COURSE SYLLABUS

PEACE CULTURE AND TRANSFORMATIVE COMMUNICATION

COURSE INFORMATION

Programme	Empowering Community Engagement: Soft Skills Micro-Courses for Students and Staff
University	Çukurova University
Department	Interdisciplinary
Course name	Peace Culture and Transformative Communication
Course code	ECE2.1
Credits/hours	3 ECTS / 28 hours in-person & 47 hours autonomous work
Language of instruction	Turkish
Course dates	Academic Year 2026/27 (11 Feb 2026 – 20 May 2026
Course schedule	Wednesday, 15.00 – 17:00
Mode of instruction	On-campus / In-person
Target audience	Students, faculty, staff
Course coordinator	İsmail Elçiçek
Course instructor	İlke Şanlıer
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SHORT DESCRIPTION

This course explores peace culture as a communicative practice shaped by power relations, conflict histories, and everyday interactions. Using a challenge-based learning approach, participants work in interdisciplinary teams to address a real-world communication challenge connected to peace, justice, and inclusion in university or community contexts. Students practise dialogical, conflict-sensitive and

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ethically grounded communication skills through short inputs, applied tasks, peer feedback and guided reflection. The course emphasises responsible communication, attention to inequality, and practical design of small-scale, feasible interventions.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyse communicative dynamics of conflict and peace by examining power relations, inequalities, and contextual factors within real-world challenges.
- Apply and test dialogical and conflict-sensitive communication strategies in intercultural and interdisciplinary team settings.
- Co-design and justify a feasible, context-responsive response to a real-world challenge, using transformative communication principles.
- Critically reflect on and evaluate one's positionality, ethical responsibility, and potential impact in peace-oriented communication practice.

COURSE CONTENTS

MODULE 1: Understanding Multiple Crises: Gender, Ecology, Migration and Poverty

Weeks 1–3

This module is grounded in the multiple crises framework developed in the doctoral research underpinning the course. It introduces students to the interconnected nature of economic, ecological, gendered and migration-related crises, emphasising how these dynamics shape conflict and peace processes.

Key topics

- Economic crisis and cycles of poverty
- Ecological crisis and forced migration
- Media representations of gender inequality in times of crisis
- The impact of neoliberal policies on class, gender and migration

Workshops and learning activities

- Crisis experience mapping using an intersectional lens
- Analysing media representations of crisis and vulnerability

Soft skills developed: Systemic thinking, ethical sensitivity, analytical reasoning

MODULE 2: Critical Peace Education: Intersectional and Ecocentric Pedagogies

Weeks 4–6

Building on critical pedagogy traditions, this module explores peace education through feminist, intersectional and eco-centric perspectives. It draws on the work of Freire, Mezirow and critical peace education scholars to question whose peace is prioritised and whose experiences remain marginalised.

Key topics

- Invisible labour of women in peace processes
- Experiences of migrant women and children
- Ecocentric peace education and eco-justice
- Poverty, class-based violence and structural harm
- Affect, vulnerability and emotional dimensions of peace

Workshops and learning activities

- Dialogue circle: “Is peace the same for everyone?”
- Ecological feminist peace imaginaries workshop

Soft skills developed: Empathy, active listening, dialogical engagement, reflexive thinking

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MODULE 3: Media, Communication and Peace: Critical Perspectives

Weeks 7–10

This module focuses on media as a key site where conflict, peace and inequality are produced and contested. Drawing on critical media studies and peace journalism, students analyse how migration, gender and ecological crises are framed and how alternative communicative practices can challenge dominant narratives.

Key topics

- Anti-migrant discourse and racism in media
- Ecofeminism and representations of environmental crises
- Criminalisation of poverty
- Reinterpreting peace journalism through gender and migration perspectives

Workshops and learning activities

- Rewriting a news story in three different frames: gender, migration and ecology
- Film analysis: framing migration stories and conflict narratives

Soft skills developed: Media literacy, creative communication, ethical judgement

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MODULE 4: Challenge-Based Learning: Designing Peace-Oriented Responses to Local Issues

Weeks 11–14

The final module operationalises learning through a challenge-based approach. Students work in interdisciplinary teams to design a peace-oriented communication or media intervention addressing a real local issue in the Adana context. The emphasis is on feasibility, ethical responsibility and conflict sensitivity rather than large-scale solutions.

Local challenge themes may include

- Women's safety in public spaces
- Exclusion of migrant communities
- Environmental degradation and water scarcity
- Poverty and housing insecurity

Key topics

- Impact-oriented design and sustainability
- Ethical risk assessment and responsibility
- Translating analysis into communicative action

Workshops and learning activities

- Project concept development sessions
- Prototype media or communication product creation
- Final presentation and community-informed feedback

Soft skills developed: Project management, teamwork, creative problem-solving, responsibility, accountability

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PEDAGOGICAL LOGIC OF THE COURSE

The course follows a progressive structure:

1. **Understanding crises** as interconnected and structural
2. **Questioning peace** through critical and intersectional pedagogy
3. **Analysing communication and media** as sites of power and resistance
4. **Applying learning** through a challenge-based, locally grounded project

This structure ensures conceptual depth while maintaining practical relevance and skill development.

ALIGNMENT WITH CHALLENGE-BASED LEARNING

- Challenges are locally situated but theoretically informed
- Students move from analysis to design, not from opinion to solution
- Power, inequality and ethics are embedded at every stage
- Communication is treated as both a site of harm and a tool for transformation

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

This course adopts a critical, practice-oriented and challenge-based learning approach grounded in peace education, communication studies and intersectional analysis. Teaching methods are designed to combine academic knowledge with lived experience and civic practice, progressively moving students from conceptual understanding to ethically responsible action.

Modular and progressive learning design

The course is organised into four thematic modules that build on each other. Each module combines theoretical input, critical discussion and applied learning activities. The modular structure allows students to engage with multiple crises, peace education, media and communication, and local challenges in a cumulative and coherent way.

Integration of civil society perspectives

A core pedagogical component of the course is the involvement of civil society representatives. In each module, invited practitioners from non-governmental organisations, community initiatives or advocacy groups contribute to selected sessions related to the module's main themes. These contributions provide grounded insights into how issues such as gender inequality, ecological crisis, migration and poverty are experienced, addressed and communicated in real-world contexts.

Civil society contributions may take the form of guest talks, case presentations or facilitated discussions. Their role is not to provide solutions, but to share situated knowledge, practical constraints and ethical dilemmas, enabling students to connect academic analysis with civic realities.

Interactive seminars and workshops

Teaching combines short lectures with facilitated seminars and workshops that prioritise dialogue and critical engagement. Workshop formats include crisis mapping, dialogue circles, media analysis and creative reframing exercises. Civil society inputs are integrated into these sessions to enrich discussion and contextualise theoretical concepts.

Critical pedagogy and reflexive learning

Drawing on critical peace education and transformative learning traditions, the course emphasises reflexivity and positional awareness. Students are encouraged to reflect on their own assumptions, responsibilities and emotional responses when engaging with conflict and crisis. Reflexive learning is supported through guided discussions, individual reflection tasks and structured feedback moments.

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Media and communication-based learning

Media texts, journalistic materials and audiovisual works are used as key learning resources throughout the course. Students analyse how conflict, migration, gender and ecological crises are framed in media and explore alternative communicative practices. Contributions from civil society actors working with media, advocacy or public communication further strengthen the link between analysis and practice.

Challenge-based learning component

In the final module, students engage in a challenge-based learning process focused on a locally grounded issue. Civil society partners may act as contextual reference points by sharing relevant experiences or challenges, while students retain responsibility for analysis, design and decision-making. The emphasis remains on feasible, ethically grounded communication or media interventions rather than large-scale policy solutions.

Collaborative learning and formative feedback

Group work, peer interaction and dialogue are central to the learning process, particularly in workshops and the challenge-based module. Continuous formative feedback from instructors, peers and, where appropriate, civil society contributors supports students in refining both their analytical and practical work.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Assessment type	Assessment criteria	Overall weight
Participation and engagement	Active and informed participation in face-to-face sessions, workshops and discussions; engagement with civil society contributions; preparedness and respectful dialogue	20%
Media and communication analysis tasks	Ability to critically analyse media texts and communication practices through a peace, power and intersectionality lens; clarity and coherence of analysis	20%
Challenge-based group project	Relevance and feasibility of the proposed communication or media intervention; attention to power relations and ethical risks; creativity and clarity of design; teamwork and collaboration	40%
Individual reflective assessment	Depth of reflexivity regarding positionality, learning process and responsibility; ability to link experience with course concepts	20%

Both individual and group performance are considered in grading. In group-based assessment components, individual contribution will be considered through peer feedback and reflective submissions. The use of AI tools is permitted for research support, idea development and language assistance, provided that its use is transparently acknowledged and students remain responsible for content, sources and ethical implications. All submissions must comply with university and EUPeace regulations on academic integrity and plagiarism.

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STUDENT WORKLOAD (in hours)

Contact hours	Independent work	Overall
28	47	75

STUDENT WORKING HOURS

Type of activity	Task	Hours
Contact hours	Face-to-face sessions	28h (14 weeks × 2h)
Guided learning and course activities	Assigned readings and audio-visual materials	16h
	Workshops and in-class activities (preparation and follow-up)	8h
	Media analysis and short written tasks	4h
Challenge-based learning component	Group project development and coordination	8h
	Prototype production and preparation of final output	4h
Individual reflection and assessment	Reflective self-assessment and learning diary	4h
	Final presentation preparation and submission	3h

READING LIST / RELEVANT REFERENCES

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Continuum.

Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*. Sage.

Hooks, B. (2003). *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. Routledge.

Lederach, J. P. (2003). *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*. Good Books.

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