

A graduate program

# Coexistence and Conflict

Courses of Study:  
Master of Arts

## Objectives

### Graduate Program in Coexistence and Conflict

Managing intercommunal conflict and violence is ever more important to national and international security in today's world. Societies are becoming much more diverse, and the globalization of conflicts around issues of ethnicity, religion, and culture is increasing. The master's program in coexistence and conflict has been designed to suit the requirements of people and organizations working in divided and conflicted societies, at local, national, and international levels, who want to learn how to more effectively prevent, manage, and resolve such conflicts.

Participants reflect upon the different kinds of ethnic, religious, and cultural conflicts that have been emerging around the world, particularly since the end of the Cold War, and the reasons for such an emergence. They will also look at the theories of contemporary intercommunal conflict as well as strategic interventions to such conflicts, including political, meditative, cultural, legislative, and developmental approaches. The program also offers students the opportunity to develop dialogue and mediation skills for use in situations of intercommunal conflict. The program is particularly geared toward early and mid-career professionals who are working, or aspire to work, within governments or international agencies. It is also useful for those who are working in related fields such as security and diplomacy, aid and development, human rights, and education, as well as democracy and civil society work.

## How to Be Admitted to the Graduate Program

The general requirements for admission to the Graduate School, given in an earlier section of this *Bulletin*, apply to candidates for admission to this area of study. Candidates must also submit a personal statement that discusses their reasons for applying for the MA and their career objectives and relevant experience. In addition, a curriculum vitae or resumé is required with three letters of recommendation, one of which should be from a supervisor in the institution in which the candidate is employed or recently employed, one academic, and the other academic or professional. An interview, either in person or by telephone, may be required for admission.

## Faculty Committee

**Mari Fitzduff, Director**  
(Coexistence and Conflict)

**Steven Burg**  
(Politics)

**Cynthia Cohen**  
(Coexistence and Conflict)

**Theodore Johnson**  
(Coexistence and Conflict)

**Daniel Terris**  
(American Studies)

## Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

### Program of Study

The sixteen-month program involves one academic year in residence at Brandeis in which students complete seven courses (26 credits), followed by a three-month field placement and a master's paper (12 credits) by December. In their second academic year, students will have nonresident status.

### Required Core Courses (five courses)

COEX 210a (Coexistence and Conflict: Theory and Analysis)  
COEX 220a (Strategies for Coexistence Interventions)  
COEX 230a (Coexistence Research Methods)

And eight credits of the following core electives:

COEX 240a (Dialogue and Mediation Skills)  
COEX 260f (Development, Aid, and Coexistence) and  
COEX 261f (Advanced Development, Aid, and Coexistence)  
COEX 270a (The Future of Diversity Work)  
POL 127b (Managing Ethnic Conflict)

The program's core courses are designed to introduce students to theoretical and practical approaches to conflict and the resolution of conflict and promotion of coexistence at local, regional, and national levels. COEX 210a (Coexistence and Conflict: Theory and Analysis) is open to graduate students from other departments, POL 127b (Managing Ethnic Conflict) is open to qualified undergraduates and graduate students from other departments. COEX 220a (Strategies for Coexistence Interventions) is open only to those who have completed COEX 210a. COEX 230a (Coexistence Research Methods) is open only to students who are undertaking the complete master's degree program. COEX 240a is open only to students enrolled in the MA program; other students may enroll with the instructor's permission. COEX 260f, 261f, and 270a are open to all graduate students.

### Elective Courses (two courses)

In addition to the core courses that will be obligatory, students will be encouraged to take advantage of the wide range of other courses available at Brandeis that focus either on particular areas in conflict or on related issues such as ethnicity and nationalism, race and ethnic relations, comparative human rights perspectives, global civil society, American foreign policy, social movements, aid and development, economics, gender issues, organizational development, or governance. In addition, participants may choose to pursue a language course. Students will make choices from these electives based on their perceived relevance to their own apparent learning needs in relation to the field, the particular needs of their existing or prospective fields of work, and the focus of their MA project.

All course selections and their relevance must be discussed with and approved by the program director.

### Master's Project and Paper

All students are required to complete an internship or independent fieldwork, with a concluding paper written under the supervision of a faculty mentor. Students must develop an MA project designed to test their application of theory to practice, to expand their policy and practical experience, and, under supervision, to increase their security and comfort levels at working in what is usually a contentious and sometimes dangerous field. In addition, the field project is planned to test and improve the width and depth of student's professional skills and to significantly increase their networks of collaboration.

The project will consist of either of the following options:

- A.** An internship of at least three months in a governmental or nongovernmental organization assisting with the development and implementation of a policy or a program of coexistence intervention. Students will (1) identify an intervention or their particular part of an intervention; (2) set objectives and time lines; (3) secure partners where necessary for its implementation; (4) ensure that appropriate monitoring and evaluating techniques are built into the program design; and (5) write a final report on the intervention.
- B.** Independent fieldwork for at least three months in a conflict area. Such fieldwork will be designed to assist the generation and development of new coexistence and conflict management intervention options, and must be undertaken in partnership with policymakers or practitioners who are already working in the area. The report of this fieldwork includes feedback and evaluations from prospective partners already working in the area. Students who are on a sabbatical from their place of employment, and whose courses of study are funded by that employer, may carry out their project either within, or on behalf of, their sponsoring organization with the approval of the program director.

The MA project will be undertaken under the direction and supervision of the program director or other Brandeis faculty members. Students are required to submit the master's paper to the director by December 1 of their continuation year in the program. Satisfactory completion of this report will be an essential part of accreditation for the MA degree.

A typical student's program will be as follows:

#### Academic Year 1, Fall Semester

COEX 210a (Coexistence and Conflict: Theory and Analysis)  
COEX 230a (Coexistence Research Methods)  
Two elective courses, one of which must be a core elective.

#### Academic Year 1, Spring Semester

COEX 220a (Strategies for Coexistence Interventions)  
Two elective courses, one of which must be a core elective.

#### Academic Year 1, Summer

Master's project fieldwork.

#### Academic Year 2, Fall Semester

Fieldwork continued.  
Master's paper submitted by December 1.

### Residence Requirement

The residence requirement for this program is one year of full-time study.

### Language Requirement

There is no foreign language requirement for the master's degree.

Students who complete all requirements for the degree by December 1 will be awarded the degree in February of the following year.

## Requirements for the Dual Degree of Master of Arts in Sustainable International Development & Coexistence and Conflict

### Admission

This dual-degree program has a single (combined) application that reflects the admissions criteria set by each program; applicants must apply for the dual degree at the outset. To gain acceptance applicants must be admitted by both programs, meet the MA/SID requirements for accelerated track students, and demonstrate the maturity as well as the writing skills to complete both degrees in an integrated fashion.

### Program of Study

This dual-degree program prepares students for careers in emergency response and rehabilitation programs as well as for development work in areas of conflict. Students will build their understanding of the structural and psychosocial causes of conflict and violence and will be able to analyze strategies for interventions. They will also gain a poverty and development context for understanding and responding to conflict situations. A total of seventy semester course credits are required to complete the program.

Students must complete thirty-two credits in the first year that include twenty-two credits in required courses from the Heller MA/SID program. The balance of credits are filled by electives as specified by the Heller MA/SID program with an additional four credits from the approved list of conflict and coexistence program electives. Students must also participate in the MA/SID Capstone in May of their first year and are required to make a presentation related to their anticipated topic of their master's paper.

In the second year, students must complete the remaining thirty-eight credits from COEX, which includes eighteen credits of required courses. The other twenty credits comprise four credits from approved COEX courses, four credits from approved courses in the MA/SID program, and the remaining twelve credits are earned through successful completion of a field project undertaken in the summer between the first and second year and a master's paper. Preparation for the summer field project is undertaken in the prior spring semester as part of the research course. The submission deadline for the written report from the field project and the master's paper is December 1.

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## Courses of Instruction

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### (200 and above) Primarily for Graduate Students

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#### COEX 210a Coexistence and Conflict: Theory and Analysis

*Open only to students enrolled in the MA program in coexistence and conflict. Other students considered with permission of the instructor.*

Addresses the current and emerging context of intercommunal conflict around the world and the varying and developing theoretical approaches to the emergence and resolution of such conflicts. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Fitzduff

#### COEX 220a Strategies for Coexistence Interventions

*Prerequisite: COEX 210a. Open only to students enrolled in the MA program in coexistence and conflict. Other students considered with permission of the instructor.*

Studies the utilization of a variety of multifaceted approaches to policy and practice in coexistence and conflict interventions, as well as the strategic design and evaluation of such interventions. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Fitzduff

#### COEX 230a Coexistence Research Methods

*Open only to students enrolled in the MA program in coexistence and conflict. Yields half-course credit.*

Preparation for the research necessary for the required field project in the MA program in coexistence and conflict. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Johnson

#### COEX 240a Dialogue and Mediation Skills

*Open only to students enrolled in the MA program in coexistence and conflict. Other students considered with permission of the instructor.*

Addresses the theoretical and practical approaches to mediation and facilitation skills for people and organizations working in areas of intercommunal conflict. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Johnson

#### COEX 250a The Arts of Building Peace

How can music, theater, poetry, literature, and visual arts contribute to community development, coexistence, and nonviolent social change? In the aftermath of violence, how can artists help communities reconcile? Students explore these questions through interviews, case studies, and projects. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Cohen

#### COEX 260f Development, Aid, and Coexistence

*Meets for one-half semester and yields half-course credit.*

Increases the knowledge and skills of students undertaking development and aid work in conflict situations. Explores how such work can address development needs, as well as the need to increase intercommunal equity, understanding, and cooperation. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Johnson

#### COEX 261f Advanced Development, Aid, and Coexistence

*Meets for one-half semester and yields half-course credit.*

This seminar builds on the concepts and theories offered in the basic course. Students will master the skills of conflict mapping, strategic intervention, and analysis using case studies of current and past conflicts where development assistance was also required. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Johnson

#### COEX 270a The Future of Diversity Work

*This course may not be taken for credit by students who have taken COEX 270f in previous years.*

This seminar uncovers the myths and challenges of race and multiculturalism and explores various approaches that have addressed them. It examines future scenarios to help form a more constructive approach to coexistence that goes beyond those challenges. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Johnson

#### COEX 297a Field Project

*Prerequisite: Two semesters as master's student in coexistence and conflict or permission of program director.*

Offers students an opportunity to apply the theories and key themes covered in the core courses in a real-life setting. Requires completion of at least three months of a paid or unpaid internship or field project approved and monitored by a faculty adviser. The project could involve a research or consulting assignment or a structured internship in the fields of coexistence and conflict. Offered every year.

Staff

#### COEX 298a Independent Study

Ms. Fitzduff

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## Comparative History

See History.