the role of Pilgrims rowing ashore in San Francisco (where he lives) and gathered some of his Native American friends to play the role of concerned citizens commenting on their arrival. Of course, they uttered many of the tropes that were common in anti-immigrant debates at the time and one still hears today.

What's key here is that our grandson and everyone else I showed the video to got the point. Kiril did miss some of Gary's more subtle touches, like the Pilgrim (in full regalia) using a leaf blower outside one Native American's expensive suburban home. Still, he got the point. Your understanding of a situation changes and gets more nuanced when you can see it from the other person's point of view.

The impeachment inquiry. I had actually had an exercise in empathy myself a few days later when I watched Adam Schiff and Devin Nunes make their opening statements before the House Intelligence Committee before Acting Director of National Intelligence, Joseph Maguire testified. As a good liberal, I agreed with just about everything Schiff said.

As a good liberal, I also expected to disagree with everything Nunes said.

So, I remembered the key things I'd included in my textbook about empathy in the minute or so before Nunes started speaking. I asked myself how a smart guy like Nunes could believe some of the (what seemed to me) stupid things he was about to say. In other words, I tried to put myself in his shoes.

I didn't agree with him any more than I did before he began his opening remarks. I did, however, begin to see the kinds of arguments we will have to make if we want to convince his supporters that President Trump has violated the law and/or his oath of office. None of my empathy preparation made his ideas any more appealing. However, they did point me toward some ways I could have a productive discussion if, perchance, I could end up sitting down with him.

If, on the other hand, you like the President, you would benefit from trying to do the same with Congressman Schiff's remarks.

Therein lies the importance of empathy whether you get at it through a satirical movie like Gary's or a real life example like those two congressional remarks. You can't hope to find a mutually satisfactory solution to a problem unless you can put yourself in the intellectual *and* emotional "shoes" of the people you disagree. When I see why you think the way you do in your own terms, it becomes easier to reframe an issue and begin identifying solutions we would both be happy with.

I suspect that you would not find Gary's video compelling if you didn't know him. And, by the time I finished writing the guide a month later, the opening statements at the first impeachment inquiry hearings had lost their luster.

Still, just a wee bit of creativity on your part and a few minutes searching the popular media or news stories that you follow will provide you with your equivalents.

Using the Book's Features

With these ideas in mind, I included five features in *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding* itself that were designed to make teaching/learning the material more useful and enjoyable for you and your students. As is the case with everything in the book, I assumed from the beginning that you would not have the time to do every exercise or have the students spend hours per week on my and other websites—even if you wanted to. Nonetheless, both were designed to be pedagogical as well as learning tools.

Critical Thinking Questions. I now put critical thinking questions at the beginning of a chapter rather than their usual place at the end. I would like to take credit for a brilliant idea, but it actually happened when a typesetter mistakenly put the questions at the start of chapters in an early edition of my comparative politics text at a time when humans still did a lot of the typesetting of books.

I realized that putting them at the beginning meant that students were much more likely to read them at all and then to use them to guide and sharpen their thinking as they read. Since then, I've (hopefully) gotten better at posing questions that help students master the basic material and to highlight the tough questions that I assume will challenge them analytically and ideologically.

Out on a Limb. I first started teaching peace and conflict studies courses at Colby College during the 1980s when most of my students had voted for President Reagan. Dealing with students when they disagreed with me from the outset also reminded me of the constructive relationships I had had with my own professors twenty years earlier who disagreed with me about Vietnam but also encouraged me to pursue my own beliefs—as long as I backed them up with logic and evidence.

I also quickly learned that I could not convince students—or anyone else—that I was right and they were wrong. Sure, students could parrot back my thoughts on an exam, but I knew that didn't last. More often than not, students "forget" that they agreed with an instructor as soon as the final exams and grades are submitted. To truly change a person's mind, the person has to do it him or herself.

In other words, I have always enjoyed working with students and professors I did not agree with. What's more, I have not choice. Given my presence on the Internet, my views are at most a mouse click or two away.

Therefore, in my own classes, I try to help students who disagree with me develop their own arguments as best they can. An author can't do that in a book. However, the out on a limb boxes are the best I could come up with here. They identify what I think are the most controversial points made in the book. You may well find other places where you think I've gone too far.

Those points can be terrific places to launch discussions that let you get to core concepts in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Conflict Labs. I included the conflict labs and critical thinking questions in the book because I wanted to overcome the traditional impression that a textbook is designed primarily to convey the conventional wisdom about a particular field. Because they are discussed at some length in the book, I won't go into them any farther here.

That said, I assume that you will experiment with them and adapt them to your own teaching style and your own students' interests and needs.

Charleshauss.info. I have long advocated using information technology in general and the Internet in particular in the social sciences. That fascination led me to quantitative political science in the first place and has left me an early adopter of technological innovations ever since.

I haven't always gotten things right the first time out. Thus, shortly after the first graphic web browser was introduced in 1995, I gave a talk to a group of Advanced Placement teachers explaining why no serious techie would abandoned the text based software package, Lynx.[17]

If I've learned anything in the last twenty-five years, it is that web sites have to be effectively curated as well as designed in order to be of value to the end user, whether that person is a student or a customer at Amazon or Nextflix. It won't take you more than a few seconds on charleshauss.info to discover that my curational skills far outpace my ability to design an aesthetically pleasant web site!

I expect the site to evolve and grow. Whatever form it takes, it will have links to information that could help get students started on everything from term papers to careers.

Working with me. It probably won't come as a surprise that I love working with young people. That started with my first job as a camp counselor which convinced me to become a teacher. It got reinforced on my at Colby when a student came up to me after my first class and asked me, "weren't you my camp counselor when I was nine?" Part of my job at AfP today involves doing outreach work with college and high school students, whether they take peace and conflict studies courses or not.

So, I am available to your students in at least three ways.

First, I get a real kick out of getting emails from students, especially students who disagree with me. They make me think, often in new ways. Thus, while I was writing this guide, I received an email from some high school students in Taiwan who were using my comparative politics textbook. They did not like the way I

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[17] Should you be so inclined (and I can't imagine why you would be), there are up-to-date versions of Lynx buried on the Web. https://lynx.invisible-island.net/current/

handled Taiwan in my discussion of democracy which drew on dated and biased definitions that political scientists use. Even though it was a minor point in the book, I looked into it, decided they were right and told them so, and will spend an hour visiting with their class using Zoom.us before the 2019-2020 academic year is over.

Second, if your students send me intriguing results from their versions of the conflict labs, I'll post them on the web site—anonymously if they want. I would like to use the book and the web site as part of a larger effort to engage young people in the world of applied peace and conflict studies in ways that extend beyond the classroom. Although I've never seen anyone do it successfully, I would like to create on line discussion forums in which your students can meet and discuss related topics wherever they happen to be taking a course.

Finally, I will be holding online office hours at times to be posted on the website. As far as I know, no one has ever done this before in a conventional class. However, Soliya (www.soliya.net) has been teaching online courses that bring together students from conflict zones and elsewhere for discussions that supplement what happens in the conventional classroom.

I have no intention of starting yet another career teaching online courses.

However, my Zoom account lets me hold de facto office hours. I can sit in my home office for an hour a week, and students can talk with me about everything from problems they see in my book (like the Taiwanese political science students) to the problems they are having starting a career. And because they will be sitting in the equivalent of their home office (dorm room, library, coffee shop, pub), I expect that they will be able to meet and hang out with students around the world who join the sessions from their own dorm rooms, libraries, coffee shops, or pubs.

I plan to start these in January 2020. Details will be posted in the peacebuilding section of my website.

Peacebuilding is a Team Sport

I rarely used group projects in a class before I moved to George Mason in the early 1990s and discovered that they were the rage. I don't think my colleagues and I used them very effectively at the time. And, they are hard to manage at a school like Mason where so many students both live off campus and maintain demanding work commitments while going to school.

Still, the older I get, the more convinced I am that courses in peace and conflict studies have to have an experiential component that also require students to do at least some of their work together. The reason is simple. Resolving conflict and building peace cannot be learned solely from a book. Similarly, no conflict is ever resolved nor is peace ever built by a single person acting alone.

As a result, I've built some of the exercises discussed here and in the book itself on the assumption that they are best done by students who work together. I've found, too, that having students do them together over the course of the entire semester maximizes what they learn from each other and also helps them see the connections between the course's conceptual material and the specifics of their project.

You can also ask your students to pursue a research topic together either of their or your choosing. Here are some examples. As I was writing this guide, the House of Representatives' impeachment investigation was well underway. One could have asked a group of students to together contemplate how two kinds of peacebuilders would approach the presidency—those who liked and those who disliked President Trump. Similarly, the wars in Syria and Afghanistan were in their eighth and eighteenth years respectively. Again, groups of students could explore how the "lessons" they were learning in your course could help them understand why those conflict kept dragging on and how we could do something to break the logjam.

Although the book does not—and cannot—do it, I like the idea of building some kind of field experience into a course. Oberlin's introductory course, for example, gives students a choice. They can either do a research project or have some sort of short-term internship. Most students choose the latter. And, if Oberlin can do it, you almost certainly can, too. As I know from first hand experience, Oberlin is in a small town that is not quite in the middle of nowhere, but is close to it. Still, my friends Steve Mayer and Steve Crowley routinely find creative ways of placing their students in local projects. To be sure, none of them deal with global issues. Still, they have found meaningful experiences for their students. You can, too.

Whether you do group projects or internships, the most important challenge is to integrate the exercise into the overall flow of the course, something I know I have always struggled to do. Here, again, design principles are key. Ask yourself which course concepts and other goals the experiential segment(s) would advance and, then, how you would do so.

Finally, if I've learned anything, group projects and internships require lots of supervision on the instructor's part. So, if you are up for tenure or if you have a major publishing deadline of your own coming up, you might want to limit the extent to which you rely on these kinds of exercises, because they will eat up a lot of your time.

Assessing Your Students and Their Work

I estimate that I spent at least the equivalent of eight to ten work weeks a year grading papers during the years I taught full time. Unlike most of my colleagues, I mostly enjoyed grading, because I got to see what my students were—and weren't—learning. Especially

when I taught at Colby and frequently taught the same student a number of times, I could watch them grow.

Here, too, my thinking has evolved especially since I left conventional teaching and since I discovered backward design, I would now approach the assessment process in a much more holistic way and would find it even more enjoyable and rewarding.

Assessment tools should measure the degree to which they master the concept, especially their ability to use it in other contexts. That certainly can't be done using the kind of short answer questions used in conventional testing. Even essay exam or paper topic questions have to be specially design to measure the student's ability to take a concept developed in one classroom context and apply it in another.

Frankly, there is no obvious way to do that. If I were teaching such a class today, I would base a lot of the grade on a project the students designed themselves that applied one or at most a handful of concepts to a case other than ones covered in class. Students often dislike group projects because they are poorly supervised and/or connected to course themes. In this case, you can get around that by setting up what business professor Rita McGrath calls checkpoints at which you meet with the groups and give them feedback on the progress they are making. Indeed, the choice of topic and the learning that takes place at each of those checkpoints can be more important for mastering the concept than making a formal presentation or writing the project up can be.

Helping Them Change Their Lives

Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal.

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

I knew I wanted to become a teacher the day I stepped in to run my first cabin as a counselor in training when I was fifteen. I don't think I fully realized how rewarding and enjoyable teaching could truly be until I taught my first peace and conflict studies course twenty-five years later.

Since then, I've used words I rarely use in describing the feeling I get every time I'm asked to take part in any such courses. I feel blessed and grateful.

That's not because of the intellectual challenges. I get plenty of that when I have to explain why the United States does not provide health care coverage to all of its students or why most countries in the Global South have made tremendous progress in pulling their citizens out of the worst forms of poverty.

Yet, there is something special about teaching peace and conflict studies.

You can change students' lives.

Or, put more accurately, you can help them change their own lives.

That's because of the subject matter and the energy that so many of your students will bring to your course. If this is the first time you teach this course, I suspect you will be surprised by how eager your students are and how high your grade distribution will be at the end of the semester no matter what you do in the classroom. Nonetheless, when done well, peace and conflict studies courses can change students' lives because your teaching will also encourage them to look inward and question some of their core values and assumptions about the role of conflict in all aspects of their own lives.

One friend who was an early immersive game designer turned social change activist talks about how the best gaming experiences help players explore what he calls the "world without" and the "world within." The same holds for peace and conflict studies courses because they can help us constantly shuttle back and forth between the "real world" and our most cherished values.

That, too, takes us back to concepts and backward design one last time. In this case, think about five of the key concepts from the book that have been central to my own teaching. They are the issues I still have to work on in my life as a practitioner and a writer. You might add others, but these are the ones that helped me change the most when I was a student in the 1960s and 1970s and still do the tricktoday.

There is, though, an irony here. If you want students to develop these skills, you have to mirror them in the ways that you teach and interact with your students outside of the classroom as well.

Listening. I learned how much I still have to learn on this front when I was asked to spend a morning with the second year group of students at Rondine (where I also got the cover for my book) who come from conflict zones around the world. They wanted to learn about what I do at AfP, but I also had to listen to them. About their experiences in Mali or Georgia or their hopes for what they could accomplish when they go back home a year from now. I had to remember that what I said to them was important. So was what they had to say to me.

Ask tough questions. If you want your students to be curious, you have to be curious, too. That extends beyond the formal subject matter to all the other aspects of their lives that are affected by conflict. I've never taught a course in which a few students' back stories did not inform the positions they took or enhance my professional life. You might be surprised at how far they can go. I saw that in a day I spent at a summer camp GMU runs for high school students. Two of them came up to me afterward with an idea for a one day workshop for high school students in our part of northern Virginia which I have helped them prepare and will take place shortly after this guide is published. To be honest, I did little more than encourage them, nodding approvingly when they laid out their plans.

Build on small victories. As noted earlier, I recently discovered Debra Meyerson's work on tempered radicals or people who choose to make radical changes in a system by

working from within. Then, I discovered her new career as a stroke survivor, as noted earlier. In both, she talks about helping others and herself win small victories, a concept she first learned from her mentor, Karl Weick. Now, she applies it to herself. Sure, she's frustrated by the fact that she can't recover everything she lost from her stroke nearly a decade ago. But, she relishes in and tries to build off of the small gains she makes. That holds for teaching—or doing anything else about—peace. I jokingly say that I majored in ending the war in Vietnam by Thursday as an undergraduate. Now, even though I know that change comes one step at a time, I forget it a lot. Especially in dealing with students. If I learn slowly and that's OK, it's OK if they do, too. Don't expect epiphanies left and right in each class. Once in a while will do. Just be sure you build on them.

Help them make choices. I also recently read Bruce Deel's *Trust First*.[18] It's not the kind of book I'd normally read. Deel is an evangelical pastor in Atlanta where he has built an amazing social service network for the most underprivileged of the city's poor as part of his ministry, City of Refuge. Among other things, he learns and relearns and relearns again a message all teachers (and preachers) have to learn and remember. I can't convince you of anything. All I can do is help give you the tools that you can use in making your own choices. When I teach about peacebuilding and conflict resolution, I'd love it if my students decided to devote their lives to my chosen profession, too. I've watched plenty of my colleagues "preach" to their students. Sometimes, the students go along—at least until the final grades are in. I know I've done it, too. Mea culpa.

I suspect you have your own list of peacebuilding concepts and skills that you have to work on, and you will have to make you own list of them before you design your own course—with or without my book.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

The real voyage of discovery comes not in seeking new lands bu tin seeing with new eyes.

--Marcel Proust

I was 71.9178082179 years old (but who's counting) when I wrote these final paragraphs. To paraphrase the words of Marcel Proust that begins *From Conflict Resolution to Peacebuilding,* writing the book was a journey of discovery. So, too, was writing this guide

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[18] Bruce Deel, *Trust First: A True Story of the Power of Giving People* Second Chances. (New York: Optimism Press, 2019).

If you have made it this far, it will not surprise you that I tend to be introspective or that the appointment with my therapist is the high point of most weeks. However, I found that writing this guide led me to think about themes like self-awareness, mindfulness, empathy, compassion and the like even more often than I usually do.

It also reinforced something I've known since I taught my first peace and conflict studies course in the early 1980s. I learned a lot about myself every time I taught these courses. In retrospect, I regret that I wasn't able to add the dose of intentionality I've discussed here when I was still in the classroom.

I hope these words have helped you think about their role in your own teaching. I hope, too, that you share the sentiment on the coffee mug my stepdaughter gave me twenty years ago. It was sitting on my desk while I was typing these words, which reminded me that including it here was as good a way of ending this guide as it was of ending the book as a whole.