



Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies  
University of Hargeisa

# MA in Peace and Conflict Studies

IPCS Handbook  
2021

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 IPCS History

The Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS) is a teaching and research center at the University of Hargeisa, Somaliland. It was established in January 2008 by the University of Hargeisa and Eastern Mennonite University in the United States of America to provide a multidisciplinary approach to understand and address conflict and violence in the Horn of Africa. The Institute was the first Institute of its kind to engage in teaching and research in the areas of peace and conflict studies, and remains the only one in the Somali-speaking region in the Horn of Africa. The IPCS provides interested scholars, institute members, and students with the opportunity to engage in intensive interdisciplinary study and research on Somaliland and Somali-inhabited regions in the Horn of Africa.

The central objective for the establishment of IPCS is to institutionalize and transform Somaliland's indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms into a field of study and to bring those mechanisms to public spheres, as well as to disseminate Somaliland's indigenous knowledge to similar international higher education institutions. It was also to blend this indigenous knowledge with liberal peace building principles and procedures.

Within the context of this broad mission, the Institute envisages three interrelated divisions of its work: academic teaching, research, and outreach and development. Outreach activities take place both at a local and a community level in order to enhance the IPCS' impact on stability at home and at the regional and international level. This engagement also acts to support the creation of extensive collaboration and mutual learning networks for peace and conflict research with the world's leading universities.

## 1.2 IPCS Vision

The Institute strives to become a leading institution for higher learning and research in the areas of peace and conflict studies in the Horn of Africa.

## 1.3 IPCS Mission

The IPCS mission is to enhance the essence of peace and conflict studies through quality teaching, research, and advocacy, and to disseminate knowledge in Somaliland and the wider Horn of Africa region.

## 1.4 IPCS Core Principles

1. Respect for academic freedom, guided by discipline and determination.
2. Belief in justice and fairness for all to avoid conflict and violence.
3. Adherence to institutional ethics and integrity.
4. Belief in growth and optimism, guided by innovation and excellence.

## 2. Purpose of the IPCS

The major objective of the Institute is to produce experts capable of managing the peace and stability of Somaliland, develop viable institutions and make policies that vanguard the development processes in the future.

The specific objectives are:

1. To produce graduates with solid knowledge and research skills in the areas of peace and conflict studies;
2. To teach the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms while complementing this local knowledge with modern conflict resolution methodologies;
3. To research and document indigenous methods for conflict resolution and transformation, and social reconciliation in Somaliland;
4. To enhance public understanding of peace and conflict prevention and management through the organization of public lectures, seminars, workshops, panel dis-

- cussions, and publications;
5. To promote a culture of peace and tolerance, not as a moral principle, but also as a way of life;
  6. To disseminate and expand the knowledge and structural framework of peacebuilding in So-

maliland through strengthening its partnership with the Government of Somaliland, non-state actors, and local communities.

### 3. IPCS Programs

#### 3.1 Education (MA programs)

##### ◇ *MA in Peace and Conflict Studies*

IPCS offers a two-year MA program in peace and conflict studies designed to address the growing demand in the region to understand and investigate peace and conflict-related issues. This two-year long program, including a dissertation component, incorporates theories, methods, and other contemporary issues in the field of peace and conflict, such as conflict analysis, research ethics, etc.

The MA aims to:

1. Develop a deeper understanding of the rich indigenous knowledge regarding peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Somaliland.
2. Enhance empirically grounded research in peace and conflict studies.
3. Build the capacities of specialists in peace and conflict-related issues for the growing number of domestic and global organizations, and;
4. Nurture local expertise in theoretical and practical dimensions of peace and conflict studies.

### ◊ *MA in Peace, Governance and Development (UPEACE program)*

Since 2019 the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies has hosted UPEACE academic programs in Somaliland. This includes a 12-month MA in Peace, Governance and Development as one of the higher learning programs the UPEACE Africa Programme provides to African citizens.

The University for Peace (UPEACE) is a global university created on December 5th, 1980 by the General Assembly of the United Nations through Resolution 35/55 with headquarters in Costa Rica, Central America. It has Regional Centers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, China, Philippines, Columbia, and joint programs in Austria, South Korea, Monaco and Honduras.

#### **3.1.1 Admission requirements**

In addition to the requirements of the Graduate Studies of the University of Hargeisa, admission to the Master's Program in Peace and Conflict Studies shall be open to those applicants who:

- » Has a minimum Bachelor degree in one of the disciplines related to social sciences (e.g. international relations, international law, history, geography, sociology and social anthropology, philosophy, journalism and mass communication, and social work).
- » Must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.75 in his/her major field of study.
- » The candidate must have two letters of recommendation from academic staff and at least one from the institution where the applicant is employed.
- » Must pass the University Placement Test.
- » Meet the School of Graduate Studies admission requirements.
- » Meeting the minimum requirements of the Graduate program does not guarantee admission into your desired degree program.

### **3.1.2 Duration of studies**

The program, which is student-centered, consists of 18-months of full-time study organized in two phases: a coursework phase that comprises of interactive teaching and learning (40%), self-learning (40%) and collaborative learning (20%). The coursework is done in the first year and is followed by a thesis work planned for 9 months.

### **3.1.3 Attendance requirements**

The student is required to attend at least 75% of the teaching classes and assessments. Any student who does not attend may have their studies terminated. The Institute is required to notify the Student Affairs Office and Academic Program Development and Promotion Directorate about periods of absence or unsatisfactory attendance. Attendance requirements are formally defined in the rules and regulations available at the University.

### **3.1.4 Graduation requirements**

In accordance with the graduation requirements of the Graduate School, graduation with a Master of Arts in Peace and Conflict Studies requires:

- » Successful completion of a minimum of 24 credit hours of coursework and six credit hours of thesis work;
- » Minimum CGPA of 3.00 for course work and a minimum grade of 'satisfactory' of thesis work,
- » Not more than one C and cumulative CGPA in each semester should be 3.00, and;
- » To satisfy other university-wide requirements.

### 3.1.5 Degree nomenclature

Students who have successfully completed the coursework with a minimum letter grade of B (CGPA of 3.00), successfully and publicly defended their thesis, and gained approval from the Board of Examiners, will be awarded the degree of Master of Arts in Peace and Conflict Studies.

### 3.1.6 Modules Profile

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Hours
First Semester, First Year		
PCS 601	Theories of Peace and Conflict	3
PCS 602	Research Methods in Peace and Conflict Studies	3
PCS 603	Peace, Conflict and Development in the Horn of Africa	3
PCS 604	Conflict Analysis and Transformation	3
Second Semester, First Year		
PCS 611	Media, Peace and Conflict	3
PCS 612	Graduate Seminar in Global Peace and Security Issues	3
PCS 613	Peace, Conflict and Human Rights	3
PCS 614	Security, Governance and Development in Africa	3
First & Second Semesters, Second Year		
PCS 621	MA Thesis	6
Total Credits		30

### 3.1.7 Modules Description

#### PCS 601: Theories of Peace and Conflict

The crucial challenge confronting humanity in the globalized world of the 21st century is to create conditions for a transition from the prevailing culture of war and widespread violence to a necessary culture of peace and non-violence. This is particularly true for Africa, the Middle Eastern region and other regions in the global South. The causes of conflict, war and the building and maintenance of peace are complex and understudied subjects. This module theory of peace and conflict is one of the major courses for the Master of Arts Programme in Peace and Conflict Studies at the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Hargeisa.

The module provides students with the analytical skills needed to understand and examine how conflicts develop and escalate, to identify factors that can lead to or sustain violence, and to map root causes of conflict (e.g., human rights violations, needs deprivation, cultural and religious differences, inequality, resource misuse and environmental degradation) at interpersonal, intergroup, and international levels. The module introduces students to the underlying causes of structural and physical violence, and to numerous peacebuilding strategies. Furthermore, the module discusses different theoretical strands that provide different perspectives on peace and conflict, and ways forward to transcend current challenges.

The course includes intensive practice in the application of peace and conflict theories and the development of peacebuilding skills, including empathic listening, dialogue, conflict analysis, and negotiation and mediation tactics. This innovative curriculum combines rigorous academic work with simulations and role-plays, and challenges participants to apply classroom learning to conflicts in their own lives through reflection, group activities, and writing exercises.



## **PCS 602: Research Methods in Peace and Conflict Studies**

The main objective of this module is to explore the philosophical and methodological approaches to social science research in general and peace and conflict studies in particular. This module will provide an opportunity for students to establish or advance their understanding of research through a critical exploration of research language, ethical principles, challenges and approaches. The module introduces the elements of the research process within quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approach. Students will use these theoretical underpinnings to begin to critically review the literature relevant to peace and conflict studies and determine how research findings are useful in informing their understanding of their environment (work, social, local, global). This module essentially will build on the philosophy of science, to formulate research problems; the research process and research design, methods of data collection and data analysis, and research ethics. Further to this, the module will have a particular focus on developing the students' theoretical knowledge and applied skills in conducting both qualitative and quantitative types of research as well as mixed in peace and conflict areas.

## **PCS 603: Peace, Conflict and Development in the Horn of Africa**

The module examines the relationship between peace, conflict, and development in the Horn of Africa, beginning with a review of some of the principal causes of conflict. The assumption is that many of the primary causes of conflict in the Horn of Africa are closely related to the question of development. Examples of current trends of peace and conflict, such as disputes over borders and self-determination, challenges of democratization, the question of identity and ethnic tensions, disputes over the use and development of international water resources, tensions over land claims, the destabilizing impact of widespread poverty and increasing social inequality, and a rising flow of migrants fleeing war, famine, and other vestiges of political, social, and economic breakdown are discussed.

The module also addresses the question of how peace in the region contributes to the development process. In contrast, the lack of peace and stability, that is, a situation of war or conflict, drains away resources; armed conflicts destroy infrastructure and human lives, and deplete natural resources. The module, therefore, advances a more comprehensive understanding of peace, conflict, and development processes in the Horn of Africa, including the environmental scarcities, cultural and ethnic clashes, geographic fortunes, and conflict transformation.

### **PCS 604: Conflict Analysis and Transformation**

The module focuses on two important concepts in peace studies namely conflict analysis and transformation. In the area of conflict analysis, the module examines theoretical and practical frameworks for understanding conflict, with particular attention to structures and dynamics inhibiting peace. In the second part relating to conflict transformation, the module explores the theoretical and practical foundations of various approaches to working with conflict to advance positive goals such as social equity and reconciliation. By so doing the module will achieve two principal objectives namely to provide students with some of the analytical skills needed to understand how conflicts develop and escalate, identify factors that can lead to or sustain violence, and to map root causes of conflict (e.g., human rights violations, needs deprivation, cultural and religious differences, inequality, resource misuse and environmental degradation) at interpersonal, intergroup, and international levels and also enhance students' skills in conflict resolution methods and practices (facilitation, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, adjudication) as well as to principles of restorative justice and dynamics of collective peacebuilding practice respectively.

### **PCS 611: Media, Peace, and Conflict**

Issues of peace and conflict take the central place in international relations. It is in the recorded past, that those big civilizations were destroyed by wars and remained the worst history of humans. Conflict

eroded human friendly relations and destroyed citizens' rights to peace and made the human life nasty. Media as a political institution in society play an immense role in contributing to processes of conflict prevention and peacemaking and building. Journalists play pivotal roles in building peace and there is nothing more valuable than living in peace for the citizens. It is primarily important to live peacefully rather than saying rest in peace at the graveside of a citizen who died in conflict. Hence, this module is designed for students to enable them to know the nexus between media, peace and conflict and play a dual role as a journalist and a citizen. Emphasis is placed on the intersection of theory and practice, that is, on media analysis and media production, and special attention is paid to debates around its role or contribution in the flaring up or resolving conflict. The module further discusses the specific theoretical areas of research, such as media effects, conflict transformation, what constitutes "peace media," and how media communication may help in the process of conflict transformation and outlines a set of approaches that can be useful in preventing violence.

## **PCS 612: Graduate Seminar in Global Peace and Security Issues**

Contemporary global issues in peace, conflict and security are numerous, multifaceted and multidimensional. This seminar module explores and introduces students to various issues of global concerns facing the world today, such as climate change, environmental degradation and desertification, conflicts on scarce resources and allocation, terrorism, piracy, the arms race and nuclear proliferation, poverty, inequality and gender, etc. All these issues in one way or another have political, economic and social dimensions that confront contemporary humanity. The major objective of this module is to encourage critical thinking about many of the political, social, economic, and security issues that face us as both Somaliland and African citizens and as members of the international community.

## PCS 613: Peace, Conflict and Human Rights

This module explores the increasingly relevant intersection of international human rights and conflict. It introduces students to many of the ethical and operational issues that policymakers, diplomats, human rights and humanitarian aid workers, soldiers, peacekeepers, and civilian police face in responding to today's conflicts. The module introduces students to a broad range of issues, concepts, and approaches integral to the study of human rights and conflict. The module provides an introduction to basic human rights philosophy, principles, and the instruments and institutions found under international human rights law. The module explores human rights as a cause or consequence of violent conflict; examples of substantive human rights found in various international treaties; holding governments, organizations or individuals responsible for violations; the regional human rights system in Africa; the women, peace and security agenda; human rights in conflict and the role of UN peacekeepers in stemming violations; and finally paths forward such as new concepts such as 'human security' and the UN's sustainable development goals. The purpose of this module is to examine the history, development, structure and efficacy of international human rights law. In this module, students will understand the nexus between human rights for one hand, and the peace and conflict for the other. Students will assess the remedies that exist for violations of human rights law in the various systems and examine practical case studies where relevant. This module provides a platform through which students can explore international human rights norms thematically in connection with peace and conflict.

## PCS 614: Security, Governance and Development in Africa

The challenges posed by civil wars, genocides, famines and other humanitarian crises show that security and development are closely linked today. Successful development and conflict resolution require

the provision of security. Conversely, lack of development can breed insecurity and violence. The interdisciplinary course also examines the complex framework of politics of governance to understand the actors, and processes that make/form public policy. This module explores the conceptual, historical and policy issues surrounding security, governance and development in Africa in the global context and how these manifest themselves in the wider context of contemporary warfare and international security. Security, governance, and development are inextricably linked, yet all too often both academics and policy-makers address them separately. This module brings together interrelated areas of study, acknowledging that insecurity, weak governance and underdevelopment interact in dynamic ways and that a full understanding of them requires a holistic approach. The module exposes students to a variety of complex transnational issues, taking a multidisciplinary approach to some of the key questions facing policy-makers and scholars today. It is designed to enhance students' analytical, research, and critical thinking skills, to provide them with detailed practical knowledge of security, governance and development around the world and the African continent.

### **3.1.8 Teaching staff**

The Institute has full-time qualified teaching staff as well as visiting professors from different institutions specialized in the areas of peace and conflict studies, international relations, political science, media and mass communications, and international law. These professors and senior teaching staff of the Institute include:

1. Professor Samuel Kale Ewusi

- \* Ph.D in peace studies and international relations, North-West University, South Africa
- \* MA in international relations, Maiduguri, Nigeria
- \* MA in political economy, Maiduguri, Nigeria
- \* Academic rank: professor
- \* Hosting Institution: United Nations-University for Peace, Costa Rica

2. Abdiwasa Abdilahi Bade

- \* Ph.D in political science, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
- \* MA in international relations, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
- \* MA in international law, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- \* Academic rank: assistant professor
- \* Hosting Institution: Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

3. Samuel Andreas

- \* Ph.D in African studies and history, University of Basel, Switzerland
- \* MA in international political economy and development, Erasmus University of

Rotterdam, The Hague, The Netherlands

- \* MA in African studies, Leiden University, The Netherlands
- \* Academic rank: senior lecturer
- \* Hosting Institution: International Institute of Social History, The Netherlands
- \*

4. Kingsley L. Ngange

- \* Ph.D in mass communications, University of Buea, Cameroon
- \* MA in Language and Culture in Europe, Linköping University, Sweden
- \* Academic rank: associate professor
- \* Hosting Institution: University of Buea, Cameroon
- \*

5. Mohamoud Abdi Sheikh Ahmed

- \* Ph.D in education, Atlantic International University, USA
- \* MA in conflict resolution, University of Bradford, UK
- \* Postgraduate Diploma in international development studies, University of Oslo, Norway
- \* Academic rank: senior lecturer
- \* Hosting Institution: Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, Somaliland

6. Nasir M. Ali

- \* Ph.D in peace, governance and development, United Nations- University for Peace, Costa Rica
- \* MA in international relations, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
- \* MA in African studies, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
- \* Academic rank: senior lecturer
- \* Hosting Institution: Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, Somaliland

7. Amal Ali

- \* Ph.D in international law, University of Sheffield, UK
- \* LLM in international and European law, University of Sheffield, UK
- \* Academic rank: senior lecturer
- \* Hosting Institution: Frantz Fanon University, Somaliland

8. Abdirahman Ahmed Hussein

- \* Ph.D in English language and literature, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA
- \* MA in English language and literature, Oklahoma State University, USA
- \* Academic rank: senior lecturer
- \* Hosting Institution: University of Hargeisa, Somaliland

9. Abdinasir Ibrahim Ismail

- \* Ph.D candidate in strategic management, University of Nairobi, Kenya
- \* MA in public policy and analysis, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya
- \* MBA in strategic management, United States International University – Africa, Kenya
- \* Academic rank: senior lecturer
- \* Hosting Institution: Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, Somaliland

10. Kevin Kester

- \* Ph.D in education, conflict and peacebuilding, University of Cambridge, UK
- \* MA in education and international development, University of Toronto, Canada
- \* MA in peace and conflict studies, United Nations-University for Peace, Costa Rica
- \* Academic rank: tenure-track assistant professor
- \* Hosting Institution: National University of Seoul, South Korea

11. David Tim Archer

- \* Ph.D in peace, pedagogy

and peaceful masculinity,  
University of Cambridge, UK

- \* M.Phil in educational research,  
University of Cambridge, UK
- \* MA in conflict resolution,  
University of Bradford, UK
- \* Academic rank: senior  
lecturer
- \* Hosting Institution: University  
of Cambridge, UK

#### 12. Alexander Gilder

- \* Ph.D in public international  
law, City, University of London,  
UK
- \* LL.M in public international  
law and international human  
rights law, Utrecht University,  
The Netherlands
- \* PGCAP, City, University of  
London, UK

\* Academic rank: senior  
lecturer

\* Hosting Institution: Royal  
Holloway, University of  
London, UK

#### 13. Aleksis Eric Ylönen

- \* Ph.D in international  
relations and African studies,  
Autonomous University of  
Madrid, Spain
- \* MA in peace, conflict and  
development studies,  
UNESCO Chair of Philosophy  
for Peace, Jaume I University,  
Spain
- \* Academic rank: associate  
professor
- \* Hosting Institution: United  
States International University  
– Africa, Kenya

## 3.2 Research

The ultimate goal of the Institute is to be a leading and renowned research institution in Somaliland in particular and the Horn of Africa in general. In line with this vision and mission, the Institute is dedicated to the production and dissemination of knowledge about Somaliland's peacebuilding and conflict prevention processes through the promotion of research and outreach activities to the widest possible freedom of inquiry. Furthermore and very importantly, the Institute not only addresses issues that are specific to Somaliland but also includes the vision to investigate and further understand other pressing issues that have a common impact on human and state securities in the wider



region. These include:

- ◇ Conflict and instability
- ◇ Development endeavors
- ◇ Political Violence
- ◇ Violent Extremism
- ◇ Governance and Democracy in post-conflict settings
- ◇ Peace education
- ◇ Migration and Climate Change
- ◇ Security

### **3.2.1 Research staff**

1. Ayan Yusuf Ali

- \* MA in international studies, University of Birmingham, UK
- \* Area of expertise: Qualitative research

2. Abdiqadir Abdirahman Ismail

- \* MA in peace and conflict studies, University of Hargeisa, Somaliland
- \* MA in development studies, Kampala International University, Uganda
- \* Area of expertise: Qualitative research

3. Mustafe Ibrahim Abdi

- \* MSc in economics, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan
- \* Area of expertise: Quantitative research

### **3.3 IPCS Public Seminar Series**

The Institute has a Public Seminar Series. This is a regular platform intended to critically discuss and disseminate ideas on issues related to Somaliland and the wider region. The Institute is particularly interested in organizing workshops or seminars to present ideas on topical issues for Somaliland as well as other important regional issues. The platform is intended to provide an opportunity to Somaliland's intellectuals and opinion leaders to discuss their views and thoughts on the past, present, and future direction of Somaliland before a much wider audience.

### **3.4 IPCS Resource Center**

The Institute has a Resource Center established to enhance the capacity of the Institute, attract both local and international researchers, and also to serve as a hub for Somaliland's peace and reconciliation archives. The IPCS Resource Center is intended to be a leading, reputable, and respected Resource Center in Somaliland that documents the indigenous methods of conflict resolution and transformation after the House of Elders. This Center helps those wanting to conduct quality research on peace and social stability in Somaliland, and may help them to understand how Somaliland was built from rubble and ruins.

The Institute is designed to take visitors on their first steps in exploring the numerous opportunities available at the Center, and hence to assist the Institute in expanding its influence in the wider region – the Horn of Africa. Surely the Center contains one of the most fascinating collections in Somaliland's history, building the knowledge and capacity of the students who enroll in the Peace and Conflict Program. In turn, students spread relevant ideas concerning the way of the Elders of this nation, providing light from one candle of peace to another, thus aiding international scholars and researchers as well. Somaliland's peacebuilding approaches

disprove the top-down and one-size-fits-all methods that external actors impose on African countries, which neither bring peace, reconciliation, stability, nor the transformation of the conflicts that ravage many parts of the African continent.

## 4. Thesis Writing and Submission

Thesis writing is one of the very crucial and important components of the Institute's teaching program. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to think about their research topics as early as possible. The preparation and submission of a topic and research proposal is required of all graduate students at the Institute. The ultimate success of a master's thesis depends upon the preparation of a sound research topic and proposal. A special guideline is available, which is designed to assist Graduate students at the Institute to prepare and write their Master's thesis in an appropriate and scholarly style. The guideline deals with the major problems likely to be encountered when doing research from the very beginning to the end, including the most common issues relating to citations, paragraphing, and paraphrasing, etc.

The Academic Commission of the Institute will approve the topic and assign supervisors to all the students based on expertise and experience. The advisors will supervise the students throughout the research process: from the approval of the topic to completion of the thesis. Students are strongly advised and expected to respect the deadlines for submission announced by the Institute. Failure to submit thesis works within the timeframe specified by the Institute will result in an undue delay of graduation for the student concerned. Students should contact the Academic Program at the Institute for further information regarding the submission of thesis and defense schedules.



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