

London + Amman: Summer Peace and Conflict Resolution Course Descriptions

Phase 1: The Life Cycle of Peace and Conflict: Lessons Learned in Northern Ireland (LONDON)

As a formal imperial power, a permanent member of the UN Security Council and a nation intimately tied to the Northern Ireland conflict, the United Kingdom offers a unique perspective from which to study conflict at several levels. London's vast political and cultural resources will be used to explore conflict development and transformation, the nature of political leadership in conflict, and the significance of "memory" in conflict. Using Northern Ireland as a case study, you will examine burning issues in contemporary conflict resolution and raise questions to be addressed in Amman during the second half of the program.

Phase 2: Conflict Resolution and Management: Beyond the Arab-Israeli Conflict (AMMAN)

In order to understand Middle Eastern politics, an understanding of Arab culture and societal organization is essential. Intra-Arab conflicts play key roles in determining the regional political scene. You should emerge from this course with a multi-faceted understanding of peace and conflict in the region. Specifically, this course will address the impact of cultural and societal factors on conflict resolution and management, focusing on case studies across the Middle Eastern region. In addition to the well-publicized Arab-Israeli conflict, lesser-known conflicts in Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq will be addressed. In addition, tradition forms of dispute resolution within and between tribes will be examined.

Phase 3: Understanding Civilizations: Islam and the West (LONDON)

What is Islam? What is the 'West'? Is Islam inherently resistant to secularization as some scholars and Islamic activists believe? Why is one defined in terms of religion and the other a geographical designation? The aim of this course is to focus on the historical, political and religious relationships between 'Islam' and the 'West'. Islam has for centuries been Europe's neighbor and cultural contestant with a history of conflict and co-existence. Since September 11 there has been increasing talk of a 'clash of civilizations', but globalization has also created an interdependency of faiths which requires greater co-operation, understanding and dialogue.

Students in this course will be exposed to the recurrent theme of whether it is possible to separate the world into monolithic entities called 'Islam' and the 'West'. Students will also gain insight into the profound urgency to develop mutual understanding between the West and the Islamic World which is highlighted by a myriad of violent events over the last decades. On the assumption that ignorance is the enemy of peace, this course intends to explore the sources of conflict that have led towards the notion of "a clash of civilizations."