

Call for Papers

Teaching Peace and Conflict in Times of War and Collapsing Orders: Challenges, Perspectives, and Innovations in Peace and Conflict Studies Education

Peace and Conflict Studies has become an increasingly important field for knowledge production and academic training in light of ongoing and emerging conflicts. The growing number and interconnectedness of armed conflicts, protracted wars, widespread violence against civilians, the global trend toward autocratization, intensifying geopolitical rivalries, the crisis of multilateral institutions, climate change, biodiversity loss, and persistent global inequalities all underscore the central relevance of Peace and Conflict Studies.

At the same time, these developments not only challenge established political orders but also call into question key assumptions and paradigms within the field itself. Some theories appear to have lost explanatory power, some contemporary phenomena remain insufficiently conceptualized within Peace and Conflict Studies, while others invite entirely new theoretical approaches.

Moreover, the field itself is increasingly under pressure as a result of these multiple crises and related societal developments. Polarization, disinformation, attacks on academic freedom, and growing societal insecurity, not least the rise of the Alternative for Germany (AfD), have made both research and university teaching more difficult. Yet precisely under these conditions, there is strong public demand, and especially strong student demand, for informed analysis and expertise from Peace and Conflict Studies.

Against this backdrop, this forum asks **how Peace and Conflict Studies can and should be taught today**. Which concepts, theories, and paradigms continue to provide convincing explanations? Which ones need to be critically examined, further developed, or supplemented? How can teaching create spaces for controversial debate without compromising scholarly standards or normative commitments? And how can students be equipped to analyze complex conflict dynamics while also coping with the emotional and political challenges of a world shaped by multiple crises?

As the leading journal of German-language Peace and Conflict Studies, ZeFKo seeks to provide a platform for discussing these questions. With this forum on "**Teaching Peace and Conflict in Times of War and Collapsing Orders**", we aim to stimulate a broader debate on the future of teaching in Peace and Conflict Studies. The objective is to bring together diverse perspectives on teaching and learning in the field. The forum is intended to foster discussion of current challenges through shorter scholarly contributions that encourage broader exchange within the academic community.

We invite scholars and educators from Peace and Conflict Studies as well as related fields to submit contributions. We particularly welcome conceptual and theoretical papers, reflections on curricula and teaching content, empirical studies on teaching and learning, reports from diverse teaching contexts, and contributions presenting and critically assessing innovative teaching and learning formats.

We especially encourage submissions addressing one or more of the following themes:

Teaching in Times of Global Crises and War: How do contemporary conflicts and global crises affect the content, objectives, and conditions of teaching? How do they reshape expectations toward Peace and Conflict Studies as a field of education and professional training? How can academic teaching contribute to societal and political attempts to deal with these crises and conflicts?

Theories, Concepts, the Canon and Beyond: Which classical approaches and theoretical perspectives remain central to teaching? Which have reached their explanatory limits? What role can new and alternative perspectives, such as decolonial or feminist approaches, play? Which concepts and approaches from neighboring fields, including Security Studies or Area Studies, should be more fully integrated into contemporary Peace and Conflict Studies curricula? Where is new theorizing needed?

Curricula and Learning Objectives: Which disciplinary, methodological and transferable skills and competencies should students of Peace and Conflict Studies acquire today? How do global crises influence the selection of teaching content, readings, and learning objectives?

Teaching Practice and Innovation: What experiences do educators have in dealing with controversial, complex, and emotionally demanding topics? Which innovative teaching and learning formats have proven successful, and where do their limitations become apparent? How do conflicts within universities shape teaching practice?

Normativity, Controversy, and Restrictions on Academic Freedom: How can teaching navigate the relationship between scholarly analysis, normative reflection, and politically contested debates? What role do emotions, personal involvement, resilience, and care play in teaching about war, violence, and peace? How do restrictions on academic freedom affect teaching? What consequences might arise from governments led by authoritarian parties, such as the AfD, for university teaching, and what forms of preparation are possible?

Self-Reflection of the Field: What does the current global situation reveal about Peace and Conflict Studies itself? What implications does this have for teaching, curricula, and the field's self-understanding?

ZeFKo publishes contributions in **both German and English**. Forum contributions should generally not exceed **4,000 words** and will undergo the journal's regular **double-blind peer-review process**. The forum is organized by the editors of ZeFKo (Hendrik Hegemann and Hanna Pfeifer).

Interested authors are invited to submit an abstract of approximately **300 words** to the ZeFKo editorial team at zefko@afk-web.de by **15 October 2026**. Authors will be notified of acceptance by **15 November 2026**. Full manuscripts are due by **28 February 2027**.